

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF SAINT JOHN.

THE author of this gospel, JOHN, the apostle and evangelist, was a native of Bethsaida, in Galilee, and the son of Zebedee and Salome, as appears by comparing Matt. xxvii. 56, with Mark xv. 40, and xvi. 1. He was younger brother of James the Greater, or Elder, (there being two apostles of that name,) with whom he exercised the trade of a fisherman, on the sea of Galilee. These brothers were among the first that became Christ's disciples, being called the same day that Peter and Andrew were chosen to that honour. John is supposed to have been about twenty-five years of age when he began to follow Christ, by whom he was peculiarly loved, and honoured with his most intimate confidence, being chosen, with his brother and Peter, exclusive of the rest, to be a witness of the raising of Jairus's daughter, of Christ's transfiguration, and of his agony in the garden. And he and his brother James, on account of their zeal in their Master's service, and their fervent manner of preaching, were distinguished by the title of Boanerges, or sons of thunder. He was the only apostle who followed Christ to Calvary, and stood under the cross when he was crucified; and to him Jesus left the care of his mother, to whom, in pursuance of the trust thus reposed in him, he showed all the testimonies of the profoundest veneration and respect, granting her, after the death of her husband Joseph, all the accommodations his house afforded, John xix. 27. He saw our Lord expire on the cross, and the soldier pierce his side with a spear, John xix. 34, 45; and was one of the first of the apostles who visited the sepulchre after Christ's resurrection; and the first of them, it seems, that believed he was risen, John xx. 8. He was present when Christ showed himself to the disciples on the day he rose, and likewise eight days after, John xx. 19-29; as also when Jesus appeared as a stranger to some of them, at the sea of Tiberias; and was the first that discovered, and gave notice to the others, that the person appearing was the Lord. After Christ's ascension, he continued with the other apostles at Jerusalem, and took part with them in all their transactions, till the day of pentecost, when, with all the others, he was endowed with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, and was thereby fully qualified for the important offices for which God designed him. He, in conjunction with Peter, with whom it appears he had contracted a very intimate friendship, had the honour of being made the instrument of working the first miracle after the day of pentecost, namely, of curing, in a moment, a man who had been lame from his birth; and the still greater honour of suffering imprisonment for Christ and his gospel, before any of the other apostles were called to give that proof of their faith in him, and attachment to his cause, Acts iii. 1-10. We find him afterward sent with Peter to Samaria, in order that through their prayers, and the laying on of their hands, the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost might be conferred on some who had been converted there by the preaching of Philip the deacon, Acts viii. 5-25. And some years after this, he is mentioned by St. Paul, (Gal. ii.,) as one of the members of that council which was held at Jerusalem, to consider whether the observation of the ceremonial law should be required of the Gentile converts, Acts xv. From all which things it appears, that he was well qualified to give to the church and the world an

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authentic and accurate history of the life, doctrine, and miracles of Christ; having been an eye and ear witness of most or of all the facts which it was of importance he should relate. It is thought, that after the events referred to above, he continued in or near Judea till the time approached for the accomplishment of Christ's predictions respecting the destruction of Jerusalem and the dissolution of the Jewish state; when, according to Irenæus, Eusebius, Origen, and others, he went into Asia, that being his peculiar province by allotment, where he founded the churches of Smyrna, Thyatira, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. His principal place of residence, however, was Ephesus, of which he was bishop; though Paul had planted a church there long before, and constituted Timothy the bishop thereof. Soon after he had settled affairs to his satisfaction in Asia Minor, he is supposed to have removed thence more eastward, and to have preached the gospel among the Parthians; to whom, as some imagine, his first epistle was anciently inscribed.

After John had been thus employed in his apostolical function for some years, the persecution of the cruel Domitian took place, in the 15th year of his reign, A. D. 95, in which so eminent a minister of Christ as John could not fail of being a sufferer. He was, accordingly, represented to the emperor as a professed atheist, and a public subverter of the established religion of the empire; whereupon, by his imperial orders, the proconsul of Asia sent John bound to Rome, where he met with the most barbarous and inhuman treatment. He was cast into a caldron of boiling or burning oil; but was miraculously preserved from being injured thereby, as Shadrach and his companions had been, long before, from being hurt by the flames of a fiery furnace. The stupid and obdurate Domitian, regardless of the miracle, still persecuted this holy man, and banished him into the island of Patmos, in the Archipelago, where, toward the latter end of the emperor's reign, he wrote the Apocalypse. Domitian being slain in A. D. 96, Nerva, his successor, by an especial edict recalled him, and several others, from their state of exile; in consequence of which he returned to Ephesus, being then about ninety years of age. Here, it is said, he wrote his gospel, but whether before he was sent into exile, or after his return from it, is not quite certain. The general current of ancient writers, however, assure us, that he wrote it at an advanced time of life; though some learned moderns are of a different opinion, supposing it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem. "The question," as Mr. Scott observes, "is perhaps rather a matter of curiosity than importance. Yet certainly several passages become far more interesting, by supposing that it was written long after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the martyrdom of the other apostles. This evangelist alone mentions Peter as the apostle who smote the high-priest's servant, and Malchus as the name of that servant. Now it is obvious to conclude, that he disclosed what the others had purposely concealed; because Peter was, at the time when he wrote, out of the reach of all his enemies. He alone records the resurrection of Lazarus; a miracle so stupendous and notorious, that one can hardly account for the other evangelists passing it over in silence, unless by supposing that, inasmuch as the Jews had consulted to put Lazarus also, as well as Christ, to death, the publicly recording of it by the evangelists, while the Jewish priests and rulers possessed authority, might needlessly have exasperated them, and exposed Lazarus and his sisters to much hatred, and even to imminent danger; and that the first Christians, knowing this, judged it proper in their public writings to observe a profound silence on this subject, till Jerusalem was destroyed, and Lazarus deceased, when the whole was circumstantially related. The other evangelists record our Lord's predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the dispersion of the Jews; but this writer is entirely silent in respect of them. Nor can a more satisfactory account of this be given, than by supposing that many of the predicted events had by that time received their accomplishment." In addition to these arguments, which certainly are of considerable weight, some have observed that it is probable St. John could not have interpreted the words of Christ, which he has recorded chap. xxi. 18: "Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird

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thee," concerning the manner of St. Peter's death, if his gospel had been written before the crucifixion of that apostle ; because, before that time, the words were ambiguous. Now this limits the writing of it to the year 69, a year expressly specified by an ancient writer. Others give it a much later date, some even so late as A. D. 97.

But at what time soever it was written, it is probable that it was undertaken in consequence of the entreaties of the Christian people and pastors of Ephesus, and other parts of Asia Minor, where John had his residence in the latter part of his life ; and if so, Dr. Campbell thinks it must have been toward the close of the first century when it first appeared in the church. It was, doubtless, published before the beginning of the second ; for we find evident references to it, though without naming the author, in some epistles of Ignatius, written about that time, the authenticity of which is strenuously maintained by Bishop Pearson, and other critics of name. There are also in Justin Martyr both references to this gospel, and quotations from it, though without naming the author. Tatian used it, along with the others, in composing the *Diatessaron*. It is scarcely necessary to mention the notice that is taken of it in the epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons, or by Irenæus, who names all the evangelists, specifying something peculiar to every one of them whereby he may be distinguished from the rest. To these may be added, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and the whole current of succeeding ecclesiastical writers.

If we may believe Irenæus, (*Advers. Hæres.*, lib. iii. cap. 11,) this gospel was written with a view to " extirpate the errors sown in the minds of men by Cerinthus, and, some time before, by those called Nicolaitans ;" in opposition to which errors, " he acquaints us, that there is one God, who made all things by his Word ; and not, as they say, one who is the Creator of the world, and another who is the Father of the Lord ; one the Son of the Creator, and another the Christ from the super-celestial abodes, who descended upon Jesus the Son of the Creator, but remained impassible, and afterward flew back into his own pleroma or fulness." Again : " This disciple, therefore, willing at once to cut off these errors, and establish a rule of truth in the church, declares, that there is one God Almighty, who by his Word made all things, visible and invisible ; and that by the same Word, by which God finished the work of creation, he bestowed salvation upon men, who inhabit the creation. With this doctrine he ushers in his gospel, ' In the beginning was the Word,' " &c. " This testimony," says Dr. Campbell, " is of great antiquity, having been given in less than a century after the publication of the gospel." Clement of Alexandria, who wrote not long after Irenæus, has, as we learn from Eusebius, (lib. iii. cap. 24,) added some particulars, as what, in his opinion, together with the entreaties of the Asiatic churches, contributed not a little to induce John to compose his gospel. The first he mentions is, that the evangelists who had preceded him, had taken little notice of our Lord's teaching and actions, soon after the commencement of his ministry, and before the imprisonment of John the Baptist. One consideration, therefore, which induced him, though late, to publish a gospel, was, to supply what seemed to have been omitted by those who had gone before him. For this reason he avoided, as much as possible, recurring to those passages of our Lord's history of which the preceding evangelists had given an account. There was no occasion, therefore, for him to give the genealogy of our Saviour's flesh, as the historian expresses it, which had been done by Matthew and Luke before him. The same Eusebius says in another place, (lib. vi. cap. 14,) quoting Clement, " John, who is the last of the evangelists, having seen that in the three former gospels corporeal things had been explained, and being urged by his acquaintance, and inspired of God, composed a spiritual gospel." Thus, it appears to have been a very early tradition in the church, that this gospel was composed, not only to supply what had not been fully communicated in the former gospels, but also to serve for refuting the errors of Cerinthus and the Gnostics.

" It deserves our particular attention, that the whole strain of the writing [of this gospel] shows it

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must have been published at a time, and in a country, the people whereof, in general, knew very little of the Jewish rites and manners. Thus those who in the other gospels are called simply 'the people,' or 'the multitude,' are here denominated 'the Jews,' a method which would not have been natural in their own land, or even in the neighbourhood, where the nation itself, and its peculiarities, were perfectly well known. As it was customary in the East, both with Jews and others, to use proper names independently significant, which, when they went abroad, were translated into the language of the country, this author, that there might be no mistake of the persons meant, was careful, when the Greek name had any currency, to mention both names, Syriac and Greek. Thus, 'Cephas, which denoteth the same as Peter,' John i. 43; 'Thomas, that is, Didymus,' chap. xi. 16. The same may be said of some titles in current use; 'Rabbi, which is, being interpreted, Master,' chap. i. 38; 'Messiah, which is, the Christ,' chap. i. 41. In like manner, when there is occasion to mention any of the religious ceremonies used in Judea, as their 'purifications,' or their 'festivals,' it is almost invariably signified that the ceremony, or custom spoken of, is Jewish. Thus the water-pots are said to be placed for the Jewish rites of cleansing, chap. ii. 6. The passover is once and again (chap. ii. 13; vi. 4; xi. 55) denominated the 'Jewish passover,' a phrase used only by this evangelist; and even any other religious feast is called (chap. v. 1; vii. 2) by him, *εορτη των Ιουδαιων*, 'a Jewish festival.' This style runs through the whole. The writer everywhere speaks as to people who knew little or nothing about the Jews: see chap. iv. 9, 45.

"Though simplicity of manner is common to all our Lord's historians, there are evident differences in the simplicity of one compared with that of another. One thing very remarkable in John's style is, an attempt to impress important truths more strongly on the minds of the readers, by employing, in the expression of them, both an affirmative proposition and a negative. Thus, John i. 20, 'He acknowledged, and denied not, but acknowledged.' Repetitions, pleonasm, and tautologies, are also very frequent in this gospel: see chap. i. 1, 2, 7, 8.

"Hebraisms are to be found in all the evangelists; though it may be remarked, that some abound more with one sort of Hebraism, and others with another. A Hebrew idiom, very frequent with this writer, is the repetition or introduction of the personal pronoun, in cases where it is perfectly redundant. See verses 33 and 27 in the original. The introduction of any incident with the phrase, *και γενετο*, generally rendered in the common translation, 'And it came to pass,' though common in the other gospels, never occurs in this. The introduction of either facts or observations, by the adverb *behold*, is much rarer in this gospel than in the rest. But in the change of the tenses, so frequent with the Hebrews, John abounds more than any other of our Lord's biographers. He is peculiar in the application of some names, as of *ὁ Λογος*, 'The Word,' and *ὁ μονογενης*, 'The only begotten,' to the Lord Jesus Christ; and of *ὁ Παρακλητος*, 'The Monitor,' or, as some render it, 'The Advocate,' and others, 'The Comforter,' to the Holy Ghost. He is peculiar also in some modes of expression which, though inconsiderable in themselves, it may not be improper to suggest in passing. Such is his reduplication of the affirmative adverb, *αμην*, *verily*; for he always says, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you.' It is never used but singly by the rest."

"The style and character of St. John," says Mr. Blackwall, in his *Sacred Classics*, "is grave and simple, short and perspicuous. As to his language, it is plain and sometimes low, but he reaches to the very heaven of heavens in the sublimity of his notions. The venerable plainness, the majestic gravity, and beautiful simplicity of this writer, will always, by men of judgment, be valued above all the pomp of artificial eloquence, and gaudy ornaments of sophistry, and the declamatory style. This glorious gospel completes the evangelical history, and enriches it with several most heavenly discourses and miracles of the world's Saviour, not recorded by any of the three divine writers before him. The first five chapters give an account of his works of wonder before the Baptist's imprisonment. He enlarges upon the eternal existence of our Saviour, and gives us a most edifying and

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delightful account of his conversation for many days upon earth, with his apostles and select disciples, after his victorious and triumphant resurrection."

"Here," says Dr. Campbell, "we have also the true sources of Christian consolation under persecution, and the strongest motives to faith, patience, constancy, and mutual love, in every situation wherein Providence may place us. From the incidents here related, we may learn many excellent lessons of modesty, humanity, humility, and kind attention to the concerns of others. Nor does any one of those incidents appear to be more fraught with instruction than the charge of his mother, which our blessed Lord, at that critical time when he hung in agony upon the cross, consigned to his beloved disciple, John xix. 25, &c. Though the passage is very brief, and destitute of all artful colouring, nothing can impress more strongly on the feeling heart his respectful tenderness for a worthy parent, and his unalterable affection for a faithful friend. Upon the whole, the language employed in conveying the sentiments is no more than the repository, the case. Let not its homeliness discourage any one from examining its valuable contents. The treasure itself is heavenly, even the unsearchable riches of Christ, which the apostle observes, (2 Cor. iv. 7,) to be committed 'to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may,' to the conviction of all the sober-minded, 'be of God, and not of men.'

"The Apostle John, by the concurrent testimony of all Christian antiquity, after suffering persecution for the cause of Christ, lived to a very great age; and having survived all the other apostles, died a natural death, at Ephesus, in Asia Minor, in the reign of the Emperor Trajan."

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

S A I N T J O H N .

CHAPTER I.

We have here, (1.) A very sublime and emphatical account of the Deity and incarnation of Christ; and of those glorious and important purposes for which he condescended to appear among us in the human nature, 1-14. (2.) The testimony of John the Baptist concerning Christ, and the evangelist's own testimony added to confirm it, 15-18. (3.) Another testimony of John concerning Christ, delivered to the priests and Levites, sent by the great men among the Jews to inquire who he was, 19-28. (4.) A third and more enlarged testimony of the Baptist borne to Jesus, as the Lamb of God, which becomes an occasion of introducing some of John's disciples into an acquaintance with Jesus, 29-42. (5.) The calling of Philip, and the interview of Christ with Nathanael, 43-51.

A. M. 1. **I**N * the beginning ^a was the Word,
B. C. 4004. and the Word was ^b with God,
^c and the Word was God.

2 ^d The same was in the beginning A. M. 1.
with God. B. C. 4004.

3 ^e All things were made by him; and with-

* Nativity of Christ, gospel, verse 1 to verse 15.—^a Prov. viii. 22, 23, &c.—^b Prov. viii. 30; Chap. xvii. 5; 1 John i. 2.

^c Phil. ii. 6; 1 John v. 7.—^d Gen. i. 1.—^e Psa. xxxiii. 6; Col. i. 16; Verse 10; Eph. iii. 9; Heb. i. 2; Rev. iv. 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1, 2. *In the beginning*—Namely, of the creation, (for the evangelist evidently refers to the first word of the book of Genesis, בראשית, *bereshith*, rendered by the LXX. *ev arxh*, the expression here used,) *was the Word*—That is, The Word existed at the beginning of the creation, and consequently from eternity. He *was* when all things began to be; whatsoever had a beginning. *And the Word was with God*—Namely, before any created being had existed. This is probably spoken in allusion to the well-known passage in Proverbs, (chap. viii. 30, &c.,) where divine wisdom is introduced, saying, *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old: I was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, &c. And the Word was God*—Was strictly and properly divine. It is observable, "that John's discourse rises by degrees. He tells us first, that the *Word*, in the beginning of the world, existed. Next, that he existed *with God*: and last of all, that he *was God*, and made all things." "I know," says Dr. Doddridge, "how eagerly many have contended, that the word *God* is used here in an inferior sense; the necessary consequence of which is, as indeed some have expressly avowed, that this clause should be rendered, *The Word was a god*; that is, a kind of inferior deity, as governors are called gods. See John x. 34; 1 Cor. viii. 5. But it is impossible he should here be so called, merely as a *governor*, because he is spoken of as existing before the production of any creatures whom he could govern: and it is to me most incredible, that when the Jews were so exceedingly averse

to idolatry, and the Gentiles so unhappily prone to it, such a plain writer as this apostle should lay so dangerous a stumbling-block on the very threshold of his work, and represent it as the Christian doctrine, that, in the beginning of all things, there were *two Gods*, one supreme and the other subordinate: a difficulty which, if possible, would be yet further increased by recollecting what so many ancient writers assert, that this gospel was written with a particular view of opposing the Cerinthians and Ebionites; on which account a greater accuracy of expression must have been necessary." As to the article δ being wanting before *θεος*, *God*, which some have urged as a proof that the word is here to be used in a subordinate sense, it must be observed, that there are so many instances in the writings of this apostle, and even in this chapter, (see verses 6, 12, 13, 18,) where the same word, without the article, is used to signify *God*, in the highest sense of the word, that it is surprising any stress should be laid on that circumstance. "On the other hand, to conceive of Christ as a *distinct* and *co-ordinate* God, would be equally inconsistent with the most express declarations of Scripture, and far more irreconcilable with reason." The order of the words in the original, *θεος ην ο λογος*, has induced some to translate the clause, *God was the Word*. So it was read in the old English translation, authorized by Henry VIII., and thus Luther rendered it in his German translation, *Gott war das wort*. But there are almost every where, in several of the purest Greek writers, instances of such a construction as our present version supposes; and one of exactly the same kind occurs

chap. iv. 24 of this gospel, namely, πνευμα ὁ θεός, which we properly render, *God is a spirit*: so that there appears to be no sufficient reason for varying from our translation in this important passage. It may be proper to add here, in the words of Bishop Burnet, (*On the Articles*, p. 40,) "That had not John, and the other apostles, thought it [Christ's proper deity] a doctrine of great importance in the gospel scheme, they would rather have waived than asserted and insisted upon it, considering the critical circumstances in which they wrote." *The same was in the beginning with God*—The apostle repeats what he had before asserted, because of its great importance; and to signify more fully the personality of the Word, or only-begotten Son, (verse 14,) as distinct from that of the Father.

Verse 3. *All things were made by him*—All creatures, whether in heaven or on earth, the whole universe, and every being contained therein, animate or inanimate, intelligent or unintelligent. The Father spoke every thing into being by him, his Eternal Word. Thus, Psa. xxxiii. 6, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, &c.* This, however, is not the only reason why the Son of God is termed *the Word*. "He is not only called so, because God at first created and still governs all things by him; but because, as men discover their minds to one another by the intervention of words, speech, or discourse, so God, by his Son, discovers his gracious designs to men in the fullest and clearest manner. All the various manifestations which he makes of himself, whether in the works of creation, providence, or redemption, all the revelations he has been pleased to give of his will, have been, and still are, conveyed to us through him, and therefore he is, by way of eminence, fitly styled here, *the Word*, and Rev. xix. 13, *the Word of God*."—Macknight. Thus also Bishop Horne's (*Sermons*, vol. i. pp. 199, 200:) "Should it be asked, why this person is styled the *Word*? the proper answer seems to be, that as a thought, or conception of the understanding, is brought forth and communicated in *speech or discourse*, so is the divine will made known by the *Word*, who is the offspring and emanation of the eternal mind, an emanation pure and undivided, like that of light, which is the proper issue of the sun, and yet coeval with its parent orb; since the sun cannot be supposed, by the most exact and philosophical imagination, to exist a moment without emitting light; and were the one eternal, the other, though strictly and properly produced by it, would be as strictly and properly co-eternal with it. So true is the assertion of the Nicene fathers; so apt the instance subjoined for its illustration, *God of God, light of light*: in apostolical language, Απαντασμα της δοξης και χαρακτηρ της υποστασεως, *The brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*. And whether we consider our Lord under the idea of the *Word*, or that of *Light*, it will lead us to the same conclusion respecting his office. For, as no man can discover the mind of another, but by the word which proceedeth from him; as no man can see the sun, but by the light which itself emit-
toth, even so, *No man knoweth the Father, save the*

Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." It may not be improper to observe further here, that "the term *λογος*, *Word*, was in use among the ancient philosophers, who sometimes speak of a person under that appellation as the Maker of the universe. So Tertullian informs the Gentiles: 'Apud vestros quoque sapientes *λογον*, id est, Sermonem atque Rationem, constat artificem videri universitatis.' It appears that among your wise men, the *λογος*, that is, the Word and Reason, was considered as the Former of the universe. And Eusebius, in the eleventh book of his Evangelical Preparation, cites a passage from Amelius, a celebrated admirer and imitator of Plato, in which he speaks of the *λογος* as being eternal, and the Maker of all things. This, he says, was the opinion of Heraclitus, and then introduces the beginning of the gospel of St. John; concerning whom it seems he was wont to complain, that he had transferred into his book the sentiments of his master Plato. But it is not likely that our evangelist either borrowed from, or intended to copy after Plato. And since not only Plato, but Pythagoras and Zeno likewise, conversed with the Jews, it is not at all wonderful that we meet with something about a *θειος λογος*, or *DIVINE WORD*, in their writings. Nor, after all, might the philosopher and the apostle use the same term in the same acception. It is customary with the writers of the New Testament to express themselves as much as may be in the language of the Old, to which, therefore, we must have recourse for an explanation of their meaning, as the penmen of both, under the direction of one Spirit, used their terms in the same sense. Now, upon looking into the Old Testament, we find, that *the Word of Jehovah* is frequently and evidently the style of a person who is said to come, to be revealed, or manifested, and the like, as in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, *The word of Jehovah came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abraham, &c.—Behold, the Word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir, and he brought him forth abroad*. Thus again, (1 Sam. iii.,) *Jehovah revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by the Word of Jehovah*. The same person is, at other times, characterized by the title, *the Name of Jehovah*, as in Isa. xxx. 27, *Behold, the Name of Jehovah cometh from far, burning with his anger, &c.* With regard to the nature of the person thus denominated, whoever shall duly consider the attributes, powers, and actions ascribed to him, will see reason to think of him, not as a created intelligence, but a person of the divine essence, possessed of all its incommunicable properties. And it may be noticed, that the Targums, or Chaldee paraphrasts, continually substitute *the Word of Jehovah for Jehovah*, ascribing divine characters to the person so named. And the ancient Grecizing Jews speak in the same style. Thus, in that excellent apocryphal book of *Wisdom*, (ix. 1.) *O God, who hast made all things, εν λογω ου, by thy Word*; and again in the passage which so wonderfully describes the horrors of that night, never to be forgotten by an Israelite, wherein the firstborn of the Egyptians were slain: *While all things were in quiet silence, and that*

A. M. 1. out him was not any thing made
B. C. 4004. that was made.

4 ^fIn him was life; and ^gthe life was the light of men.

5 And ^hthe light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

A. D. 26. 6 ¶ ⁱThere was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

^f Chap. v. 26; 1 John v. 11.—^g Chap. viii. 12.—^h Chap. iii. 19.—ⁱ Mal. iii. 1; Matt. iii. 1; Luke iii. 2.

night was in the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty WORD (λογος) leaped down from heaven, out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war, into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought thy unfeigned commandment, as a sharp sword; and standing up filled all things with death; and it touched the heaven, but stood upon the earth, chap. xviii. 14." Horne's Discourses, disc. vii. vol. i. pp. 194-197. And without him was not any thing made—Ουδε εν, not so much as any single thing having existence, whether among the nobler or the meaner works of God, was made without him. See the same truth attested and enlarged upon by Paul, Col. i. 16. Now, "if all things were made by him, he cannot be himself of the number of the things that were made. He is superior, therefore, to every created being. Besides, it should be remembered, that in the Old Testament, the creation of the heavens and the earth is often mentioned as the prerogative of the true God, whereby he is distinguished from the heathen idols. The design of the evangelist in establishing so particularly and distinctly the dignity, but especially the divinity of Christ, was to raise in mankind the most profound veneration for him, and for all his instructions and actions. And, without doubt, he who is the Word of God, the interpreter of the divine counsels, and who is himself God, ought to be heard with the deepest attention, and obeyed with the most implicit submission."

Verses 4, 5. In him—Or, through him, as Beza understands it; was life—He was the living and powerful Word, which was the source of life to every living creature, as well as of being to all that exists. And the life was the light of men—He, who is essential life, and the author of life to all that live, was also the fountain of wisdom, holiness, and happiness to man in his original state. And the light shineth in darkness—Namely, in the darkness, or amid the ignorance and folly, sinfulness and wretchedness of fallen man. This has been the case from the time of man's fall, through all ages, and in all nations of the world; the light of reason and conscience, as well as the light issuing from the works of creation and providence, and the various discoveries of God and his will made to and by the patriarchs and prophets, being through and from him: But the darkness comprehended it not—Did not advert to it, so as to understand and profit by it, as it might have done by the instruction thus communicated. It became necessary, therefore, in order to the more full illu-

7 ^kThe same came for a witness, A. M. 4030. to bear witness of the Light, that A. D. 26. all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 ^lThat was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and ^mthe world was

^k Acts xix. 4.—^l Ver. 4; Isa. xlix. 6; 1 John ii. 8.—^m Ver. 3; Heb. i. 2.

mination and the salvation of mankind, that God should give a more perfect revelation of his mind and will, than he had given in former ages. Of this the evangelist speaks next.

Verses 6-9. There was a man sent from God—The introducer of a new dispensation, the morning star, preceding the rise of the Sun of righteousness; whose name was JOHN—That is, grace; a name fitly given to the Messiah's forerunner, who was sent to proclaim the immediate accomplishment of God's gracious intentions toward men, the expectation of which had been raised in them by all his preceding dispensations. The same came for a witness—Εἰς μαρτυριαν, for, or, in order to give, a testimony of an infinitely important kind; to bear witness of the light—ἵνα μαρτυρησῆν περὶ τοῦ φωτός, that he might testify concerning the light: namely, the light mentioned above, Christ, the light of the world; that all men through him—Through his testimony; might believe—In Christ, the light. He—John, though an extraordinary messenger of God, was himself not that light, but was merely sent to bear witness of that light—And thereby to draw men's attention to it, and induce them to believe in it; namely, in the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world—Both as he is their Maker, who has put into their minds the light of reason and conscience, and as he visits and strives with them by his Spirit, and is the author of that revelation, which was not intended to be confined to the single nation of the Jews, but to be communicated to all mankind.

Verses 10, 11. He was in the world—From the beginning, frequently appearing, and making known to his servants, the patriarchs and prophets, the divine will, in dreams and visions, and various other ways: and the world was made by him—As has just been shown; and the world, nevertheless, knew him not—Knew not its Maker and Preserver. He came—As the true, the often-predicted, and long-expected Messiah; unto his own—Εἰς τὰ ἴδια, to his own things, namely, his own land; termed, Immanuel's land; his own city, called the holy city; his own temple, mentioned as such by Malachi, chap. iii. 1: The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly, or unexpectedly, come to his temple: but, although he answered all the characters given of the Messiah in the Old Testament, οἱ ἴδιοι, his own people, whom he had separated from all the people upon earth, watched over, protected, delivered, and singularly favoured, in a variety of most extraordinary ways, for many

A. M. 4030. made by him, and the world knew
A. D. 26. him not.

11 *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But °as many as received him, to them gave he ¹power to become the sons of God,

* Luke xix. 14.—Isa. lvi. 5; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iii. 26; 2 Pet. i. 4; 1 John iii. 1.—¹ Or, the right, or, privilege.

ages; *received him not*—Because he did not countenance and gratify their carnal spirit and worldly views, by coming in that state of wealth, power, and grandeur in which they expected him to come. He came as the prophet like unto Moses, as Moses foretold he should come, (Deut. xviii. 18, &c.,) and by his holy life, his mighty miracles, extreme sufferings, and glorious resurrection from the dead, proved to a demonstration his divine mission; yet *they received him not*, because his doctrine contradicted their prejudices, censured their vices, and laid a restraint upon their lusts. He came as the High-priest of their profession, and a Mediator between God and man; but, depending on their being Abraham's seed, on the ceremony of circumcision, on the Aaronical priesthood and the expiations of their law, and, in general, on their own righteousness, they *received him not* in these characters. He came as a Redeemer and Saviour; but not feeling, nor even seeing, their want of the redemption and salvation which are through him, and having no desire of any such spiritual blessings, they *received him not*, in any such relations. He came as *the King set upon God's holy hill of Zion*, Psa. ii. 6; *the righteous branch raised unto David, the king that was to reign and prosper, and to execute justice and judgment in the earth*, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; *Zion's king, that was to come to her, just and having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass*, Zech. ix. 9: but, as his kingdom was *not of this world*, not earthly, but heavenly, not carnal, but spiritual, and they did not desire one of another world, they would not receive him; declaring openly, *We will not have this man to reign over us*.

Verses 12, 13. *But as many as received him*—As the true Messiah, and according to the various offices and characters which he sustains: learning of him, as a teacher, the infinitely important lessons of his grace; relying on him with penitent and believing hearts, as a mediator, that is, on his sacrifice and intercession, for acceptance with God; applying to him, in faith and prayer, as a Redeemer and Saviour, for the redemption and salvation which he has to bestow; as many as are subject to him as their King and Governor, and prepare to meet him as their Judge: *to them*—Whether Jews or Gentiles; *gave he power*—Or privilege, as *εξουσιαν* implies; *to become the sons of God*—To stand related to him, not merely as subjects to their king, or servants to their master, but as children to their father; being taken under his peculiar protection, direction, and care; being favoured with liberty of access to him, and intercourse with him, and constituted his heirs, and

even to them that believe on his A. M. 4030.
name: A. D. 26.

13 *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 ¶ And the Word * was made * flesh, and

¶ Ch. iii. 5; Jam. i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23.—* Matt. i. 16, 20; Luke i. 31, 35.—* Rom. i. 3; Gal. iv. 4.—* Heb. ii. 11, 14, 16, 17.

joint heirs with Christ of the heavenly inheritance; *even to them that believe on his name*—*With their hearts unto righteousness*, or with a *faith working by love*. Nor are they constituted his children merely by adoption, but they are made such also and especially by regeneration, being *born, not of blood*—Not by descent from Abraham; *nor by the will of the flesh*—By natural generation, or by the power of corrupt nature; *nor by the will of man*—Circumcising or baptizing them; *but of God*—By his Spirit creating them anew.

Verse 14. *And the Word, &c.*—And in order to raise us, sinful creatures, to this dignity and happiness, the Divine and Eternal Word, by a most amazing condescension; *was made flesh*—That is, united himself to our inferior and miserable nature, with all its innocent infirmities. If it be inquired how he did this, we answer, in the language of the Creed, “Not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God.” Observe, reader, the whole manhood, the complete human nature, consisting of soul and body, and not the body only. Accordingly, we read, (Luke ii. 52.) that *Jesus increased in wisdom as well as stature*, having, as man, 1st, *A finite understanding*, which gradually received information and knowledge. 2d, *A will of his own, distinct from, but resigned to, the will of his heavenly Father*; in consequence of which he could say, *I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me: Father, not my will, but thine be done*. 3d, *All the innocent human passions and affections, such as, desire; with desire have I desired to eat this passover, &c.*, Luke xxii. 15: *aversion; Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me*, Luke xxii. 42: *hope; for the felicity set before him, and expected by him, he endured the cross, &c.*, Heb. xii. 2: *fear; he was heard in that he feared*, Heb. v. 7: *joy; Jesus rejoiced in spirit*, Luke x. 21: *sorrow; my soul is exceeding sorrowful*, Matt. xxvi. 38: *a peculiar human love; the disciple whom Jesus loved*, John xxi. 20: all which faculties belonged not to his body, but to his soul. When we read, therefore, that *he was made flesh, partook of flesh and blood*, (Heb. ii. 14,) *came in the flesh*, (1 John iv. 2,) *was manifest in the flesh*, (1 Tim. iii. 16,) *had a body prepared for him*, (Heb. x. 5,) we must remember, that the whole human nature is intended to be signified by such expressions, and not the body only. It is, however, justly observed by Bishop Horne on this point, that “As the Divinity is an object by no means within the grasp of the human understanding, it were absurd to expect an adequate idea of the mode of its union with

A. M. 4030. dwelt among us, (and ' we beheld
A. D. 26. his glory, the glory as of the only
begotten of the Father,) " full of grace and
truth.

'Isa. xl. 5; Matt. xvii. 2.—" Col. i. 19.

flesh, expressed in the text by the word *made*; (*εγενετο*;) *The word was made flesh*. It sufficeth, in this case, to maintain the general truth of the proposition against those, who, in different ways, by subtlety and sophistry, have laboured to oppugn and destroy. We must not, with Arius, deny the Saviour to be truly God, because he became man; nor assert, with Apollinaris, that he was not really man, because he was also God. We must not, with Nestorius, rend Christ asunder, and divide him into two persons; nor, after the example of Eutyches, confound in his person those natures which should be distinguished. These were the four capital errors, which, in the earlier ages, harassed and distracted the Christian church, on the point of the incarnation; and in opposition to which, the four most famous ancient general councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon were called. Whatever was by them decreed, either in declaration of Christian belief, or refutation of heresy, may all be comprised, as judicious Hooker well noteth, in four words, *αληθως, τελως, αδιαιρετως, ασυγχυτως*, 'truly, perfectly, indivisibly, distinctly; truly God, perfectly man, indivisibly one person, distinctly two natures.' 'Within the compass of which,' said he, 'I may truly affirm, that all heresies which touch the person of Jesus Christ, (whether they have risen in these latter days, or in any age heretofore,) may be with great facility brought to confine themselves.' Book v. sect. 54. The apostle to the Hebrews, writing on the subject of the incarnation, thus expresseth himself: *ου γαρ δεησεν αγγελων επιλαμβανεται, αλλα σπερματος Αβρααμ επιλαμβανεται*, *He taketh not hold of angels, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham*; he took, or assumed, the manhood into God. As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ. The soul is not turned into, nor compounded with, the body; yet they two, though distinct in nature, form one man. The natures are preserved, without confusion; the person is entire, without division. 'Sic factum est Caro, ut maneret verbum; non immutando quod erat, sed assumendo quod non erat; nostra auxit, sua non minuit; nec sacramentum pietatis detrimentum Deitatis.' Concil. Chalced.—Horne's *Sermons*, vol. i. pp. 203-205.

And dwelt among us—Not making us a transient visit for an hour, or a day, or appearing occasionally, as he did formerly, but making his abode with us for a considerable time. The original expression, *εσκηνωσεν εν ημιν*, properly signifies, *he tabernacled among us*, alluding, as some think, to his dwelling, in ancient times, first in the tabernacle, and afterward in the temple, where he manifested his presence and glory. His human nature was the true tabernacle, or temple of his Deity; and therein

15 ¶ " John bare witness of him, A. M. 4030.
and cried, saying, This was he of A. D. 26.
whom I spake, " He that cometh after me is
preferred before me; " for he was before me.

" Verse 32.—" Matt. iii. 11.—" Chap. viii. 58.

resided *the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. Hence he says, *Destroy this temple*, meaning his body, *and I will build it up in three days*. Beza renders the word, *Commoratus est, he sojourned*, or tarried for a while. Doddridge reads, *he pitched his tabernacle*: Wesley, *he tabernacled*. Any of which readings give the primitive signification of the verb *σκηνωω*, from *σκηνη*, a tent or tabernacle. But words often come insensibly to deviate from their first signification, and this has evidently happened to the verb now spoken of, which frequently signifies *to dwell*, or *inhabit*, in the largest sense, without any limitation from the nature or duration of the dwelling. Hence it is applied, (Rev. xii. 12; and, xiii. 6) to the inhabitants of heaven, and is made use of to express God's abode with his people after the resurrection, which is always represented as eternal, Rev. xxi. 3. And the noun *σκηνη*, itself, from which the verb is derived, is used (Luke xvi. 9) for a permanent habitation, and joined with the epithet, *αιωνιος, eternal*. As the term, however, admits of both interpretations, and may be either rendered, *to dwell*, or *to sojourn*, and as our Lord's life on earth, and especially his ministry, was of short duration, he may much more properly be said to have *sojourned*, than to have *dwelt* among us. *And we*—Who are now recording these things, we his disciples, *beheld*—Greck, *εθεασαμεθα*, (the word used 1 John i. 1,) *contemplated his glory*; and that with so strict an attention, that, from our own personal knowledge, 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 course of his life. In all he appeared *full of truth and grace*—He was in himself most benevolent and upright: made those ample discoveries of pardon to sinners, which the Mosaic dispensation could not do; and exhibited the most substantial blessings, whereas that *was but a shadow of good things to come*. Observe, reader, we are all by nature false, depraved, and children of wrath, to whom both truth and grace are unknown; but we are made partakers of them, through him, when we believe in him with our hearts unto righteousness.

Verse 15. *John bare witness of him, saying, This is he, &c.*—"This might probably happen at the time when Jesus made his first appearance among those that came to be baptized by John; when, at his offering to receive his baptism, though John before had been a stranger to him, and knew him not by any personal acquaintance with him, yet, by some powerful impression on his mind, he presently discerned that *this was He* whom he be-

A. M. 4030. 16 And of his ^a fulness have
A. D. 26. all we received, and grace for
grace.

^a Chap. iii. 34.—Exod. xx. 21, &c.

fore had taught the people to expect, and of whose person he had given them so high a character. For it was plainly from his knowledge of him, that John at first would have declined baptizing him as an honour of which he looked upon himself to be unworthy. Nor is it to be doubted, that when first he knew the person, of whose appearance he had raised such expectations by his preaching, he would immediately be ready to acquaint his hearers, that this was he who was intended by him; which they themselves might have been ready to conclude from the uncommon veneration and respect with which the Baptist treated him, who had been always used to treat men with the greatest plainness." *He that cometh after me is preferred before me*—Name-ly, by God. "Erasmus supposes, that John here refers to the honours which he knew had been paid to Jesus in his infancy, by the angel who announced his birth to the shepherds; by the shepherds themselves; by the eastern sages; by Simeon and Anna; honours which could not be paralleled by any thing which had happened to him. But the words seem to have a more extensive meaning, comprehending the superior dignity of Christ's nature, office, commission, and exaltation, as Mediator. See Matt. iii. 11, the passage here referred to. *For he was before me*—It is fit that Jesus should be raised above me, because he is a person superior in nature to me. For though he was born after me, he existed before me." "This must undoubtedly refer to the state of glory in which Christ existed before his incarnation, of which the Baptist speaks so plainly, ch. iii. 31." See Doddridge and Macknight.

Verse 16. *And of his fulness have all we received*—These are not the words of the Baptist, as the expression, *we all*, shows; for those to whom he addressed himself do not appear to have received grace from Christ. But here the evangelist confirms the Baptist's words, spoken in the preceding verse; as if he had said, He is indeed preferred before thee: so we have experienced: for *we all*, that is, I, John, the apostle, and my brethren, the other apostles, and all that truly believe in him, have received from *his fulness*, from the plenitude of truth and grace which are in him, all the blessings we enjoy, whether as men, as Christians, or as apostles. "But what," says Dr. Campbell, "is the import of the clause, *grace for grace*? Is it that we receive grace in return for the grace we give? So says Le Clerc, availing himself of an ambiguity in the Greek word *χαρις*, which (like *grace* in French) signifies not only a favour bestowed, but thanks returned: and maintaining that the sense is, that God gives more *grace* to those who are thankful for that formerly received; a position which, however just, it requires an extraordinary turn of imagination to discover in this passage. Is

17 For ^a the law was given by A. M. 4030.
Moses, but ^b grace and ^c truth came A. D. 26.
by Jesus Christ.

^b Rom. iii. 24.—^c Chap. viii. 32.

it, as many render it, *grace upon grace*, that is, grace added to grace? I should not dislike this interpretation, if this meaning of the preposition, *αυτι*, in Scripture, were well supported. It always there denotes, if I mistake not, *instead of, answering to, or in return for*. Is it a mere pleonasm? Does it mean (as Grotius would have it) *grace gratuitous*? I do not say that such pleonastic expressions are unexampled in Sacred Writ; but I do say, that this sense given to the idiom is unexampled. The word in such cases is *δωρεαν*, as Rom. iii. 24, *Δικαιουμενοι δωρεαν τη αυτη χαριτι*, *justified freely by his grace*. If, instead of giving scope to fancy, we attend to the context, and the construction of the words, we shall not need to wander so far in quest of the meaning. In verse 14 we are informed that *the word became incarnate, and sojourned among us, full of grace and truth*. It is plain that the 15th verse, containing the Baptist's declaration, must be understood as a parenthesis. And it actually is understood so by all expositors; inasmuch as they make *αυτη* [*his*] here refer to *λογος* [*the Word*] in verse 14. The evangelist, resuming the subject which (for the sake of inserting John's testimony) he had interrupted, tells us, that all we his disciples, particularly his apostles, have received of his *fulness*. But of what was he full? It had been said expressly, that he was *full of grace*. When, therefore, the historian brings this additional clause concerning *grace* in explanation of the former, is it not manifestly his intention to inform us, that of every *grace* wherewith he was filled, his disciples received a share? *The Word incarnate*, he says, *resided among us, full of grace and truth; and of his fulness all we have received, even grace for his grace*; that is, of every grace, or celestial gift, conferred above measure upon him, his disciples have received a portion according to their measure. If there should remain a doubt whether this were the sense of the passage, the words immediately following seem calculated to remove it. *For the law was given by Moses, the grace and the truth came by Jesus Christ*. Here the evangelist intimates, that Jesus Christ was as truly the channel of divine grace to his disciples, as Moses had been of the knowledge of God's law to the Israelites." If, however, the reader prefer adhering to the common translation, it seems it may be supported by the frequent use of the preposition *αυτι*. Thus Rom. xii. 17, *Recompense to no man* (*κακον αυτη κακω*) *evil for evil*, or, in return for evil. According to this translation, the meaning of the passage will be, that under the gospel dispensation, all men receive *grace for grace*, that is, privileges and advantages, in proportion to the improvement which they make of those already bestowed on them.

Verse 17. *For the law*—Working wrath, and con-

A. M. 4030. 18 ^d No man hath seen God at
A. D. 26. any time; * the only-begotten Son,
which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath
declared him.

19 ¶ * And this is ' the record of John, when

^d Exod. xxxiii. 20.—* Verse 14.—* Fourth Sunday
in Advent, gospel, verse 19 to verse 29.

taining shadows; was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ—Grace, opposed to the condemnation and wrath by the law, and truth, opposed to the ceremonies thereof. Further, in the gospel we have a discovery of the most important truths to be received by the understanding, as well as of the richest grace to be embraced by the will and affections. *It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation*; that is, it is truth and grace. The offers of grace are sincere, and what we may venture our souls upon. The gospel is grace and truth, with reference to the law; for, 1st, It is the performance of all the Old Testament promises. 2d, It is the substance of all the Old Testament types and shadows. There was a measure of grace, both in the ordinances that were instituted for Israel, and the providences that were concerning Israel; but they were only shadows of good things to come, even of that grace which is brought to us by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He is the true paschal lamb, the true scape-goat, the true manna. They had grace in the sign and picture, we have it in the thing signified and the reality. Because, in this passage, the apostle, speaking of the law, says, *εδωθη*, it was given by Moses; but that grace and truth, *εγενετο*, was, or came by Jesus Christ, Erasmus supposes, that the expressions were meant to imply, that whereas Moses was only the messenger of the law, Christ was the original of the grace and truth he brought into the world by the gospel. But it must be observed, that the preposition *δια*, through, is here used of Christ as well as of Moses, so that, in this passage, both of them seem to be represented as messengers, though of very different dispensations, and the former of infinitely greater dignity than the latter.

Verse 18. *No man hath seen God at any time*—Nor, indeed, can see him as he is, an incorporeal, and, therefore, an invisible Being: but *the only-begotten Son, &c.*—John, having spoken of the incarnation, now calls Christ by this name, and no more terms him *the Word*, in all his book; *who is in the bosom of the Father*—And ever favoured with the most endearing and intimate converse with him. The expression denotes the highest unity, and the most perfect knowledge. *He hath declared him*—Hath revealed him in a much clearer and fuller manner than he was made known before, and that by such discoveries of his nature, attributes, and will, as have the most powerful tendency to render us holy and happy. The following particulars are evidently implied in this passage: 1st, That, as the nature of God is spiritual, he is invisible to our bodily eyes. He is a Being whose essence no man hath

the Jews sent priests and Levites A. M. 4034.
from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art A. D. 30.
thou?

20 And * he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

^d Chapter v. 33.—^e Luke iii. 15; Chapter iii. 28;
Acts xiii. 25.

seen or can see, (1 Tim. i. 17, and vi. 16,) though Moses and others frequently heard his voice, and saw the bright cloud and external glory, that was a symbol of his presence. 2d, That the revelation, which God made of himself under the Old Testament dispensation, was very inferior to that which he has made by Christ; and what was seen and known of him before Christ's incarnation was little, in comparison with what may now be seen and known; life and immortality being now brought to light in a far higher degree than they were then. And, 3d, That neither Moses, nor any of the Old Testament prophets, were so well qualified to make God and his will known to mankind, as our Lord Jesus Christ was. They never saw, nor perfectly knew the Divine Being, and his eternal counsels, and therefore could not make a full discovery thereof to men. The only person who ever enjoyed this privilege was the only-begotten Son of God, *the Word*, which was in the beginning with him, or, as it is here expressed, was, and is, *in the bosom of the Father*: that is, always was, and is the object of his tenderest, yea, of his infinite affection, complacency, and delight, and the intimate partner of his counsels. And this circumstance recommends Christ's holy religion to us unspeakably before any others; that it was founded by one that had seen God, or that had clear and perfect knowledge of him, and of his mind and will, which no other person ever had, or could have.

Verses 19-23. *And this is the record of John*—This is the testimony which he bare publicly to Jesus; *when the Jews*—Namely, the senate, or great council of the nation; *sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem*—Persons of the first consideration for learning and office; *to ask him, Who art thou*—What character dost thou assume to thyself? It is probable, that the reason why the sanhedrim sent these persons, was their having been informed that the Baptist's extraordinary sanctity, zeal, and powerful preaching, together with the solemnity of his baptizing, had made such an impression on the people, that they were beginning to think he might be the Messiah. These rulers therefore judged it proper to send persons thus to examine him, because it belonged to them to take cognizance of all matters relating to religion, and especially to judge who were true prophets. And as they were evidently jealous of his increasing popularity, they probably hoped to find in his answers to their questions some pretence for taking measures to silence him, especially as they understood his ministry neither agreed with the Mosaic dispensation which they had been long under, nor with the notions they had formed of the Mes-

A. M. 4034. 21 And they asked him, What then?
A. D. 30. Art thou ^b Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou ⁱ that ² prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 ^b He said, I am the voice of one crying in

^b Mal. iv. 5; Matt. xvii. 10.—¹ Deut. xviii. 15, 18.—² Or, a prophet.

siah's kingdom. *And he confessed, and denied not, &c.*—John, according to the natural plainness of his temper, presently replied to their inquiry; *I am not the Christ*—As if he had said, I know that the people begin to look on me as their long-expected deliverer, but I tell you plainly, they are mistaken: nor do I in the least pretend to arrogate to myself the honours which are due to none but him. *And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias*—Art thou the Prophet Elijah, who, as the Scriptures tell us, is to arise from the dead, and to appear before the coming of the Messiah? *And he saith, I am not*—There was here an apparent contradiction to the words of our Lord concerning John, (Matt. xi. 14,) *This is Elias which was to come.* But Jesus, in these words, evidently refers to the prophecy of Malachi, chap. iv. 5; his purpose being to inform his disciples that John was Elijah in the sense of that prophet, and that his prediction was accomplished in the Baptist, inasmuch as he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. But when the question was here proposed to John, the laws of truth required that he should answer it as he did, namely, according to the sense wherein the words were used by the proposers, who expected that the very Prophet Elijah would come in person before the Messiah should appear: a notion which they entertained very early, as is evident from the Septuagint translation of the passage just referred to in Malachi, *ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς ἡμῶν Ἠλίαν τὸν Θεοδιδόντα*, literally, *Behold, I send you Elias the Tishbite before the day of the Lord come.* Therefore the Baptist, on being asked if he was Elias, could not answer otherwise than in the negative, without rendering himself liable to the charge of equivocating. For though the name of Elias did truly belong to the forerunner of the Messiah, Malachi having called him so, John was not the person whom the people expected, and the priests meant, when they asked him, *Art thou Elias?* He was not that individual prophet returned from heaven to sojourn again upon the earth. It is justly observed by Grotius here, that the persons who made this inquiry show that they were ignorant of the parentage of John the Baptist, or that they were in doubt concerning it; *Art thou that prophet*—Whom Moses has assured us God will raise up, and of whom we are daily in expectation? (John vi. 14:) or their meaning may have been, Art thou Jeremiah, or any other of the old prophets raised from the dead? for it appears from Matt. xvi. 14, that they thought the

the wilderness, Make straight the A. M. 4034.
way of the Lord, as ¹ said the Pro- A. D. 30.
phet Esaias.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

^b Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 3; Luke iii. 4; Chap. iii. 28.
¹ Isa. xl. 3.

Messiah would be preceded by some such extraordinary personage. *And he answered, No*—He was a prophet, but not one of the old prophets raised from the dead, nor had he his revelations by dreams and visions, as the Old Testament prophets had theirs; his commission and work were of another nature, and belonged to another dispensation. *Then said they, Who art thou? that we may give an answer, &c.*—We are sent by the supreme council, who have a right to judge persons pretending a commission from God, as thou seemest to do by baptizing and gathering disciples. It becomes thee, therefore, to give an account of thyself to us, that we may lay it before them who have sent us. *And he said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness*—John, instead of giving a description of his own character and office, refers those who questioned him to the words of the Prophet Isaiah, in which they would find it; and what he here says of himself, is to be understood no otherwise than we understand what Matthew says of him, (chap. iii. 3,) where see the note. He says, in effect, *I am that forerunner of Christ of whom Isaiah speaks, chap. xl. 3.* Archbishop Fenelon beautifully illustrates the humility of this reply: as if this illustrious prophet had said, "Far from being the Messiah, or Elias, or one of the old prophets, I am nothing but a voice; a sound, that as soon as it has expressed the thought, of which it is the sign, dies into air, and is known no more." Dr. Campbell renders the clause, *I am he whose voice proclaimeth in the wilderness, &c.*; observing that, in such declarations, the general purport is alone regarded by the speaker, and that the words, therefore, ought not to be interpreted too grammatically; interpretations to be formed from the manifest scope, and not from the syntactic structure of sentences, being not unfrequent in Scripture. Thus, Rev. i. 12, *Ἐπερρεψα βλέπειν τὴν φωνήν*, literally, *I turned to see the voice.*

Verses 24–28. *They which were sent were of the Pharisees*—Who were peculiarly tenacious of old customs, and jealous of any innovations, (except those brought in by their own scribes,) unless the innovator had unquestionable proofs of divine authority. Add to this, the decisions of the Pharisees were held by the common people as infallible. And, as their sect had declared that only proselytes were to be baptized, on this account also they found fault with John for baptizing; *saying, Why baptizest thou then*—Without any commission from the san-

A. M. 4034. 26 John answered them, saying, ^a I
A. D. 30. baptize with water: ^a but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not:

27 ^o He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done ^p in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming

^a Matt. iii. 11.—^o Mal. iii. 1.—^o Verses 15, 30; Acts xix. 4.—^p Judg. vii. 24; Chap. x. 40.—^a Exod. xii. 3; Isa. liii. 7; Verse 36; Acts viii. 32; 1 Pet. i. 19; Rev. v. 6, &c.—^r Isa. liii. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 3; Gal. i. 4; Heb. i. 3; ii. 17; ix. 28;

hedrim; and not only heathen, (who were always baptized before they were admitted to circumcision,) but Jews also? *if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, &c.*—The Jews, it seems, had conceived an opinion that they were all to be baptized when the Messiah came, either by himself, or by some of his retinue, because it was said, (Zech. xiii. 1,) *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, &c., for sin and for uncleanness.* They thought that John's altering, in this manner, their institutions, was an exercise of authority which, by his own confession, did not belong to him. *John answered, I baptize you with water*—To prepare you for the Messiah; I call you to repentance and amendment of life, and admit the penitent to my baptism, to represent to you that reformation of conduct and purity of heart which are requisite, in order to the reception of him. Hereby also John showed, that Jews as well as Gentiles must be proselytes to Christ; and that the former, as well as the latter, stood in need of being washed from their sins. I baptize you: but observe, it is with water only, which cannot cleanse you from your sins, as the washing predicted by Zechariah will do. *But there standeth one among you, &c.*—That more efficacious baptism will be dispensed unto you by the Messiah, who is at present among you, though you do not know him, because he has not manifested himself. *He coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes, &c.*—Besides, in dignity the Messiah is infinitely my superior, for I am not worthy to be his servant, or to do him the meanest offices. *These things were done in Bethabara, where John was baptizing*—Consequently, in the presence of a great multitude of people. The word, *Bethabara*, signifies, *the house of passage.* It lay near that part of the river which was miraculously dried up, that the Israelites, under the command of Joshua, might pass over into Canaan. See Joshua iii. 6, and Judges xii. 6.

Verse 29. *The next day*—Namely, the day after John had returned the answer mentioned verses 26, 27, to the priests and Levites sent to inquire into his character and mission; *John seeth Jesus coming unto him*—Having now returned from the desert, in which he had been tempted; *and saith, Behold the Lamb of God*—That innocent and holy person, who is to be offered up a sacrifice for the

unto him, and saith, Behold ^a the A. M. 4034
Lamb of God, ^r which ³ taketh away A. D. 30.
the sin of the world!

30 ^o This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, ^t therefore am I come baptizing with water.

1 Pet. ii. 24; iii. 18; 1 John ii. 2; iii. 5; iv. 10; Rev. i. 5. ^o Or, *beareth.*—Verses 15, 27.—^a Mal. iii. 1; Matt. iii. 6; Luke i. 17, 76, 77; iii. 3, 4.

sins of mankind; prophesied of by Isaiah, (chap. liii. 7,) and typified by the paschal lamb, and by the daily sacrifice; *which taketh away the sin of the world*—Which so atones for and expiates the guilt of mankind, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles, that through his mediation, whosoever, being truly penitent, and bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance, believeth in him, may receive remission of sins. Grotius, indeed, understands this of Christ's reforming men's lives; but it plainly refers to his being slain as a piacular victim, (1 Pet. i. 19,) to redeem us to God by his blood, (Rev. v. 9,) or to procure for us that redemption which ensures to the penitent, that believe in him with a true and living faith, remission of sins, (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14,) and an exemption from the punishment deserved thereby. To understand this doctrine more fully, the reader must observe that, when a sacrifice was to be offered for sin, he that brought it laid his hand upon the head of the victim, according to the command of God, Lev. i. 4; iii. 2; iv. 4; (where see the notes;) and by that rite was supposed to transfer his sins upon the victim, which is said *to take them upon itself, and to carry them away.* Accordingly, in the daily sacrifice of the lamb, the stationary men, says Dr. Lightfoot, who were the representatives of the people, laid their hands upon the lambs thus offered for them; and these two lambs offered for the daily sacrifice were bought with that half shekel which all the Jews yearly paid, *εις λυτρον της ψυχης αυτων, εξιλασσαι περι των ψυχων αυτων, as the price of redemption of their souls, to make atonement for them,* Exodus xii. 3, 14, 16. This lamb was therefore offered to take away the guilt of their sin, as this phrase signifies when it relates to sacrifices. Since, therefore, the Baptist had said, he baptized them *for the remission of their sins*, he here shows them by what means that remission was to be obtained. See Whitby.

Verses 30-34. *This is he, &c.*—I now point out to you the very person of whom I formerly said, *After me cometh a man which is preferred before me*—Being incomparably greater and more excellent than I; *for he was*—That is, he existed; *before me*—Dr. Hammond abundantly vindicates this interpretation. Had *πρωτος*, rendered *before*, signified *chief* here, as in some other places, *ετι, is, not ην,*

A. M. 4034. 32 ^a And John bare record, saying,
A. D. 30. I saw the Spirit descending from
heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent
me to baptize with water, the same said unto
me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit de-
scending and remaining on him, ^x the same is
he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw and bare record, that this is
the Son of God.

35 ¶ Again the next day after, John stood,
and two of his disciples;

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked,
he saith, ^y Behold the Lamb of God!

^a Matt. iii. 16; Mark i. 10; Luke iii. 22; Chap. v. 32.
^x Matt. iii. 11; Acts i. 5; ii. 4; x. 44; xix. 6.

was, would have been joined with it, and John would have said he *is*, and not he *was*, my chief, which would have been a very flat tautology instead of a reason; whereas Christ's having existed before John, though he was born after him, was a most convincing proof that he was a very extraordinary person, and was the strongest reason that could well have been assigned, to show that he was worthy of their superior regard. *And I knew him not*—When I testified concerning the Messiah that he was soon to appear, and was a much greater person than I was, I did not know that this was he: I only knew in the general, that my mission and baptism were designed by God as the means of making the Messiah known to the Israelites. See the note on Matt. iii. 14. The Baptist made this declaration, lest the surrounding multitude should have imagined that Jesus assumed, and that he gave him, the title of Messiah, by private concert between themselves. But how surprising is this that John here asserts, considering how nearly they were related, and how remarkable the conception and birth of them both had been. But through the peculiar providence of God, it was ordered that our Saviour should live from his infancy to his baptism at Nazareth, while John lived all that time the life of a hermit, in the deserts of Judea, ninety or more miles from Nazareth. Hereby that acquaintance was prevented which might have made John's testimony of Christ suspected. *And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit*—From the time that the Baptist had the Messiah discovered to him by supernatural revelation, and the appearance of the sign which God had told him of, he openly pointed him out to the Jews, declaring, at the same time, the ground on which he proceeded in this matter, namely, the descent of the Spirit, which was the sign mentioned by God himself.

Verses 35-39. *The next day, John stood, and two of his disciples*—John happening the next day to be with two of his disciples on the banks of Jordan, he saw Jesus passing by a second time, and repeated what he had said to the multitude the day

37 And the two disciples heard ^{A. M. 4034.}
him speak, and they followed Jesus. ^{A. D. 30.}

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them follow-
ing, and saith unto them, What seek ye?
They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say,
being interpreted, Master,) where ^d dwellest
thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They
came and saw where he dwelt, and abode
with him that day: for it was ^e about the tenth
hour.

40 One of the two which heard John *speak*,
and followed him, was ^f Andrew, Simon Pe-
ter's brother.

^y Verse 29.—^d Or, *abidest*.—^e That was two hours
before night.—^f Matt. iv. 18.

before. Probably he pointed out Jesus to these two disciples because they had been absent when the Spirit descended upon him, and the voice from heaven declared him to be the Son of God. But having now had an account of these things from their master, they desired to become acquainted with Jesus, and for that purpose followed him. *Then Jesus turned, &c.*—Jesus, knowing their intentions, turned about; and saith, *What seek ye?*—Thus he spake, not to discountenance and turn them back, but to encourage and invite them to a free converse with him. *They said unto him*—With the greatest reverence and respect; *Rabbi*—Which, being interpreted from the Syriac, the language then spoken by the Jews, signifies, *Master*; *where dwellest thou*—*Πο νεεις, where dost thou lodge?* For Jesus had no fixed abode at Jordan, being come thither only to be baptized. By making this reply, John's disciples intimated that they had a great inclination to converse with Jesus. He gave them, therefore, an invitation to his lodging, which they readily accepted; *and abode with him that day*—The remainder of it; *for it was about the tenth hour*—Or, four in the afternoon; so that they had an opportunity of spending the rest of the evening with him, doubtless, much to their satisfaction and delight.

Verses 40-42. *One of the two who heard John speak*—In the manner above related; *was Andrew*—And probably this evangelist, John, was the other, it being his custom to conceal his own name in his writings. *He*—Andrew; *first findeth his own brother Simon*—Simon may perhaps be here called *Andrew's own brother*, to distinguish him from some other person that belonged to the family, who possibly might be his brother-in-law, or related to him only in half-blood. Peter was so remarkable a person, that it was proper to mention who was the first means of bringing him acquainted with Christ; and if John was the other disciple that is here referred to, he might intend this as an humble intimation that Andrew's zeal was, in this respect, greater than his own. We see here, that Peter was not the first of Christ's disciples, but that another was the means

A. M. 4034. 41 He first findeth his own brother
A. D. 30. Simon, and saith unto him, We have
found the Messias; which is, being interpreted,
the Christ.

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when
Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon
the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas;
which is, by interpretation, a stone.

43 ¶ The day following Jesus would go

* Or, the anointed.—Matthew xvi. 18.—⁷ Or, Peter.
b Chap. xii. 21.—^c Chap. xxi. 2.—^d Gen. iii. 15; xlix. 10;
Deut. xviii. 18; Luke xxiv. 27.

of bringing him to an acquaintance with him. In that respect, therefore, the Papists have no room for glorying. And saith unto him, We have found the Messias—It seems the Baptist's testimony, joined with the proofs offered by Christ himself, in the long conversation which the two disciples had with him, fully convinced Andrew. And he brought him to Jesus—That by conversing with him he might be satisfied of the truth of what he had told him. And when Jesus beheld him—Εμβλεψας αυτω, looking steadfastly upon him, as if he had read in his countenance the traces of his character, and of his future service in the church; he said, Thou art Simon—Though Jesus had never seen Simon before, and no one had told him his name or his parentage, immediately on his coming in Jesus saluted him by his own and his father's name, which could not but greatly strike Peter. He added, Thou shalt be called Cephas, which—Says the evangelist, (for they are his, and not Christ's words,) is by interpretation, a stone—Or rock, that is, it signifies the same in the Syriac which the word Peter does in Greek. It must be observed, to account for the insertion of this explanatory clause, that John "wrote his gospel in Greek, and in a Grecian city of Asia Minor; and therefore was the more careful to translate into Greek the Hebrew, Chaldee, or Syriac names, given for a special purpose, whereof they were expressive. And there was the greater reason for doing so in the two cases occurring in this and the preceding verse, as the Greek names were become familiar to the Asiatic converts, who were unacquainted with the oriental names. The sacred writer had a two-fold view in it: 1st, To explain the import of the name; 2d, To prevent his readers from mistaking the persons spoken of. They all knew who, as well as what, was meant by Χριστος, Christ, but not by the Hebrew word, Messias. In like manner, they knew who was called Peter, but might very readily have mistaken Cephas for some other person."—Campbell.

Verses 43, 44. The day following—The next to that last mentioned, on which he met with Peter; Jesus would go forth into Galilee—And there enter on his public ministry; and findeth Philip—Whom he intended to choose to be one of his apostles; and saith to him, Follow me—Which he accordingly did, being secretly influenced by Christ's grace. When

forth into Galilee, and findeth Phi- A. M. 4034.
lip, and saith unto him, Follow me. A. D. 30.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city
of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto
him, We have found him of whom Moses in
the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of
Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there

* Isa. iv. 2; vii. 14; ix. 6; liii. 2; Mic. v. 2; Zech. vi. 12;
ix. 9; Luke xxiv. 27.—^f Matt. ii. 23; Luke ii. 4.—^g Chap.
vii. 41, 42, 52.

we consider how suddenly some of Christ's disciples left their stated employments to follow him, it seems reasonable to allow some singular kind of impression on their minds, as there was in the calling of Elisha, (1 Kings xix. 19–21,) which, though for the present it superseded the necessity of arguments, yet it did not exclude their attending to that afterward, which might be necessary to defend their conduct to others. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew—“As it appears from the subsequent part of the history, Philip was already acquainted with our Lord's character, and believed on him, this observation is made by the evangelist, to show by what means he was brought to Jesus; his townsmen, Andrew and Peter, had done him this favour.”

Verses 45, 46. Philip findeth Nathanael—Nathanael is supposed by many to have been the person, who, in the catalogue of the apostles, is called Bartholomew, that is, as the word signifies, the son of Tholomew, for Matthew joins Bartholomew with Philip, chap. x. 3; and John places Nathanael in the midst of the apostles, immediately after Thomas, (chap. xxi. 2,) just as Bartholomew is placed, Acts i. 13. And saith, We have found him of whom Moses did write—“It seems Peter and Andrew, in their conversation with Philip, had induced him to believe on Jesus, by showing him how the predictions of the law and the prophets were fulfilled in him, a method which, perhaps, Jesus himself had taken to confirm Peter and Andrew, Philip's instructors, in the good opinion they had conceived of him, by means of the testimony which their master, John the Baptist, had given concerning him.” Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?—A proverb, by which the rest of the Israelites ridiculed the Nazarenes. Nathanael, on this occasion, applied it the rather, because the Messiah's nativity had been determined by the Prophet Micah to Bethlehem. As if he had said, Have we ground from Scripture to expect the Messiah, or any eminent prophet, from Nazareth? As Nathanael was a native of Galilee, it appears from hence that the Galileans themselves had but an ill opinion of Nazareth, as worse than the rest of that country; and, indeed, by the figure its inhabitants make in the evangelists, they seem to have deserved it. Philip saith, Come and see—Come talk with him thyself, and thou wilt soon be convinced that he is the Messiah. How cautiously should we guard against

A. M. 4037. any good thing come out of Nazareth?
A. D. 33. Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold ^h an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him,

^h Psa. xxxii. 2; lxxiii. 1; Chap. viii. 39; Rom. ii. 28, 29; ix. 6. ¹ Matt. xiv. 33.—^k Matt. xxi. 5; xxvii. 11, 12; Chap. xxiii. 37;

popular prejudices! When these had once possessed so honest a heart as even 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.

Verses 47-51. *Jesus saw Nathanael coming*—“Nathanael, being a man of a candid disposition, resolved to go and converse with Jesus, that he might judge with the more certainty concerning his pretensions. He was coming therefore with Philip on this errand, when Jesus, who knew his thoughts, honoured him with the amiable character of a *true Israelite, in whom there was no guile*—A plain, upright, honest man, one free from hypocrisy, and open to conviction; one who not only derived his pedigree from Abraham, but who inherited his virtues.”—Mac-knight. *Nathanael saith, Whence knowest thou me*—I am a perfect stranger to thee; how then canst thou know my character? *Jesus answered*—I am not so entire a stranger to thy character as thou art ready to suppose; nor do I take it from uncertain report. *Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast alone under the fig-tree, I saw thee*—As if he had said, I was present in spirit to observe what passed in that secret retirement. I know how well thou deservest the testimony which I have now borne to thine integrity. *Nathanael* was so struck with this express reference to what he was certain none could know but God and his own conscience, that all his prejudices were at once removed; and he immediately replied, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, &c.*—So he acknowledges more than he had heard from Philip: he makes a confession both of the person and office of Christ. Happy they that are thus ready to believe, swift to receive the truth and grace of God! Just thus the woman of Samaria argued, (chap. iv. 29.) *Come see a man who told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*—Which plainly intimates, that they supposed the Messiah would be endowed with the most perfect knowledge, and have the gift of prophecy in the highest degree. *Because I said, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou*—Dost thou believe me to be the Messiah, because of the supernatural knowledge of thy character and secret actions which I have now discovered?

Rabbi, ¹ thou art the son of God; A. M. 4034. thou art ^h the King of Israel. A. D. 30.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ¹ Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

xix. 3.—¹ Gen. xxviii. 12; Matt. iv. 11; Luke ii. 9, 13; xxii. 43; xxiv. 4; Acts i. 10.

Thou shalt see greater things than these—Greater instances of my power and knowledge, consequently more remarkable proofs of my mission. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*—“There is no doubt that these words are to be taken for a solemn affirmation, in which it was observable that John has constantly repeated the *amen, verily*, while it is only mentioned once by the other evangelists; and this we may suppose him to have done, either to excite the greater attention, or in a more emphatical and stronger manner to assert the truth, not only of the thing affirmed, but of the person who affirms it. For as *amen* in the Hebrew signifies *truth*, (Isa. lxxv. 16,) so Christ, as being the true and faithful witness, is called *the Amen*, Rev. iii. 14. This repeated asseveration, therefore, may be considered as an intimation to us, not only that the saying, unto which it is prefixed is true, but that we must regard it as proceeding from the true and faithful witness.”—Dod-dridge. *Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending, &c.*—Ye shall see the whole frame of nature subject to my commands, and such a surprising train of miracles wrought by me, in the whole course of my succeeding ministry, with such remarkable interpositions of Providence in my behalf, as will not only leave you no room to doubt of my mission from God, but will make it appear as if heaven was opened, and all the angels of God were continually, (as they appeared in a vision to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 12,) ascending and descending to wait upon *the Son of man*, and to receive and execute his orders. Or, if we understand the prediction more literally, we may, with Dr. Hammond, refer it to Christ's ascension, when the heaven was opened to receive him, and the angels came down from thence to wait on him, and ascended after him. The appearance of an angel in his agony might also be referred to, and of those who waited on him at his resurrection, and so he may be considered as referring his disciples to the greatest of his miracles, his resurrection from the dead, by which the truth of his mission was put beyond all doubt. And even his second and glorious coming may be included, or, as some think, may be principally intended; as if he had said, “All 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.”

CHAPTER II.

Here, (1,) Christ attends a marriage-feast in Cana of Galilee, and miraculously changes water into wine, 1-11. (2,) After a short stay at Capernaum, he attends the passover at Jerusalem, and drives the traders out of the temple, 12-17. (3,) He vindicates his conduct, and foretels his death and resurrection, 18-22. (4,) He avoids trusting himself with pretended believers, 23-25.

A. M. 4034. **AND*** the third day there was a
A. D. 30. marriage in *Cana of Galilee;
and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 And both Jesus was called, and A. M. 4034.
his disciples, to the marriage. A. D. 30.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother

* Second Sunday, Epiphany, gospel, verse 1 to verse 12.

* Josh. xix. 28.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. *And the third day*—Namely, after Christ's coming into Galilee, and discoursing there with Nathanael, as related above; *there was a marriage in Cana*—A town which originally belonged to the tribe of Asher, Josh. xix. 28. There were two other towns of the same name, one in the tribe of Ephraim, the other in Cælo-Syria; *and the mother of Jesus was there*—It being probably a marriage of a near relation, or an intimate friend of hers. This may be inferred from Mary's being not only present at the feast, but concerned about supplying the company with wine. As Mary here is spoken of alone, it may be reasonable to conclude that Joseph was now dead, and that he did not live to the time when Jesus entered on his public ministry, especially as he is nowhere mentioned in the gospel history afterward. *And both Jesus was called*—That is, was invited to the marriage; *and his disciples*—Namely, the two that had followed him from the banks of Jordan, with Peter, Philip, and Nathanael. And Jesus, not affecting the austerities which became the character and ministry of John the Baptist, freely accepted of the invitation. For he did not come to take away human society, but to sanctify it.

Verses 3, 4. *And when they wanted wine*—It is probable that, in consequence of its being known that Jesus would be present at this feast, a greater resort of company came than was expected, and that this occasioned a failure of the wine. *The mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine*—Some infer from this application which she made to Jesus, that she had either seen some of his miracles in private, or had received from him some hint of his intentions of working one now. For, without supposing the one or the other of these, one can hardly imagine why she should thus apply to him on this occasion: for, doubtless, she knew, both that he had not money to buy a quantity of wine, and that if he had, it would not have been proper for him to have done it, as it must have been interpreted as an affront to the bridegroom. But the supply that she expected from him was undoubtedly by his working of a miracle; and it is plain, from her direction to the servants afterward, that, notwithstanding the rebuke she justly met with, yet she had still a view to this. *Jesus saith unto her, Woman*—Using a plainness of language, suited to the simplicity of those ages and countries. For that this compellation was not in those days accounted disrespectful, has

been fully evinced by critics from the best authorities. We find in this gospel, (chap. xix. 26,) our Lord addressing his mother by this title, on a very moving occasion, on which he showed her the most tender affection and regard. *What have I to do with thee?*—Or rather, *What hast thou to do with me?* namely, to direct me when and how my miracles are to be wrought. The original expression, *τι εμοι και σοι*, is rendered by some, *What is this to me and thee?* namely, that they want wine: What concern is it of ours? it does not belong to us to provide necessaries for this feast. But Jesus, says Dr. Doddridge, "was of so benevolent a temper, and Mary seems to have been so far concerned as a relation, that it does not appear this would have been a proper reply. The words seem rather to be intended as a rebuke to Mary, and it was surely expedient she should know that Jesus was not, upon such occasions, to be directed by her. And nothing is more evident than that the phrase, in other places, has the meaning that our version gives it." Thus also Dr. Campbell: "It was, no doubt, our Lord's intention in these words gently to suggest, that in what concerned his office, earthly parents had no authority over him. In other things he had been subject to them." To translate the clause, *What is it to me and thee?* "at first sight appears preferable to other versions, because the most literal. But, as Bishop Pearce well observes, had that been the evangelist's meaning, he would have written, *τι προς εμε και σε*; as in chap. xxi. 23, *τι προς σε*, *what is that to thee?* and Matt. xxvii. 4, *τι προς ημας*, *what is that to us?*" He observes, further, that the common version suits the phrase in every place where it occurs; and that the other conveys a worse sense, a sense not suitable to the spirit of our Lord's instructions, as "not favouring that tender sympathy, which his religion so warmly recommends, whereby the interests and the concerns of others, their joys and their sorrows, are made our own." *Mine hour is not yet come*—"The season of my public ministry in this country is not yet come. Before I work miracles in Galilee, I must go into Judea and preach, where the Baptist, my forerunner, has been preparing my way." So Mac-knight. Or, he may speak of the time when he intended to perform the miracle desired by his mother; for which the proper moment, though very near, was not yet quite come. Some translate the clause interrogatively, *Is not mine hour come?* the season of my public ministry, at which period thy authority over me ends? Upon the whole, our Lord's answer

A. M. 4034. of Jesus saith unto him, They have
A. D. 30. no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her, ^b Woman, ^c what have I to do with thee? ^d mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

6 And there were set there six water-pots of stone, ^e after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots

^b Chap. xix. 26.—^c 2 Sam. xvi. 10; xix. 22.—^d Chap. vii. 6.

to his mother was not in the least disrespectful, nor did she consider it as implying a denial of her request, as is evident from the temper with which she received it, and from her desiring the servants (verse 5) to wait on him, and to execute his orders punctually. Many writers have interpreted this rebuke of our Lord as being given in his prophetic spirit, as a standing testimony against that idolatry which he foresaw after ages would superstitiously bestow upon his mother, even to the robbing him of the right and honour of his alone mediatorship and intercession.

Verse 5. *His mother*—Either gathering from his answer, or from something he said to her which the evangelists have not recorded, that he would perform something extraordinary; *saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it*—Obey his orders immediately and exactly, for he may have reasons for them beyond what you imagine. Hereby she declares her expectation of his performing some mighty work, in answer to what she had suggested to him; and prescribes a rule, which it would be well if every servant of Christ would invariably observe, *Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it*, not questioning the reasonableness of the command, or its fitness to accomplish the end proposed, but implicitly obeying whatever is manifestly a precept of Christ.

Verse 6. *There were six water-pots of stone*—Which were placed there, some of them for the cleansing of cups and tables, &c., and others for such purifications as required the immersion of the whole body; *after the manner of the purifying of the Jews*—Who were accustomed to purify themselves by frequent washings, particularly before eating; *containing two or three firkins apiece*—A large quantity, but exactly how much, is not now easy to be ascertained. The original word, *μετρας*, here used, is translated by Dr. Campbell *baths*, because the Hebrew measure, *bath*, is thus rendered in the Septuagint, 2 Chron. iv. 5. He acknowledges, however, that this is not a decisive proof that it ought to be so rendered: but says, "I have not found any thing better in support of a different opinion. Some think, that as *μετρητης* was also the name of an Attic measure, the evangelist (most of whose readers

with water. And they filled them A. M. 4034.
A. D. 30. up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted ^f the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when

^e Mark vii. 3.—^f Chap. iv. 46.

were probably Greeks) must have referred to it, as best known in that country. There are other suppositions made, but hardly any thing more than conjecture has been advanced in favour of any of them. It ought not to be dissembled, that in most of the explanations which have been given of the passage, the quantity of liquor appears so great as to reflect an improbability on the interpretation." The doctor observes, however, that the English translation is more liable to this objection than his version, the *firkin* containing nine gallons, whereas the bath is commonly rated at seven and a half, and, according to some, but four and a half; in which case the amount of the whole is but half of what the English translation makes it. The quantity thus reduced, he thinks, will not be thought so enormous, considering 1st, The length of time, commonly a week, spent in feasting on such occasions, and the great concourse of people which they were wont to assemble. To this may be added, that whatever the quantity of water contained in these water-pots might be, there is no proof that our Lord turned the whole of it into wine, or that he turned into wine any of it, any otherwise than as it was drawn out.

Verses 7-10. *Jesus saith unto them*—After some convenient pause, that the failing of the wine might be the more observed; *Fill the water-pots with water*—Choosing, for wise reasons, to make use of these rather than the vessels in which the wine had before been contained: one of which reasons might be to prevent any suspicion that the tincture or taste of the water was in any degree derived from any remainder of wine in the vessels. *Draw out now, and bear unto the governor*—"Among the Greeks, Romans, and Jews, it was usual, at great entertainments, especially marriage-feasts, to appoint a master of ceremonies, who not only gave directions concerning the form and method of the entertainment, but likewise prescribed the laws of drinking. Jesus, therefore, ordered the wine which he had formed to be carried to the governor of the feast, that by his judgment passed upon it, in the hearing of all the guests, it might be known to be genuine wine of the best kind." *When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, &c.*—The governor of the feast, on tasting the wine, being highly pleased

A. M. 4034. men have well drunk, then that
A. D. 30. which is worse: but thou hast kept
the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus
in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth
his glory; and his disciples believed on
him.

¶ Chap. i. 14.—Matt. xii. 46.—Exod. xii. 14; Deut. xvi.
1, 16; Verse 23; Chap. v. 1; vi. 4; xi. 55.

with its flavour and richness, but not knowing how
it had been procured, addressed himself to the bride-
groom, in the hearing of all the guests, and, com-
mending the wine, as far preferable to what they
had been drinking, praised him for the elegance of
his taste, and for his civility, in giving the company
better wine during the progress of the entertainment
than at the beginning of it, which showed that he
did not grudge the quantity they might use. This
declaration of the governor, no doubt, surprised the
bridegroom, who knew nothing of the matter, and
occasioned an inquiry to be made about it. It is
reasonable, therefore, to suppose, that the servants
were publicly examined, and the company received
an account of the miracle from them. For it is ex-
pressly said, that by it Jesus *manifested his glory*,
that is, demonstrated his power and character, to
the conviction of the disciples, and of all the guests.
The expression in the tenth verse, *οταν μεθυσθωσι*,
here rendered, *when men have well drunk*, though
it may sometimes signify to drink to excess, yet
frequently in Scripture, and sometimes in other
writings, denotes no more than to drink sufficiently,
or to satisfaction: and "it would be very unjust and
absurd to suppose it implies here, that these guests
had already transgressed the rules of temperance.
None can seriously imagine the evangelist to be so
destitute of common sense as to represent Christ as
displaying his glory by miraculously furnishing the
company with wine to prolong a drunken revel. It
is much more reasonable to conclude, that it signifies
here, (as it does Gen. xliii. 34; Cant. v. 1; Hag. i. 6,
in the Septuagint,) only to drink so freely as inno-
cently to exhilarate the spirit. And even this, per-
haps, might only be the case with some of them, and
particularly not of those who, drawn by a desire to
converse with Jesus, might be but lately come in."
—Doddridge.

Verse 11. *This beginning of miracles did Jesus, &c.*—Grotius supposes the meaning to be, that this
was the first miracle wrought at Cana, another being
afterward mentioned, John iv. 46. But it is plain
there must have been a long series of miracles
wrought here to justify such a manner of speaking,
which doth not at all appear to have been the case.
The sense of the expression seems much rather to
be, that this was the first of Christ's public miracles;
for probably the necessities of the family might
sometimes have engaged him to have done something
miraculous in private for its relief. *And manifested
forth his glory*—And that in such an illustrious

12 ¶ After this he went down to A. M. 4034.
Capernaum, he, and his mother, and A. D. 30.
his brethren, and his disciples; and they con-
tinued there not many days.

13 ¶ And the Jews' passover was at hand,
and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

14 And found in the temple those that sold

¶ Matt. xxi. 12; Mark xi. 15; Luke xix. 45.

manner, that his fame was spread over all the neigh-
bouring country; and his disciples believed on him
—Namely, more steadfastly than before. Being the
first miracle they had ever seen Jesus perform, it
tended not a little to the confirmation of their faith.

Verses 12, 13. *After this he went down to Capernaum*—A city that lay near the north part of the
sea of Galilee, and on the south border of the land
of Naphthali. See note on Matt. iv. 13. Here Christ
and his disciples continued but a short time, the
passover of the Jews being at hand, which Jesus,
who was made under the law, and maintained a re-
ligious regard to its ceremonial, as well as its moral
precepts, would not neglect attending: thus teaching
us by his example a strict observance of all divine
institutions, and a diligent attendance on religious
assemblies. As the evangelists have not informed
us how many passovers happened between the bap-
tism and death of Christ, or during the course of
his public ministry, learned men have been much
divided in their opinions on the subject. But by far
the greater part have supposed there were four,
reckoning this the first; the feast mentioned John
v. 1, the second; the passover spoken of John vi. 4,
as the third; and that at which Christ suffered, the
fourth. But there are others of a different opinion.
The celebrated Sir Isaac Newton reckons five; the
first, this which is now before us; the second, ac-
cording to him, happened four months after Christ's
discourse with the woman of Samaria, John iv. 35;
the third, a few days before the story of the *disciples
rubbing the ears of corn*, Luke vi. 1; the fourth, a
little after the feeding of the five thousand; and the
last, at the time of our Lord's crucifixion.

Verse 14. *And found in the temple those that sold
oxen, &c.*—Used for sacrifice. It seems the officers,
whose province it was to take care of the temple,
permitted a market of these animals, and other things
necessary for sacrifice, to be kept in the court of the
Gentiles, in order that the worshippers might be
supplied with victims requisite for the altar. The
consequence of which was, that there was often such
a bustle and confusion there, that the proselytes who
came to worship could not but be much disturbed in
their devotions; as the reader will easily believe,
when he is informed that, according to Josephus,
"no fewer than two hundred and fifty-six thousand
five hundred victims were sometimes offered at one
passover. But the abuse did not rest here: for it is
generally supposed that the priests let out this part
of the temple for profit, and that the sellers, to ena-

A. M. 4034. oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the
A. D. 30. changers of money, sitting :

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen ; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables ;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take

¹ Luke ii. 49.—² Psa. lxxix. 9.—³ Matt. xii. 38 ; Chap. vi. 30.

ble themselves to pay the rent of their shops and stalls, demanded an exorbitant price for their commodities. Nay, it is said that the priests and Levites very often sold the animals they had received for sacrifices to the dealers in cattle, at a lower rate, that they might sell them again with profit ; so that the same sacrifices were often sold to different persons, and the spoils, or gain of them, were divided between the priests and the salesmen. In order to expedite this traffic, there were money-changers at hand, who gave the Jews who came from foreign countries the current money of Judea, in lieu of the money of the countries from whence they came ; and for this service they took a premium, which, upon the whole, became very considerable. Thus was the temple profaned by the avarice of the priests, and literally made a den of thieves. When our Lord viewed this scene of iniquity, we need not wonder at his indignation ; for it was an honest zeal, which showed his high regard to religion, and his implacable enmity to vice ; while, at the same time, it illustrated the character given of him by Malachi, (chap. iii. 1,) and established the pretensions he made of being the messenger mentioned by that prophet." See Josephus, *Bell.*, vi. 9, and note on Matt. xxi. 12, 13.

Verses 15-17. *And when he had made a scourge of small cords*—*Εκ σχοινοῶν*, of rushes, rather, which he found strewed on the ground. This circumstance, seemingly slight, was inserted to show that the instrument could not be the cause of so wonderful an effect as is here mentioned. *He drove them all out*—Namely, out of the court of the temple ; both *the sheep and the oxen*—Though it does not appear that he struck even them, much less any of the men. But a terror from God, it is evident, fell upon them. *And poured out the changers' money*—Upon the ground ; *and overthrew the tables*—At which they were sitting. *And said to them that sold doves, Take these things hence*—Greck, *ravra*, the cages wherein the pigeons were exposed to sale, pointing to them. *Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise*—Make not the temple, which is dedicated to the worship of God, a place for carrying on low traffic. It is remarkable, that the guilty persons did not offer to make the least resistance ; probably, a consciousness of guilt restrained them, or the wonderful things which Jesus had performed at this festival, though not recorded, with the influence of Christ's miraculous power on their minds, made them afraid to resist him. Nevertheless, in the apprehension of the disciples, he exposed him-

self to great danger, by turning out a body of factious men, whom the priests and rulers supported. On this occasion, therefore, they called to mind, Psa. lxxix. 10, *The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up*—Imputing their Master's action to such a concern for the purity of God's worship, as the psalmist of old was animated by. The truth is, it certainly was an evidence of a very extraordinary zeal indeed ; a zeal nothing inferior to that for which the prophets were famed.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, ² The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.

18 ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, ³ What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things ?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, ° De-

° Matt. xxvi. 61 ; xxvii. 40 ; Mark xiv. 58 ; xv. 29.

self to great danger, by turning out a body of factious men, whom the priests and rulers supported. On this occasion, therefore, they called to mind, Psa. lxxix. 10, *The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up*—Imputing their Master's action to such a concern for the purity of God's worship, as the psalmist of old was animated by. The truth is, it certainly was an evidence of a very extraordinary zeal indeed ; a zeal nothing inferior to that for which the prophets were famed.

Verses 18-22. *Then answered the Jews*—"A fact so public and remarkable as that just mentioned, could not but immediately come to the knowledge of the priests and rulers of the Jews, whose supreme council sat in a magnificent chamber belonging to the temple ;" some of them, therefore, *said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing thou doest these things*—That is, to prove thyself authorized and commissioned to do them ? This they ask because it belonged only to the magistrate, as being God's minister and vicegerent, or to a prophet, to reform abuses in God's worship. The authority of the magistrate they knew Christ had not, for acting as he had done ; and if he alleged that he acted as a prophet, they require him to give them proof of his being such, by some miracle or prediction, to be accomplished before their eyes. But was not the thing itself a sufficient sign ? His ability to drive so many from their posts, without opposition, was surely a proof of his authority to do it : he that was armed by such a divine power, must have been armed with a divine commission. The truth is, they required a miracle to confirm a miracle ! This unreasonable demand Jesus did not think proper to grant them ; but refers them to the miracle of his resurrection : which, however, he does in such obscure terms, as prejudiced minds could not understand, till the prediction was cleared and explained by the event. *Jesus answered, Destroy this temple*—Pointing probably to his body, which, with the greatest propriety, he called a temple, on account of the divinity residing in it. By a like figure of speech, the apostle calls the bodies of believers *the temples of God*. When Christ said, *Destroy this temple*, he meant, You will be permitted to destroy it, and you will destroy it : for at the very beginning of his ministry he had a clear foresight of all his sufferings, and of his death at the end of it ; and yet he went on cheerfully in his work. Observe, reader, our Lord spake thus to them in parables because they were willingly ignorant, and shut their eyes

A. M. 4034. stroy this temple, and in three days
A. D. 30. I will raise it up.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21 But he spake ^p of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, ^q his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the

^p Col. ii. 9; Heb. viii. 2; 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16.—^q Luke xxiv. 8.—1 Sam. xvi. 7; 1 Chron. xxviii.

against the clear light issuing from his life, his doctrine, and his miracles. For they that will not see shall not see; but shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken, Isa. viii. 14, 15. Accordingly, the figurative speech here used by our Lord, proved such a stumbling-block to them, that it was produced in evidence against him at his trial, to prove him a blasphemer, Matt. xxvi. 60, 61. Had they, in humility, asked him the meaning of what he said, he would have informed them, and it would have been a *savour of life unto life to them*; but they resolved to cavil, and it proved a *savour of death unto death*. They that would not be convinced were hardened, and the manner of the expression of this prediction occasioned the accomplishment of the prediction itself. In his saying, *In three days I will raise it up*—Our Lord not only foretold his resurrection, but that it should be effected by his own power. There were others that were raised at different times from the dead, but Christ was the only person that ever raised himself! They, supposing that he spake of the temple in which they were standing, replied, *Forty and six years was this temple in building*—Dr. Lightfoot computes that it was just forty-six years from the founding of Zerubbabel's temple, in the second year of Cyrus, to the complete settlement of the temple service, in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes. The original expression, however, *ᾠκοδομηθη ὁ ναὸς ἑπτὰς*, instead of, *was this temple in building*, is translated by Doddridge, Heylin, and Worsley, *hath been building*, "proceeding on the supposition, that those who made this reply alluded to the additional buildings which the temple had received, and which had been begun by Herod, and continued by those who succeeded him in the government of Judea, to the time then present. But let it be observed, that the Jews never did, nor do to this day, speak of more than two temples possessed by their fathers; the first built by Solomon, the second by Zerubbabel. The great additions made by Herod, were considered as intended only for decorating and repairing the edifice, not for rebuilding it; for, in fact, Zerubbabel's temple had not then been destroyed. Nor need we, I think, puzzle ourselves to make out exactly the *forty-six* years spoken of. Those men were evidently in the humour of exaggerating, in order to represent to the people as absurd what they had immediately heard advanced by our Lord. In this

a

scripture, and the word which Jesus A. M. 4034.
had said. A. D. 30.

23 ¶ Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast-day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for ^r he knew what was in man.

9; Matt. ix. 4; Mark ii. 8; Chap. vi. 64; xvi. 30; Acts i. 24; Rev. ii. 23.

disposition, we may believe, they would not hesitate to include the years in which the work was interrupted, among the years employed in building."—Campbell. *But he spake of the temple of his body*—And therefore they were entirely mistaken as to the sense of what he said; *When, therefore, he was risen from the dead*—Just on the third day after his crucifixion; *his disciples remembered that he had said this*—Which, when they heard him utter it, they did not at all understand; *and they believed the Scripture, &c.*—As they believed the Scriptures, which predicted the Messiah's death, so they believed the more firmly in their Master on account of this prophecy, which, by foretelling his resurrection so long beforehand, rendered that event, when it happened, a most illustrious proof of his mission from God. Dr. Campbell translates the clause, *They understood the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken*; observing, that the word *πίστευον*, in the sacred writers, sometimes signifies, not so much to believe, as to apprehend aright. "In this sense, it is once and again employed by this writer in particular. It is not intimated here, that the disciples did not, before this time, believe the Scriptures, or their Master's word: but that they did not, till now, *rightly apprehend* the meaning of either, in relation to this subject. Another instance of this application of the verb *πίστευω*, we have chap. iii. 12."

Verses 23-25. *When he was in Jerusalem, in the feast-day*—Or rather, during the feast, as *ἐν τῇ εορτῇ*, should undoubtedly be translated: that is, during all the days of the solemnity; *many believed in his name*—Were inwardly persuaded that he was the Messiah, or, at least, that he was a teacher sent from God; *when they saw the miracles which he did*—This, as well as John iii. 2, and iv. 45, plainly refers to some miracles wrought by Christ, the particulars of which are not transmitted to us. *But Jesus did not commit himself unto them*—Did not repose such confidence in the sincerity of their profession of faith in him, or in their fidelity, courage, or wisdom, as to discover himself to be the Messiah. *Because he knew all men*—Had perfect knowledge of their dispositions; *and needed not that any should testify of man*—To give him any information concerning the character of any man, though ever so much a stranger to him; *for he knew what was in man*—By an immediate and unerring penetration, he knew what was in the heart of every man; and conse-

quently knew, that those people had such gross notions of the Messiah's kingdom, that there was no room for him to confide in them: or, he knew that the faith of many of them had not yet advanced to a full conviction; and foresaw that they would quickly fall off, when they found he was rejected by the great

men, and did not erect a secular empire. 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 and openness of temper which would make us the property of every pretender to kindness and respect.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter we have, (1.) Our Lord's conference with Nicodemus, in the former part of which he states the nature and necessity of regeneration, 1-10; and in the latter part shows the design of his coming into the world, and the absolute necessity of faith in him, 11-21. (2.) John the Baptist's discourse with his disciples concerning Christ, in which is contained his last testimony to him, occasioned by a dispute about his baptism, and that administered by Christ, 22-36.

A. M. 4034. **T**HERE ^a was a man of the Phari-
A. D. 30. sees named Nicodemus, a ruler
of the Jews:

2 ^a The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for ^b no man

can do these miracles that thou ^a doest, except ^a God be with him. A. M. 4034. A. D. 30.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, ^d Except a man be born ¹ again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

^a Trinity Sunday, gospel, verse 1 to verse 16. — ^a Chap. vii. 50; xix. 39. — ^b Chap. ix. 16, 33; Acts ii. 22.

^c Acts x. 33. — ^d Chap. i. 13; Gal. vi. 15; Tit. iii. 5; James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 John iii. 9. — ¹ Or, from above.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1, 2. *There was a man of the Pharisees*—Belonging to the sect so called. What is here related, doubtless, occurred while our Lord was attending at Jerusalem to keep the passover, as is mentioned in the latter part of the preceding chapter: *a ruler of the Jews*—A member of the great council, termed the sanhedrim, John vii. 50. *The same came to Jesus*—With desire of receiving instruction from him in divine things, but came privately, and *by night*—Through shame, and fear of his brethren of the council, who from the very beginning of Christ's ministry were his enemies. *And said unto him, Rabbi*—Giving him the title of respect with which it was usual to address the Jewish doctors; *we know that thou art a teacher come from God*—Namely, with an extraordinary commission. It is probable that the expression, *we know*, signifies no more here than *it is known*, for, as Dr. Whitby justly observes, Nicodemus could not say with truth, that his brethren, the Pharisees and rulers, knew Christ to be a teacher come from God; for it appears from chap. vii. 48, that none of them believed on him. *For no man can do these miracles that thou doest*—Miracles so beneficial and divine; *except God be with him*—In an extraordinary manner, investing him with power from on high. Here, 1st, We are assured of the truth of Christ's miracles, and that they were not counterfeit and fictitious. For Nicodemus, a judicious, sensible, inquisitive man, one that had all the reason and opportunity imaginable to examine them, was so fully satisfied they were miracles, that he was induced by them to go contrary to his interest, and the stream of those of his own rank, who were prejudiced against Christ. 2d, We are directed what inference to draw from Christ's miracles; we are, therefore, to receive him as a

teacher come from God. His miracles were his credentials. The course of nature could not have been altered, but by the power of the God of nature, who, we are sure, is the God of truth and goodness, and would never set his seal to a lie or a cheat. Nicodemus's acknowledgment, that Jesus was a teacher come from God, and his applying to him under that character, implied that he came with a desire to receive from Christ's own mouth a particular account, both of the doctrine which he taught, and of the kingdom which he declared God was about to erect. Our Lord's answer intimates, that he either expressly made, or secretly intended, such an inquiry; and it is impossible to enter into the beauty of the following discourse without considering the matter in this light.

Verse 3. *Jesus answered*—Jesus, knowing the prejudices Nicodemus laboured under, both as a Jew and a Pharisee, judged it necessary immediately to acquaint him with the absolute necessity of experiencing a thorough change, both of his heart and life, to be wrought by divine grace; a change so great as might appear like coming into a new world by a second birth, and would bring the greatest and most learned men to the simplicity, teachableness, and humility of little children, see Matt. xviii. 3. He therefore said unto him, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*—I declare it with the utmost solemnity, as a truth of the highest importance, that whatever great privileges any man may inherit by his natural birth or education, or church-fellowship, or by the place he occupies, or the rank he holds in civil or religious society, or how exact and strict soever he may be in ceremonial observances; *unless a man be born again, he cannot see*—Cannot even have just views of, much less can he enjoy; *the kingdom of God*—On earth or in heaven; can neither be a

true member of the church militant, nor enter into the church triumphant: nor will thy knowing and acknowledging that I am a teacher come from God, avail thee, unless thou experience this second birth. The original expression, *εαν μη τις γεννηθη ανωθεν*, may also be rendered, *unless a man be born from above*: the sense, however, which our translation gives it, is evidently that in which Nicodemus took it: for he so expresses himself as to show, that he thought a man could not be born in the manner Christ spoke of, without *entering a second time into his mother's womb*. What is added, at verse 5, explains what was before undetermined, as to the original of this birth. The reader must observe, that in the following discourse our Lord touches on those grand points, in which it was of the utmost importance that Nicodemus, his brethren, and mankind in general, should be well informed, namely, that no external profession, no ceremonial observances, or privileges of birth, could entitle any to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; but 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 Spirit of God: that every man born into the world was by nature (verse 6) in a state of depravity and sin, of condemnation and misery; (verses 17-19;) that the free mercy of God had given his Son to deliver them from it, (verses 14-16,) 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. It is justly observed by Dr. Owen, "That if *regeneration* here mean only *reformation of life*, our Lord, instead of making any new discovery, has only thrown a great deal of obscurity on what was before plain and obvious, and known, not only to the Jews, but the wiser heathen." The fact is, as by justification and adoption, a *relative* change, or a change of *state*, is signified, the person before under guilt being thereby acquitted; the person before under wrath being taken into favour with God; or, which is implied in adoption, the person, who was before merely a *servant*, serving God from fear, and perhaps with reluctance, being thereby made a son and an heir, (see Rom. viii. 14-17; Gal. iv. 4-7,) so by *regeneration*, a *real* change is intended; a change of nature, termed (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15) *καινη κρισις*, a *new creation*; and described, (Eph. iv. 22, 23,) as *putting off the old man, being renewed in the spirit of our minds, and putting on the new man, created after God in righteousness and truthfulness*. The ground and reason of which doctrine are evident; man by the fall lost the image of God, especially his moral image, and without recovering it, without being made pure in heart and life, he cannot *see the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14; Matt. v. 7; 2 Cor. v. 3. Now this divine image begins to be restored to us when we are regenerated, and is increased and perfected in and by our sanctification, termed, (Tit. iii. 6,) *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*.

If it be inquired, why this change is termed a

birth, the reason may be, that it resembles in some particulars, and may be illustrated by, our natural birth. For, 1st, As the natural birth introduces us into natural life, in consequence of which, we have union with, and breathe the air of, this world; so by the spiritual birth we are introduced into spiritual life, have union with God, and breathe the spirit of prayer and praise. 2d, The natural birth opens our natural senses, our eyesight, hearing, tasting, &c., and thereby discloses natural things; so the spiritual birth opens our spiritual senses, and imparts the seeing eye, the hearing ear, the feeling sense, (Heb. vi. 4, 5; 1 Pet. ii. 3,) and thereby manifests to us spiritual things. 3d, The natural birth prepares us to enjoy natural things, which, without being born into this world, it is impossible we should enjoy; so the spiritual birth introduces us to the enjoyment of spiritual things, illumination of mind, renovation of heart, manifestations of the divine favour, communications of the Divine Spirit, *peace and joy through believing*, lively hopes of life eternal, and above all, *fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*. 4th, The natural birth introduces us among men, and, partaking of their nature, as we proceed in the course of life, we begin to share in their desires and aversions, hopes and fears, sorrows and joys, cares, labours, and pursuits: we hear and understand, and then begin to converse. In like manner, the spiritual birth introduces us among Christians, true Christians, nor are we only *among*, but *of* them; and as we partake of their heavenly and holy nature by regeneration, we also soon begin to entertain their views, and manifest affections and dispositions, desires and designs, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, similar to theirs: first, we hear, and then, being improved in knowledge, we speak their heavenly language. 5th, When born into this world we are capable of receiving, tasting, and being nourished by the food provided for us; so when born of God, we begin to have an appetite for, and to partake of, first *the sincere, uncorrupted milk of the word*, adapted to the state of babes in Christ; and then of the stronger meat, suited to those of riper age. Hence follows a growth in spiritual health and strength, knowledge, experience, and holiness, till, *growing up into Christ in all things*, we arrive at the *measure of the stature of his fulness*.

He cannot see the kingdom of God—The common explanation that is given of the word *see*, in this passage, is, *enjoy, share in*. Accordingly it is considered synonymous with *enter*, verse 5. "Though I admit," says Dr. Campbell, "in a great measure, the truth of this exposition, I do not think it comprehends the whole of what the words imply. It is true, that to *see* often denotes to *enjoy*, or to *suffer*, as suits the nature of the object seen. Thus, to *see death*, is used for *to die*; to *see life*, for *to live*; to *see good days*, for *to enjoy good days*; and to *see corruption*, for *to suffer corruption*. But this sense of the word *seeing* is limited to a very few phrases, of which those now mentioned are the chief. I have not, however, found an example (setting this passage aside as questionable) of *ιδειν βασιλειαν*, [*seeing a kingdom*,] for enjoying a kingdom, or partaking

A. M. 4034. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How
A. D. 30. can a man be born when he is old?
can he enter the second time into his mother's
womb, and be born?

• Mark xvi. 16;

therein. I understand, therefore, the word *iden*, to imply here, what it often implies, to *perceive*, to *discern*, namely, by the eye of the mind. The import, therefore, in my apprehension, is this: the man who is not regenerated, or born again, of *water and of the Spirit*, is not in a capacity of perceiving the reign of God, though it were commenced. Though the kingdom of the saints on the earth were already established, the unregenerate would not discern it, because it is a spiritual, not a worldly kingdom, and capable of being no otherwise than spiritually discerned. And as the kingdom itself would remain unknown to him, he could not share in the blessings enjoyed by the subjects of it, which appears to be the import of the expression, (verse 5,) *he cannot enter the kingdom of God*. The two declarations, therefore, are not synonymous, but related; and the latter is consequent upon the former." Our Lord's words being represented as spoken in answer to what Nicodemus had said to him, the doctor thinks the sense he gives them makes the connection and pertinency of the whole discourse much clearer. Nicodemus had acquainted our Lord that, on the evidence of his miracles, he believed him to be a teacher come from God, but made no mention of his being the Messiah, or of his reign upon earth; and this interpreter supposes it is in reference to this defect in his faith, "partly, as it were, to account for his silence on this article, and partly to point out to him the proper source of this knowledge, that our Lord answers by observing, that, *unless a man be enlightened by the Spirit*," (implied in being born again,) "he cannot discern either the signs of the Messiah, or the nature of his kingdom. Augustine is of opinion, that it was necessary thus to humble the spiritual pride of the Pharisee, the conceited superiority to the vulgar in things sacred, which is the greatest obstruction to divine knowledge, that he might be prepared for receiving with all humility the illumination of the Spirit." Dr. Macknight interprets our Lord's answer in nearly the same sense with that above stated. His paraphrase on it is, "Though the lustre of my miracles constrains thee to acknowledge, that I am a teacher come from God, thou dost not fully believe that I am the Messiah, and the reason of thy doubt is, that thou dost not find me surrounded with the pomp of a temporal prince. But, believe me, unless a man be renewed in the spirit of his mind, he cannot discern the evidence of my mission, who am come to erect the kingdom of God, consequently cannot see that kingdom, cannot enter into it on earth, neither enjoy it in heaven."

Verses 4. 5. *Nicodemus*—Exceedingly surprised at Christ's declaration; saith, *How can a man be born when he is old*—As I now am? *Can he enter, &c.*—As if he had said, It would be perfectly absurd

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I A. M. 4034
say unto thee, • Except a man be A. D. 30.
born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter
into the kingdom of God.

Acts ii. 38.

to think that thou intendest thy words to be taken in a literal sense, and yet, I confess, I am at a loss to know what figurative interpretation to put upon them. *Jesus answered, Except a man be born*—He meant likewise *begotten*, as previous thereto, for the original word signifies both, see James i. 18; *of water*—That is, baptized; and *of the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God—Or, in plain terms, Whosoever would become a regular member of it, he must not only be baptized, but, if he would share its spiritual and eternal blessings, he must experience the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit on his soul, to deliver it from the power of corruption, and to animate it to a divine and spiritual life. "To be born of water and of the Spirit," says Bishop Hopkins, "may admit of a double interpretation: for either by water is meant baptism," or it "may denote to us the manner of the Spirit's proceedings in the work of regeneration. *Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit*—That is, except he be renewed by the Holy Ghost, working as water, leaving the same effect upon the soul in cleansing and purifying it from sinful defilements, as water doth upon the body in washing off contracted filth. Nor, indeed, is this manner of expression strange to the Holy Scripture: for John Baptist, speaking of Christ, tells them, that he should baptize them *with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*: that is, he should baptize them with the Holy Ghost, working as fire, which eats out and consumes the rust and dross of metals," &c. Or, as Dr. Macknight interprets the clause, "Unless a man has a new nature given him by the Spirit, which is being born of the Spirit, and publicly receive the Christian religion, when offered to him, (Matt. x. 33,) which is being born of water, he cannot be a subject of God's kingdom here, nor have a share in his glory hereafter." And he justly observes, in a note, "Our Lord did not mean that baptism is in all cases necessary to salvation; for in the apostle's commission, (Mark xvi. 16,) notwithstanding faith and baptism are equally enjoined upon all nations, not the want of baptism, but of faith, is declared to be damning. Besides, it should be considered, that this is a mere ceremony, which in itself has no efficacy to change men's natures, or to fit them for heaven, and that in some circumstances it may be absolutely impracticable. Nevertheless, as the washing of the body with water in baptism fitly represents the purification of the soul necessary to its enjoyment of heaven, this ceremony is very properly made the rite by which we publicly take upon ourselves the profession of the Christian religion, the dispensation preparatory to heaven. Wherefore the receiving of this rite is necessary in all cases where it may be had; the confessing of Christ being oftentimes as

A. M. 4034. 6 That which is born of the flesh,
A. D. 30. is flesh; and that which is born of
the Spirit, is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must
be born² again.

8 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou
hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell

* Or, from above.—† Eccles. xi. 5; 1 Cor. ii. 11.

necessary as believing on him. If so, persons who undervalue *water* baptism, on pretence of exalting the baptism of the *Spirit*, do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the commandment of Christ."

Verses 6-8. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh*—Only flesh, void of the Spirit: or is carnal and corrupt, and therefore at enmity with the Spirit. *And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*—Is spiritual, heavenly, divine, like its author. As if our Lord had said to Nicodemus, Were it possible for a man to be born again in a literal sense, by entering a second time into his mother's womb, such a second birth would do no more to qualify him for the kingdom of God than the first; for what proceeds, and is produced from parents that are sinful and corrupt, is sinful and corrupt as they are; but that which is born of the Spirit is formed to a resemblance of that blessed Spirit, whose office it is to communicate a divine nature to the soul, and to stamp it with the divine image. *Marvel not, therefore, that I said unto thee*—And have declared it as a truth that ye are all concerned in; that *ye must be born again*—Ye Jews, though descendants of Abraham; ye scribes, though learned in the law; ye Pharisees, though exact in the observance of its ceremonies, and the traditions of the elders; ye doctors of Israel and rulers of the people, notwithstanding your authority in matters civil and religious, must all be born again in this spiritual sense, since the degeneracy of the human nature is of so universal an extent as to be common to you all. *The wind bloweth, &c.*—As if he had said, Nor have you any cause to be surprised if there be some things in this doctrine of regeneration which are of an obscure and unsearchable nature, for even in the natural world many things are so: *the wind, for instance, bloweth where it listeth*—According to its own nature, not thy will, sometimes one way, and sometimes another, not being subject to the direction or command of man; *and thou hearest the sound thereof*—And feelest its sensible and powerful effects on thy body; *but canst not tell whence it cometh*—Canst not explain the particular manner of its acting, or where it begins, and where it ceases blowing; for whatever general principles may be laid down concerning it, when men come to account for its particular variations, the greatest philosophers often find themselves at a loss. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit*—The fact is plain, the manner of its operations is inexplicable. "It is worthy of remark," says Dr. Campbell, "that as, in the Greek and in the Vulgate, the same word, in this passage, signifies both *wind* and *spirit*, the illustra-

tion is expressed with more energy than it is possible to give it in those languages which do not admit the same ambiguity." But "I shall give what appears to me the purport of verses 7 and 8. 'Nor is there,' as if he had said, 'any thing in this either absurd or unintelligible. The *wind*, which in Hebrew is expressed by the same word as *spirit*, shall serve for an example. It is invisible; we hear the noise it makes, but cannot discover what occasions its rise or its fall. It is known to us solely by its effects. Just so it is with this second birth. The Spirit himself, the great agent, is invisible; his manner of operating is beyond our discovery; but the reality of his operation is perceived by the effects produced on the disposition and life of the regenerate.'"

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him,
"How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art
thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these
things?

‡ Chap. vi. 52, 60.

tion is expressed with more energy than it is possible to give it in those languages which do not admit the same ambiguity." But "I shall give what appears to me the purport of verses 7 and 8. 'Nor is there,' as if he had said, 'any thing in this either absurd or unintelligible. The *wind*, which in Hebrew is expressed by the same word as *spirit*, shall serve for an example. It is invisible; we hear the noise it makes, but cannot discover what occasions its rise or its fall. It is known to us solely by its effects. Just so it is with this second birth. The Spirit himself, the great agent, is invisible; his manner of operating is beyond our discovery; but the reality of his operation is perceived by the effects produced on the disposition and life of the regenerate.'"

Verses 9, 10. *Nicodemus answered, How can these things be?*—Christ's explication of the doctrine of regeneration, and its necessity, made it no clearer to him. The corruption of nature, which renders it necessary, and the operation of the Spirit, which renders it practicable, were as great mysteries to him as the thing itself. And though he had acknowledged Christ to be a divine teacher, he was unwilling to receive his doctrine when it did not agree with his preconceived notions. Thus the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the natural man, and he is not only estranged from them, but prejudiced against them. *Jesus said, Art thou a master*—Ο διδασκαλος, a teacher, or rather, the teacher, of Israel, as Dr. Campbell renders the expression; observing, "The article here is remarkable; the more so, because there does not appear to be a single Greek copy which omits it. As a member of the sanhedrim, Nicodemus had a superintendency in what concerned religious instruction, and might on that account have been called a *teacher of Israel*; but it is probably in order to intimate to us his distinguished fame for abilities in this respect, that he is styled by way of eminence, *the teacher*." *And knowest thou not these things*—When so much is everywhere said in the Scriptures of God's *circumcising* men's hearts, *creating* in them *clean hearts*, *renewing* in them *right spirits*, and of the quickening and purifying operations of his Spirit on their souls? See Deut. xxx. 6; Psa. li. 10; Jer. iv. 4; and xxxi. 33, 34; Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27. "Could it be proved," says Dr. Doddridge, "that the Jewish rabbis, so early as Christ's time, called a baptized person one *born again*, or *born of water*, that would strongly illustrate the passage before us." But though several learned commentators give the words this turn, the fact, he thinks, is not proved. "However, it is

A. M. 4034. 11 ^h Verily, verily, I say unto thee, A. D. 30. We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ⁱ ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye

^h Matt. xi. 27; Chap. i. 18; vii. 16; viii. 28; xii. 49; xiv. 24. ⁱ Verse 32.

strange to me," says he, "that any should doubt whether proselytes were admitted into the Jewish church by baptism, that is, by washing, when it is plain from express passages in the Jewish law that no Jew who had lived like a Gentile for one single day could be restored to the communion of their church without it. Compare Num. xix. 19, 20; and many other precepts relating to ceremonial pollutions, by which the Jews were rendered incapable of appearing before God in the tabernacle or temple till they were washed, either by bathing or sprinkling." It is probable, however, that the reproof conveyed in this verse does not so much relate to the forementioned figures of speech, supposed to be in use among the rabbis, representing the baptism of proselytes as a *new birth*; as to Nicodemus's being so entirely unacquainted with the doctrine of the Old Testament, respecting the necessity of a change of heart being experienced by all who would be the true people and spiritual worshippers of God; and respecting that effusion of the Spirit which the prophets had so clearly foretold would take place under the Messiah.

Verse 11. *We speak that we do know*—I, and all that truly believe in me. Or, he may refer to the testimony that was given to the truth of his doctrine by John the Baptist, and to the preaching also of his own disciples, who all concurred in testifying the same things, the certainty of which they were assured of by the illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit, and by their own experience, while it was known to Christ by his omniscience, and by the intimate acquaintance that he had with all the counsels of his Father. *And testify that we have seen*—Here our Lord alludes to what was required in the law to qualify a man to be a witness, namely, that he should be able to declare concerning what he testified, that he *had seen, or known it*, Lev. v. 1. And as Christ, therefore, had a clear perception and certain knowledge of the truth of what he said, there was the highest reason to receive his testimony, and to regard him as a *true and faithful witness*. *And ye*—Jewish rulers, teachers, and people, are generally of such a disposition that ye *receive not our witness*—Either as true or important; but disbelieve and reject, or neglect it.

Verses 12, 13. *If I have told you earthly things*—As the truths which I have taught you concerning the spiritual nature of God's kingdom, and the qualifications of his subjects, may properly be termed, because they are capable of being represented to you in a familiar way, and of being illustrated by such obvious and well-known similitudes as to be rendered thereby perfectly plain and easy to be understood. Or, by *earthly things*, he might mean things to be

believe not, how shall ye believe if I A. M. 4034. tell you of heavenly things? A. D. 30.

13 And ^h no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even the Son of man* which is in heaven.

^h Prov. xxx. 4; Chap. vi. 23, 38, 51, 62; xvi. 28; Acts ii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 47; Eph. iv. 9, 10.

experienced and enjoyed on earth, such as the new birth and the present privileges of the children of God. *And ye believe not*—Even these; *how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things*—If I should go on to teach you other doctrines, much more mysterious and sublime, and not capable of being thus illustrated and explained? Our Lord has been thought by some to refer here to those sublime and heavenly doctrines which were afterward revealed, such as the eternity of the Son, the *fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily*, the unity of the Father, Son, and Spirit, and those other mysteries of godliness that are above the reach of human reason, and cannot be illustrated by earthly things. It is more probable, however, as Dr. Doddridge observes, that he more immediately refers "to the doctrines which he mentions in the remaining part of his discourse to Nicodemus—of his descent from heaven to instruct us in the things of God, and be united to the human nature here below, while, by his divine nature, he still continued to be present above,—of the design for which he came into the world, to be lifted up upon the cross, that he might save us from our sins,—of everlasting life, and happiness to be obtained by faith in his death,—and of the condemnation of all those that should reject him; which may be counted as *the deep things of God*, which he reveals unto us by his Spirit, and which the natural man, who disregards that Spirit, *receiveth not, for they are foolishness unto him*, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 14." *And no man, &c.*—As if he had said, For here you must rely on my single testimony, whereas in the other points, termed earthly things, you have a cloud of witnesses. Or the connection and sense may be, Yet the truth of my doctrine concerning these heavenly things you will have no just reason to suspect, considering whence it comes, and who it is that reveals it. *For no man hath ascended up to heaven*—To search into the secret counsels of God, and to obtain an intimate and perfect knowledge of his mind and will; *but he that came down from heaven*—Qualified and commissioned in the most extraordinary manner to reveal them, as far as is proper, to mankind; *even the Son of man which is in heaven*—Is present there by his divine nature, which fills both heaven and earth, even while he is here on earth as to his human nature. This is a plain instance of what is usually termed the communication of properties between Christ's 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 spoken of the divine. "Beza, and some others, suppose that the present tense, (*ων, who is*), is here put for the past, (*ην, who*

A. M. 4034. 14 ¶¹ And as Moses lifted up the
A. D. 30. serpent in the wilderness, even so
must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but^a have eternal life.

16 ¶² For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever

¹ Num. xxi. 9.—² Ch. viii. 28; xii. 32.—³ Verse 36; Ch. vi. 47.—⁴ Monday in Whitsun-week, gospel, verse 16 to verse 22.

was,) of which construction we have some examples, particularly John ix. 25. Accordingly they translate the clause, *The Son of man, who was in heaven*: but the common translation may be retained, [and interpreted,] thus: Moses, your lawgiver, did not ascend into heaven; he only went up to mount Sinai, and that but for a few days, that he might receive the law from God. Whereas, *the Son of man*, (this was one of the Messiah's titles,) *who is come down from heaven*, (ο εκ τῆς οὐρανόσ καταβας,) who is commissioned by God in an extraordinary manner, to reveal his will to men, and in respect of whose commission, all the other messengers of God may be said to have been of the earth: (see John iii. 31; Heb. xii. 25:) *he hath ascended up to heaven*—Hath received the clearest and most extensive views of spiritual things; hath penetrated into the recesses of the divine counsels; (see Prov. xxx. 3, 4;) *now, is, at present, in heaven*, is with God, is conscious of all his gracious purposes toward men, consequently must be a messenger of much higher dignity than Moses, or Elijah, or any of the prophets, for whom you entertain so great a regard."—Mac-knight.

Verses 14, 15. *As Moses lifted up the serpent*—As if he had said, And even this single witness, bearing testimony of heavenly things, will soon be taken from you; yea, and in a most ignominious manner. Or, as Dr. Doddridge connects the words with what precedes, "And now I mention the Son of man, let me rectify that grand mistake of yours concerning his kingdom, which otherwise may be attended with fatal consequences. You expect to see him raised on a magnificent throne; and not only breaking off the yoke from the Jewish nation, but leading them on to conquer and destroy the Gentiles; but I must assure you that, *as Moses lifted up*, [Greek, *ὑψωσε*, raised on high, namely, on a pole,] *the serpent in the wilderness*—To heal those that were dying by the venom of the fiery serpents there; *even so must the Son of man be lifted up*—On a cross, (see the margin,) and then publicly exhibited in the preaching of the gospel, that sinners may by him receive a far more noble and important cure; even that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish*—As all in their natural state otherwise would; *but may obtain so perfect a recovery as certainly to have eternal life*"—For all those who look to him, and rely on him by faith, recover spiritual life and health. The reader will observe, 1st, That the grand point of similitude here is, in the manner of performing the cure, that is, by believing regards to what was lifted up, or

believeth in him should not perish, A. M. 4034.
but have everlasting life. A. D. 30.

17 ¶ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

18 ¶ He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is con-

⁵ Rom. v. 8; 1 John iv. 9. ⁶ Luke ix. 56; Chap. v. 45; viii. 15; xii. 47; 1 John iv. 14.—⁷ Chap. v. 24; vi. 40, 47; xx. 31.

raised on high, for that purpose, by a divine appointment. 2d, That the passage strongly implies, that as the wounded Israelites would have died if they had not looked to the brazen serpent for a cure, so will men, wounded by sin, original and actual, assuredly perish, and that eternally, if they do not look to, and believe on Christ, *delivered unto death for their offences, and raised from the dead for their justification*; which great truth is still more strongly expressed, verse 18. 3d, That our Lord, by telling Nicodemus, that the death of the Messiah was prefigured by types in the law, showed him, that it was agreeable both to the doctrine of Moses, and to the counsels of heaven, that the Messiah should be in a suffering state; and consequently he intimated that the meanness of his present appearance on earth was no reason why any should doubt of his having been, and still being in heaven.

Verses 16–19. *For God so loved the world, &c.*—Here our Lord proceeds to inform Nicodemus, that men owed the blessings above mentioned to the free and immense love of God the Father, who desired their salvation with such ardency, that he sent his only-begotten Son to bestow it upon them; and that it is designed for all that will accept of it in the way God hath appointed. *God, says he, so loved the world*, that is, all men under heaven; even those that despise his love, and will for that cause finally perish, *that he gave his only-begotten Son*, truly and seriously: and the Son of God gave himself, (Gal. ii. 20,) truly and seriously; *that whosoever believeth in him*—With that faith which worketh by love, and holdeth fast the beginning of his confidence steadfast to the end; *should not perish*—Under the sentence of divine justice, as he otherwise must have done; *but have everlasting life*—The life of grace, and the life of glory, through the mere mercy of God, and the infinite merits of his Son. *For God sent not his Son to condemn the world*—To execute that vengeance upon them which their guilt might have taught them to fear; nor did he send him to destroy the Gentile nations, which prejudiced Jews have supposed would be one principal end of the Messiah's coming. God, says Grotius, is often described as an avenger in the Old Testament: therefore the guilty might reasonably expect, that when his Son came into the world, it would be to execute vengeance in his Father's name. *But that the world through him might be saved*—Even all, without exception, who will hearken to the overtures of the gospel. *He that believeth on him*—With his heart unto righteousness; *is not condemned*—Is acquitted, is justified before God, how

A. M. 4034. demned already, because he hath not
A. D. 30. believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, ^r that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For ^r every one that doeth evil hateth the

^r Chap. i. 4, 9, 10, 11; viii. 12.—^r Job xxiv. 13, 17; Eph. v. 13.

many and great soever his past sins may have been, and however unpardonable according to the tenor of the Mosaic law: but *he that believeth not*—Whatever his external profession and privileges may be; *is condemned already*—Remains under the sentence of his former guilt; yea, and subjects himself, by his refusal of the only remedy, to still greater and more aggravated condemnation and wo; because, notwithstanding the incontrovertible evidence given of Jesus's divine mission, and of his being the true Messiah, he hath not *believed in the name*, the glorious name of the *only-begotten Son of God*—Though expressly revealed to him, that he might believe in him. "Though the name of a person be often put for the person himself, yet it may be further intimated here, in that expression, that the person spoken of is greatly magnificent; and therefore it is generally used to express either God the Father, or our Lord Jesus Christ."—Doddridge. *And this is the condemnation*—The cause of it, the crime that fills up the measure of men's iniquities, and is the principal reason of their speedy and final ruin; *that light is come into the world*—Divine and glorious light, the day-spring from on high, the light of the glorious gospel, through the incarnation of the Eternal Word, and the preaching of his forerunner preparing the way before him; *and men loved darkness rather than light*—Ignorance of the divine truth rather than the knowledge of it, folly rather than wisdom, sin rather than righteousness; *because their deeds were evil*—And they had not so much fear of God before their eyes, or so much concern for their own everlasting salvation, as to resolve on a thorough reformation of their conduct.

Verses 20, 21. *For every one that doeth evil*—That is conscious to himself that he lives in known sin, and is inclined to continue to do so; *hateth the light*—Which would detect and expose his evil practices, and thereby cause anguish and shame to his guilty mind; *neither cometh to the light*—But keeps aloof from it, being unwilling, not desirous, to know his true character, and the dangerous and miserable condition which he is in. Thus Christ, and his genuine gospel, is hated, because sin is loved. And sinners hate the light, because it discovers the evil and sinfulness of their ways unto them, and condemns them for them. *But he that doeth the truth*—That complies with the will of God, as far as he knows it; that sincerely and conscientiously endeavours to conform his conduct to the eternal law of righteousness; *cometh to the light*—With confidence

light, neither cometh to the light, lest A. M. 4034.
his deeds should be ³reproved. A. D. 30.

21 But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

22 ¶ After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, ^r and baptized.

^r Or, *discovered*.—^r Chap. iv. 2.

and joy, brings his opinions and practices, his desires and designs, his affections, intentions, and resolutions, his tempers, words, and actions, to the test of God's word; *that his deeds may be made manifest*—As in open day; *that they are wrought in God*—Are performed as in his sight, according to the direction of his word, with a single eye to his glory, and in consequence of that union of soul with him, which is the highest dignity and happiness of a rational creature. "Be it therefore known to you all," as if our Lord had said, "that this gospel which I preach is the great touchstone of men's true characters; and as nothing but a corruption of the heart can oppose it, so I faithfully warn you, that if you reject it, it is at the peril of your souls." Observe, reader, we have in this passage the character of a good man: 1st, He is one that doeth *την αληθειαν*, not truth merely, but the truth, namely, that walks according to the truth, as it is in Jesus, and that uprightly and conscientiously. 2d, He is one that *cometh to the light*, that is ready and desirous to receive the truth, as far as it appears to him to be so, and discoveries of God's mind concerning him, whatever uneasiness may be created to him thereby. He frequently tries himself, and desires that God would try him; being solicitous to know his will, and resolving to comply with it, however contrary to his own will and apparent interests. We have here, also, the character of a *good work*: it is *wrought in God*, in union with him by living faith, through the aid of his grace. Our works are then good, and will bear the test of God's word, when the will of God is the rule of them, and the glory of God the end of them; when they are done in his strength and for his sake, to him and not to men: and if by the light of the gospel it be manifested to us that our works are thus wrought, then we have cause of rejoicing, Gal. vi. 4; 2 Cor. i. 12. Such was the purport of our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus; and it appears by some following circumstances of the story, that it made a deep and lasting impression on his mind; and that he afterward became a true disciple of Christ. See chap. vii. 50; xix. 39.

Verses 22–24. *After these things*—That is, some time after our Lord's conference with Nicodemus; *came Jesus and his disciples*—From Jerusalem, where they had kept the passover together; *into the land of Judea*—That is, into a part of it which was at some distance from the capital city; *and there he tarried with them*—How long is not said; *and baptized*—Not himself, but his disciples, by his order,

A. M. 4034. 23 ¶ And John also was baptizing
A. D. 30. in *Enon*, near to ^v *Salim*, because
there was much water there: ^z and they
came, and were baptized.

24 For ^y John was not yet cast into prison.

25 ¶ Then there arose a question between
some of John's disciples and the Jews, about
purifying.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto
him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond
Jordan, ^x to whom thou barest witness, behold,

^v 1 Samuel ix. 4.—^x Matthew iii. 5, 6.—^y Matthew xiv. 3.
^z Chapter i. 7, 15, 27, 34.—¹ 1 Cor. iv. 7; Heb. v. 4; James
i. 17.—^a Or, take unto himself.

chap. iv. 2. *And John also was baptizing*, at that
time, at *Enon*, near *Salim*—A town on the west
side of Jordan; because there was much water there
—Which made it very convenient for his purpose.
And they came—Namely, people came from various
parts; and were baptized by him. *For John was
not yet cast into prison*—As he was a few months
after, by the injustice of Herod, in whose dominions
that place was.

Verses 25, 26. *Then there arose a question*—Or a
dispute; between some of John's disciples and the
Jews—Or rather, a certain Jew: for, "though the
common editions read *Jews*, the greater number of
MSS., among which are some of the most valuable,
some ancient expositors also, and critics read, a *Jew*,
in the singular; with which agrees both the Syriac
versions. To which may be added some of our best
modern critics, as Grotius, Cocceius, Hammond,
Mill, and Wetstein."—Campbell. *About purifying*
—That is, as appears from the sequel, about bap-
tisms, and other legal ablutions. The Jews called
all sorts of ablutions, prescribed by their teachers,
purifications. The subject, therefore, of this debate,
seems to have been, how Jesus, who had been him-
self baptized by John, came to rebaptize John's disci-
ples, (Acts xix. 4, 5,) that is, assume greater autho-
rity than John, and virtually declare that his bap-
tism was inefficacious for the purposes of purifica-
tion. *And they came unto John*—The Baptist's disci-
ples, though they had often heard their master speak
on the subject, not understanding the subserviency
of his ministry to that of Jesus, were unable to give
their antagonists a satisfactory answer, so they came
and proposed their question to John himself; and
said, *He to whom thou barest witness*—Gavest such
an honourable testimony; *behold, the same baptizeth*
—People that come to him from all parts, yea, even
such as have before received thy baptism. They,
soem to have been apprehensive that this would
cause John's baptism to be neglected, and would
tend to the injury of his character.

Verses 27-29. *John answered*—With a humility
and integrity agreeable to the rest of his character,
A man can receive nothing—Neither he, nor I, nor
any man; unless it be given him from heaven—
Whence every good gift cometh, James i. 18; a

the same baptizeth, and all men come
to him. A. M. 4034.
A. D. 30.

27 John answered and said, ^a A man can
receive nothing, except it be given him from
heaven.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I
said, ^b I am not the Christ, but ^c that I am sent
before him.

29 ^d He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom:
but ^e the friend of the bridegroom, which
standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly,

^b Chapter i. 20, 27.—^c Mal. iii. 1; Mark i. 2; Luke i. 17.
^d Matthew xxii. 2; 2 Cor. xi. 2; Eph. v. 25, 27; Rev. xxi. 9.
^e Cant. v. 1.

general truth, very applicable in this case. Differ-
ent employments are according to the direction of
Divine Providence; different endowments according
to the distribution of divine grace. We have as ne-
cessary and constant a dependance upon the grace
of God in all the actions of the spiritual life, as we
have upon the providence of God in all those of the
natural life. Dr. Macknight paraphrases the pas-
sage thus: "A man of God, or prophet, can assume
no greater dignity and authority than God has
thought fit to confer on him. *Ye yourselves bear
me witness*—For you cannot but remember, that *I
said*—Very expressly; *I am not the Christ*—I never
pretended to be the Messiah, as you very well know;
but when you asked me, I told you I was only his
harbinger sent before, to give you notice of his
coming, and to prepare you for receiving him. *He
that hath the bride is the bridegroom, &c.*—So far
am I from envying his growing fame, or the number
of his disciples, that I greatly rejoice in both; just as
the bridegroom's friend, who is appointed to stand
and hear him converse with his bride, rejoices in the
love she expresses to him; of which love the friend
forms an idea likewise, by what he hears the bride-
groom say to her in return. My highest joy, there-
fore, is, that men cheerfully submit to the Messiah,
and pay him all due honour." Thus John was so
far from regretting the advancement of Christ and
his interest, as his disciples did, that he rejoiced in
it, expressing his joy by an elegant, well-known, and
expressive similitude. As if he had said, "Do all
men come to him? It is well: whither else should
they go? Has he got the throne in men's affec-
tions? Who else should have it? It is his right.
To whom should the bride be brought but to the
bridegroom? The Word was made flesh, that the
disparity of nature might not be a bar to the union;
provision is made for the purifying of the church, that
the defilement of sin might be no bar. Christ espouses
the church to himself: he has the bride, for he has
her love and her promise." All that John had done
in preaching and baptizing, he had done as the
friend of the bridegroom, to introduce him to the
bride, recommend him to her affections, prepare her
for him, and in other respects do him honour and
service; and now that he was come, had gained her

A. M. 4034. because of the bridegroom's voice :
A. D. 30. this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

30 He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

31 'He that cometh from above 'is above all: 'he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: 'he that cometh from heaven is above all.

32 And ^kwhat he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

33 He that hath received his testimony,

^f Verse 13; Chap. viii. 23.—^g Matt. xxviii. 18; Chap. i. 15, 27; Rom. ix. 5.—^h 1 Cor. xv. 47.—ⁱ Chap. vi. 33; 1 Cor. xv. 47; Eph. i. 21; Phil. ii. 9.—^k Verse 11; Chap. viii. 26; xv. 15.—^l Rom. iii. 4; 1 John v. 10.

love, and betrothed her to himself; John had what he wished for, and rejoiced. Thus faithful ministers, as friends of the bridegroom, recommend him to the affections and choice of mankind; and the espousing of souls to Christ in faith and love, is the fulfilling of their joy.

Verses 30, 31. *He must increase*—And appear continually more and more glorious, like the growing moon; *but I must decrease*—Must gradually wane and decline, till I disappear: for the end of my ministry is now, in a great measure, answered, and therefore I quickly expect to be dismissed from it. *He that cometh from above is above all*—As if he had said, It is fit he should increase, while I decrease; for he is a person of infinitely greater dignity than I am, possesses far more knowledge of the divine will, and the discoveries which he makes thereof as far transcend mine as heaven exceeds earth. Thus John speaks of Christ's increase and his own decrease, not only as what was necessary and unavoidable, and that which could not be prevented, and therefore must be borne; but as highly just and agreeable to him: and he is entirely satisfied with it, nay, and rejoices in it. Thus 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 amid 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. But let us especially rejoice to observe the glory of Christ increasing, and eclipsing the lustre of all other glory, as the increasing light of the morning causes the glory of the morning star to decline, and at last entirely to disappear. And, if our diminution and abasement may but in the least contribute to the advancement of his name and honour, let us cheerfully submit to it, and be content to be any thing, yea, to be nothing, so that Christ may be all.

Verses 32-34. *And what he hath seen and heard*—This is spoken in allusion to what was said in the preceding verse, of his being from above, where he enjoyed the most intimate communications of the divine counsels; *that he testifieth*—Clearly, fully, and faithfully; *and no man receiveth his testimony*

¹hath set to his seal that God is true. A. M. 4034.
A. D. 30.

34 ^mFor he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit ⁿby measure unto him.

35 ^oThe Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

36 ^pHe that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

^m Chap. vii. 16.—ⁿ Chap. i. 16.—^o Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18; Luke x. 22; Chapter v. 20, 22; xiii. 3; xvii. 2; Hebrews ii. 8. ^p Hab. ii. 4; Chap. i. 12; vi. 47; Verses 15, 16; Rom. i. 17; 1 John v. 10.

—That is, very few receive it, particularly concerning the spiritual nature of the kingdom of God, and the qualifications requisite in his subjects. There is a strong resemblance between this and what our Lord himself said to Nicodemus, verses 11-13. *He that hath received his testimony*—That hath understood and believed it; *hath set to his seal that God is true*—Hath made a most just and substantial acknowledgment of the veracity of God, who by his prophets in ancient times foretold what the nature of his kingdom under the Messiah would be, and who speaks to men now by his only-begotten Son, in such a manner as he never did by any other prophet. As *sealing* was employed for vouching the authenticity of writings, *to seal* came, by a natural and easy transition, to signify, *to vouch, to attest*. Our acceptance of God's message by his Son, through an unshaken faith, vouches on our part the faithfulness of God, and the truth of his promises. *For he whom God hath sent*—His only-begotten Son; *speaketh the words of God*—Declareth doctrines which ought to be regarded as divine oracles, showing themselves to be such by their own native light of truth, and proved to be such by a great variety of the most extraordinary miracles. *For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him*—Or, under such limitations, and with such interruptions, as he hath given, or still gives, that blessed gift to all his other messengers; but it dwells in him by a constant presence, and operates through him by a perpetual and unprecedented energy.

Verses 35, 36. *The Father loveth the Son*—Incomparably, beyond the most faithful of his servants, and with an affection very different from the regard which he hath manifested, does, or ever will manifest to any of his other messengers. They were *servants*, and were treated as such, being endowed with scanty portions of the Spirit, compared to those of which he is possessed; whereas this is the *Son*, for which reason God has anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows. *And hath given all things into his hand*—Hath not only made him the greatest prophet and priest, but the greatest king also, that ever was; even king and judge universal, by whose laws men must govern their lives, and at whose bar they shall all be finally tried. *He, therefore, that believeth on the Son*—With a living

faith, a faith of the operation of God, Col. ii. 12; he that receiveth him in all his offices and characters; hath everlasting life—Hath a title to it, being a child of God, is an heir of it, has an increasing meetness for it, and an earnest of it by the Holy Spirit in his heart. *And he that believeth not the Son*—That does not receive his doctrine in faith and love, and with an obedient mind; or, *who is disobedient to the Son*, as the original expression seems more properly to signify; and continues in unbelief and disobedience, shall not see, or enjoy life—Either spiritual or eternal; but the wrath of God abideth on him—Being unpardoned and unrenewed, he remains under the guilt of all his sins, and is continually exposed to that wrath of God which, if his repentance, faith, and new obedience do not prevent, will quickly sink him into final condemnation and ruin. It is justly observed here, by Dr. Doddridge, that “it is of great importance to preserve a difference in the translation between ο πιστευων εις τον υιον, *he that believeth on the Son*, and ο απειθων τω υιω, *he that is disobedient to the Son*; because the latter phrase explains the former, and shows that the faith, to which

the promise of life is annexed, is an effectual principle of sincere and reserved obedience; and it is impossible to make one part of Scripture consistent with another, unless this be taken into our idea of saving faith.” It must be observed, also, that in Scripture the word *abide* has frequently a particular signification, denoting the adhesion and permanency of the thing that is said to abide. Of this signification we have an example here, for the Baptist does not speak of that momentary wrath, or displeasure of God, whereby he often chastises his people for their offences, or even cuts them off by a premature death, but of that abiding wrath which torments and does not kill, and being once inflicted never comes to an end. “Thus the Baptist bare testimony to Jesus anew, setting forth his dignity, in the plenitude of his commission, the excellence of his gifts, the nearness of his relation to his heavenly Father, as his only Son, and the greatness of his power, as universal judge:” and thus he concluded those of his testimonies to Christ, which are recorded in the gospel; and was quickly after imprisoned by Herod.

CHAPTER IV.

Here, (1,) Christ, going from Judea to Galilee, meets with a woman of Samaria, and enters into a conference with her, in which he discovers himself to her as the Messiah, 1-27. (2,) The woman recommends him to her neighbours, 28-30. (3,) He converses with his disciples concerning his delight to serve his Father, and the ripeness of the people for the gospel dispensation, 31-38. (4,) He is believed on, and confessed to be the Messiah, by the Samaritans, 39-42. (5,) Returning to, and residing in Galilee, he cures a nobleman's son, who was dangerously ill, 43-54.

A. M. 4034. **W**HEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and *baptized more disciples than John,

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) A. M. 4034. A. D. 30. 3 He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

* Chap. iii.

22, 26.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1-3. *When the Lord knew*—Without receiving information from any one; *how the Pharisees*—Whose interest in the sanhedrim was very great; *had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John*—To shun the effects of their envy and malice, which were hereby excited; *he left Judea*—After having continued there, it seems, about eight months; *and departed again into Galilee*—His former place of abode, where the influence and power of the council were not so great, and where his presence was necessary, as the ministry of his forerunner in that country was now brought to a period. It seems the testimony which the Baptist had given to Christ, together with the miracles which he himself had wrought at Jerusalem during the passover, had greatly impressed the minds of the people; so that vast numbers, during his abode in those parts, were continually flocking around him, and many attached themselves to him as his follow-

ers; a circumstance which gave great umbrage to the Pharisees. For these men claimed it as the privilege of their sect to direct the consciences of the people, and were therefore enraged to find such numbers of them acknowledging, as the Messiah, one whose birth and fortune so little suited the notions which they had taught concerning the great deliverer of the nation. The evangelist informs us, that *Jesus himself baptized not*—Perhaps because it was not proper to baptize in his own name, and because it was of more importance to preach than to baptize, 1 Cor. i. 17. Besides, it might have given those who were baptized by him occasion to value themselves above others, as happened in the church of Corinth, where the brethren valued themselves upon the character of the persons who had baptized them. Indeed the baptism properly Christ's was that of the Holy Ghost, with which Spirit John had foretold he should baptize his followers. See Mac-knight.

A. M. 4034. 4 And he must needs go through
A. D. 30. Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground ^b that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

^b Gen. xxxiii. 19; xlviii. 22; Josh. xxiv. 32.—^c 2 Kings xvii. 24; Luke ix. 52, 53; Acts x. 28.

Verses 4-6. *And he must needs go through Samaria*—The road from Judea to Galilee lying directly through it. *Then cometh he*—In the progress of his journey; *to a city of Samaria, called Sychar*—The original name of the place was Sichem, or Shechem, but now the Jews called it *Sychar*, which name they used as a term of reproach, intimating thereby that it was the seat of drunkards, see Isa. xxviii. 1; *near to the parcel of ground that Jacob*—Having purchased it of the children of Hamor, Gen. xxxiii. 19; *gave to his son Joseph*—By a particular grant. See Gen. xlviii. 22; Josh. xxiv. 32. The word *χωριον*, here rendered *parcel*, is translated by Dr. Campbell, *heritage*, as meaning, he observes, an estate in land; and that, since the estate here spoken of was given by the patriarch to his son Joseph, to be possessed by him and his posterity, it may be properly denominated *heritage*. *Now Jacob's well was there*—A well so called, as having been used by Jacob and his family, while he dwelt in those parts. See Gen. xxxiii. 18; xxxv. 4. *Jesus, being wearied with his journey*—For he was subject to all the innocent infirmities of human nature; *sat thus*—Weary as he was, on the side of the well; *and it was about the sixth hour*—Or just high noon; so that the heat co-operated with the fatigue of the journey to increase both his thirst and faintness. It must be observed, that in the latitude in which Judea lies, the weather is sometimes exceeding hot at noon, even in December, and on days when the cold has been very severe in the morning.

Verses 7, 8. *There cometh*—At the very juncture of time; *a woman of Samaria to draw water*—The providence of God so ordering it, that she might have an opportunity of hearing the truth, in order to her salvation. *Jesus*—With a view to introduce a discourse which he graciously intended should be the means of her conversion; *saith to her, Give me to drink*—And it is remarkable, that in this one conversation he brought her to that knowledge which the apostles were so long in attaining. *For his disciples were gone unto the city*—Otherwise they might have assisted him to get water, and he would not have needed to have asked her.

Verse 9. *Then saith the woman, How is it that*

8 (For his disciples were gone away ^{A. M. 4034.}
unto the city to buy meat.) ^{A. D. 30.}

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for ^c the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee ^d living water.

^d Isaiah xii. 3; xlv. 3; Jeremiah ii. 13; Zechariah xiii. 1; xiv. 1.

thou, being a Jew—As it appears by thy habit and dialect thou art; *askest drink of me, &c., for the Jews have no dealings*—Or rather, *no friendly intercourse; with the Samaritans*—They would receive no kind of favour from them. That the expression, *no dealings*, as Dr. Campbell justly observes, “implies too much to suit the sense of this passage, is manifest from the preceding verse, where we are told, that the disciples were gone into the Samaritan city Sychar to buy food. The verb *συγγραμαι*, is one of those called *απαξ λεγομενα*, once used: it does not occur in any other place of the New Testament, or in the Septuagint. The Pharisees were in their traditions nice distinguishers. Buying and selling with the Samaritans were permitted, because that was considered as an intercourse merely of interest or convenience; borrowing and lending, much more asking or accepting any favour, was prohibited; because that was regarded as an intercourse of friendship, which they thought it impious to maintain with those whom they looked upon as the enemies of God.”

Verses 10-12. *Jesus answered*—And in his answer, shows her that he was not under the power of such common prejudices; *If thou knewest the gift of God*—Which he is now bestowing on mankind by his Son; meaning the Holy Spirit and its fruits, styled, as here, *δωρα το Θεου*, the gift of God, Acts viii. 20; and *η δωρα*, the gift, Acts xi. 17; *and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink*—How great a person he is who is now conversing with thee. Instead of scrupling to grant him so small a favour, *thou wouldest have asked*—*εν ανηθους*, thou surely wouldest have asked; *of him, and he*—Without objecting to thee on account of the people unto whom thou belongest; *would readily have given thee living water*—Water incomparably better than that which thou art drawing. By this our Lord intended to signify his ability and readiness to communicate those influences and graces of the Holy Spirit, which refresh the soul that earnestly desires them, as water refreshes a thirsty person. The influences of the Holy Spirit are termed *living water* also, chap. viii. 38; and *water of life*, Rev. xxi. 6; and xxii. 1, 17; and *clean water*, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. The phrase, *living water*, frequently signifying, in the

A. M. 4034. 11 The woman saith unto him, A. D. 30. Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again;

• Chap. vi. 35, 58.—† Chap. vii. 38.

language of Judea, only *springing water*, or *running water*, in opposition to that which stagnates, the woman mistook his meaning and replied, *Thou hast nothing to draw with*—*Ουτε αντλημα εχεις, thou hast not a bucket*, nor any other instrument where-with thou canst draw the water; and this *well*—The only spring hereabout; *is deep: from whence then hast thou*—Whence canst thou obtain; *that living water*—Of which thou speakest? Or, what is the extraordinary supply which thou declarest may be had from thee? Mr. Maundrell tells us, that the well, now shown as Jacob's, is thirty-five yards deep. *Art thou greater*—“Art thou a person of greater power, or more in favour with God; than our father Jacob—That thou canst procure water by supernatural means? He was obliged to dig this well, in order to provide drink for himself and his family: canst thou create water?” Although this woman speaks of Jacob as the *father*, or progenitor of the Samaritans, they were in truth not his progeny, but the descendants of those nations which the king of Assyria placed there in the room of the Israelites, whom he carried away captive, 2 Kings xvii. 24; *who gave us the well*—In Joseph their supposed father; and *drank thereof himself*—So even he, great and holy as he was, had no better water than this. Observe here, reader, the reason why men are indifferent about the inestimable *gift of God* here spoken of, the Holy Spirit, and either do not sincerely and earnestly apply to God in prayer for it, or apply without success, is not their knowledge, and their preservation thereby from enthusiasm, but their ignorance, and their being destitute of all true religion through that ignorance. If, as Jesus says to this woman, they knew this *gift of God*, knew its nature, excellence, necessity, and attainableness, and together therewith the way of attaining it; and that Christ has received it for them, and how willing, as well as able, he is to bestow it, they surely would ask it of him, and he would not fail to give them this living water.

Verses 13-15. *Jesus said, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again*—How much soever this water may be esteemed, and though it may refresh the body, and allay its thirst for a little while, yet the appetite will soon return, even if it be drunk ever so plentifully. *But whosoever drinketh of the*

14 But * whosoever drinketh of the A. M. 4034. water that I shall give him, shall never A. D. 30. thirst; but the water that I shall give him, † shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 † The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have

‡ Chap. vi. 34; xvii. 2, 3; Rom. vi. 23; 1 John v. 20.

water that I shall give him—Will find it so reviving and satisfying to his soul; that he *will never thirst*—Be without refreshment, dissatisfied, or unhappy; that is, provided he continue to drink thereof. If ever his thirst, or his dissatisfaction and uneasiness return, it will be the fault of the man, not of the water. *But the water that I shall give him*—The Spirit of faith and love, hope and joy, of holiness and happiness; *shall be in him*—An inward, living principle; *a well of water*—A fountain, as *πηγη* signifies. A well is soon exhausted. *Springing*—*Αλλομενε, bubbling up*, and flowing on into everlasting life, which is a confluence, or rather an ocean of streams arising from this fountain. “Some would render the original expression, *ε μη διψηση εις τον αιωνα*, (instead of *shall never thirst*,) *shall not thirst for ever*: but not to urge how much this spoils the antithesis, the expression used, John vi. 35, *ε μη διψηση ποποτε*, is not liable to any such ambiguity. The force and truth of our Lord's assertion seems to lie in this, that the most impatient and restless desires of the soul being satisfied, when it is fixed on God as its supreme happiness, other thirst was not worth being mentioned.”—Doddridge. *The woman*—Still ignorant of our Lord's meaning, and understanding him as speaking only of natural water; *saith unto him, Sir, give me this water*—Extraordinary as it is, according to thy declaration; *that I thirst not*—Any more for ever, and may be saved the trouble of coming every day so far for water. She seems to have had a mind to turn Christ's words into ridicule. It therefore became necessary that he should open to her a new scene, and, by bringing her besetting sin to remembrance, touch her in a tender part, as he does in the next words.

Verses 16-18. *Jesus saith, Go call thy husband*—What Christ had said to her concerning his grace and eternal life, he found had made little impression upon her, because she had not been convinced of sin; therefore, waiving the discourse about the *living water*, he sets himself to awaken her conscience, and proceeds to open the wounds of her depravity and guilt, that she might better understand, and more readily receive, the remedy provided by grace. *The woman*—Conscious of the sinfulness of the way in which she had lived, but desirous to evade conviction, and thinking to conceal her shame; *said, I*

A. M. 4034. no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

^a Luke vii. 16; xxiv. 19; Chapter vi. 14; vii. 40.—¹ Judges ix. 7.

have no husband—She wished to be thought a maid or a widow; whereas, though she had no husband, she was neither. *Jesus said, Thou hast well said*—That is, thou hast spoken the truth, in saying, *I have no husband; for, I well know, thou hast had five husbands*—Doubtless it was not her affliction, the burying of so many husbands, but her sin, that Christ intended to upbraid her with. Either she had forsaken some of her husbands and married others, or by her undutiful, unchaste, or otherwise improper conduct, had provoked them to divorce her; or by indirect means, and contrary to the law, she had divorced them. *He whom thou now hast is not thy husband*—Either she was never married to him at all; or, which is more probable, one or more of her former husbands were living, so that, in fact, she lived in adultery.

Verses 19, 20. *The woman saith, Sir, I perceive thou art a prophet*—“To find a person who was a perfect stranger, and who, on account of the national animosity, could not be suspected of having any intercourse with her townsmen, or with the Samaritans in general, discovering, nevertheless, the most secret particulars of her life, made so sensible an impression on her mind, that she could not but confess such a degree of knowledge more than natural; and consequently, that the person possessed of it was a prophet, and had it communicated to him by divine inspiration.” *Our fathers worshipped, &c.*—The instant she perceived that the person conversing with her was a prophet, being glad of the opportunity, and perhaps, also, desiring to shift the discourse to a subject less disagreeable to her, she proposes what she thought the most important of all questions; *Our fathers worshipped on this mountain*—As if she had said, True, I have been a sinful woman, and have not worshipped and served God as I ought, but if I wished to worship and serve him, I know not where I ought to do it, whether on this mountain, (pointing, probably, to mount Gerizim, at the foot of which Sychar was built,) as the Samaritans say, or in Jerusalem, which you Jews affirm to be the only place where God can be acceptably worshipped. It is well known, and necessary to be recollected here, that Sanballat, by the permission of Alexander the Great, had built a temple upon mount Gerizim, for Manasseh his son-in-law, 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. The woman,

20 Our fathers worshipped in ¹ this mountain; and ye say, that in ² Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, ¹ when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

^a Deut. xii. 5, 11; 1 Kings ix. 3; 2 Chron. vii. 12.—¹ Mal. i. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 8.

in saying, *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain*, 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 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. And though Hyrcanus, the son of Simon, who succeeded his father as high-priest, and prince of the Jews, had long ago destroyed the temple which Sanballat built here, (Jos. Antiq., xiii. 9,) yet it is plain that the Samaritans still resorted thither to worship, having, doubtless, rebuilt it, though probably in a meaner manner.

Verse 21. *Jesus saith to her*—In answer to this case of conscience; *Believe me*—Our Lord uses this expression only once, and that to a Samaritan. To his own people, the Jews, his usual language is, *I say unto you*. *The hour cometh*—Which will put an entire end to this controversy; *when ye*—Both Jews and Samaritans; *shall neither worship in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem*—As preferable to any other place: nay, when an end will be put to the worship at both places; and the true worship shall be no longer confined to any one place or nation. As if our Lord had said, Thou art expecting the hour to come, when either by some divine revelation, or some signal providence, this matter shall be decided in favour of Jerusalem or mount Gerizim; but I tell thee, the hour is at hand when it shall be no more a question: that which thou hast been taught to lay so much stress on, shall be set aside as a thing indifferent. Our Lord meant that the approaching dissolution of the Jewish economy, and the erection of the evangelical dispensation, should set this matter at rest, and lay all things respecting it in common, so that it should be perfectly indifferent whether in either of those places, or any other, men should worship God. Observe, reader, the worship of God is not now, under the gospel, appropriated to any place, as it was under the law: but it is his will that men should pray, give thanks, and worship and serve him everywhere. Our reason teaches us, indeed, to consult decency and convenience with respect to the places of our worship; but our religion enjoins that we give no preference to one place above another, in respect of holiness and acceptableness to God. They who prefer any act of worship merely for the sake of the house or building in which it is performed, (though it were as magnificent, and as solemnly consecrated as ever Solomon's temple was,)

A. M. 4034. 22 Ye worship ^{ye} know not
A. D. 30. what: we know what we worship,
for ^{salvation} is of the Jews.

2 Kings xvii. 29.—Isa. ii. 3; Luke xxiv. 47; Rom. ix. 4, 5.

forget that the hour is come when there should be no difference put in God's account; no, not between Jerusalem, which had been so famous for sanctity, and the mount of Samaria, which had been so infamous for impiety.

Verse 22. *Ye worship ye know not what*—Or rather, as the original words, *υμεις προσκυνειτε ο εκ οιδατε, ye worship what ye know not*, that is, ye Samaritans are ignorant, not only of the place, but, in a great measure, also of the very object of worship. They believed indeed, in a sense, in the one living and true God, as the Jews did; drawing their knowledge of him from the five books of Moses, the authority of which they acknowledged. But as they did not receive the writings of the prophets as canonical, or of divine inspiration, it is not to be supposed that they were, in general, so well acquainted with God, and the service he required, as the Jews were. On the contrary, it is probable that they were sunk into a state of gross ignorance in these respects. For, if the writings of the prophets were of importance for conveying to mankind the knowledge of the perfections and will of God, the Samaritans, who rejected all those writings, must, on this head, have been more ignorant than the Jews. Doubtless, many of them were like their progenitors, of whom we read, (2 Kings xvii. 32,) that *they feared the Lord*, namely, after a fashion; but, at the same time, *served their own gods*, that is, they joined the worship of idols with his worship: or worshipped him merely as a local deity, as is plainly intimated, verses 26 and 27 of that chapter, where they twice term him, *the God of the land*. *We know what we worship*—Or rather, as the Greek is, *we worship what we know*, or, we know the God we worship. Our Lord and his disciples, and such Jews as were pious, certainly knew the God they worshipped; and the Jews in general had much more correct ideas of the nature and attributes of God than the Samaritans had. Christ elsewhere condemns the corruptions of the Jewish worship; yet here defends their worship with regard to its object: for we may be right with respect to the object of our worship, even when there is much that is faulty and corrupt in the manner of it. *For salvation is of the Jews*—All the prophets spoke of the Saviour as one that should come out of the Jewish nation, and that through him the knowledge of the true God, and of the true way of worshipping and serving him, should be communicated to the rest of mankind. For, as the author of salvation came of the Jews, appeared among them, and was sent first to bless them, affording them, in an extraordinary way, the means of salvation; so the word of salvation was of them, and was delivered to them, to be derived from them to other nations. This was a sure guide to them in their worship, and they who followed it knew what they worshipped. As they,

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23 But the hour cometh, and now ^{is} when the true worshippers shall
A. M. 4034. worship the Father in ^{spirit} and in truth:
A. D. 30.

Phil. iii. 3.—Chap. i. 17.

therefore, were thus privileged and advanced, it was presumption for the Samaritans to vie with them.

Verse 23. *But the hour cometh and now is*—The fixed and stated time, concerning which it was of old determined when it should come, even the *accepted time and day of salvation*. And when our Lord thus spoke, it was coming in its full strength, lustre, and perfection. As if he had said, The thing you are chiefly concerned to know is, that a dispensation of religion is now beginning, under which all languages, countries, and places being sanctified, men are to worship God, not in Jerusalem, but in their hearts, and by their lives; by offering the sacrifice, not of beasts, but of themselves; the thing signified by every sacrifice and service enjoined in the law, and what alone was acceptable to the Father, even under the legal dispensation; *when the true worshippers*—And what does it avail to be a *false worshipper*? *shall worship the Father*—Shall worship God as a *Father*, even as a reconciled Father in Christ, who hath made them his children through faith in him, (chap. i. 12; Gal. iii. 26,) by adoption and regeneration, see note on Matt. vi. 9; *in spirit and truth*—*In spirit*, and therefore *in truth*: that is, 1st, In our spirit, or inwardly in our minds and hearts, adoring his majesty, revering his power, humbled before his purity, confiding in his mercy, praising him for his benefits, loving him for his unspeakable love to us; being subject to his sway, obedient to his will, resigned under his dispensations, devoted to his glory, and aspiring after a closer union with him, and a more full conformity to him. And all this, 2d, Through the illuminating, quickening, and comforting influences of his Spirit; without which our worship is but a shadow without substance, a form without power, a body without a soul: the lifeless image of worship, without truth and reality: nay, a mere *lie*. For when we ask blessings, which we do not sincerely desire and expect to receive; thank God for favours for which we feel no gratitude; sit down to hear that word of which we neither intend nor desire to be *doers*, our worship is hypocrisy and a *lie*: as it is also when we have not within us, during our pretended worship, affections and dispositions suited to his divine attributes, and the relations in which he is pleased to stand to us. For to worship him without *reverence* and *humility*, is to say, in effect, that he is not great and glorious, just and holy; to do it without *confidence* and *gratitude*, is saying in our spirit that he is not merciful, kind, and beneficent; to worship him without love and obedience, subjection and resignation, is to deny his love to us, and his authority over us, as our Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, Redeemer, Saviour, Friend, and Father; and the wisdom, justice, and goodness of his dispensations: that is, it is to worship him *in a lie*. For whether we say, by our

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A. M. 4034. for the Father seeketh such to worship
A. D. 30. him.

24 ^a God is a Spirit: and they that worship him, must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

¶ 2 Cor. iii. 17.—Verses 29, 39.

spirit and conduct, that he possesses these perfections or not, it is certain he does possess them, and our not acknowledging it, and being properly influenced thereby, is, in effect, to deny it, and to affirm he is not the being that he is, and does not possess the attributes that he does possess. *For the Father seeketh such to worship him*—Desires and approves of such worshippers, and sends his word and Spirit, his gospel and his grace, to form such. The expression implies, 1st, That such worshippers are very rare, and seldom found. The gate of spiritual worship is strait. 2d, That such worship is necessary, and what the God of heaven requires and insists upon. When God comes to inquire for worshippers, the question will not be, *Who worshipped at Jerusalem?* but, who worshipped in spirit and truth? That will be the touchstone, or test, whereby men's religion will be tried, and whereby they will stand or fall in the day of final accounts.

Verse 24. *God is a Spirit, &c.*—“As a further answer to the woman's question, our Lord delivered a doctrine which may justly be called his own, as it exhibits an idea of God, and of the worship which is due to him, far more sublime than the best things said by the philosophers on that subject.” Christ came to declare God to us, and this he has declared concerning him, that he is a *Spirit*, and he declared it to this poor Samaritan woman, for the meanest are concerned to know God; and with this design, to rectify her mistakes concerning religious worship, to which nothing could contribute more than the right knowledge of God. 1st, *God is a Spirit*, for he is an infinite and eternal mind; an intelligent being, yea, the supreme Intelligence, who by one act sees the thoughts of all other intelligences whatever, and so may be worshipped in every place; he is incorporeal, immaterial, invisible, and incorruptible: for it is easier to say what he is not than what he is. If God were not a *Spirit*, he could not be perfect, nor infinite, nor eternal, nor independent, nor the Father of spirits. Now, 2d, on this spirituality of the divine nature is founded the necessity of the spirituality of divine worship; for the worship of God must partake of his nature: as his nature is spiritual, his worship, to be acceptable, must be so likewise. If we do not worship God, who is a Spirit, in spirit, we neither give him the glory due to his name, and so do not perform a real and proper act of worship, nor can we hope to attain his favour, and acceptance with him, and so we miss the end of worship. The exercise of faith and love, therefore, and of other graces, must constitute the true spiritual worship which we owe to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and which cannot but be

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25 The woman saith unto him, I know A. M. 4034.
that Messias cometh, which is called A. D. 30.
Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.

¶ Chap. ix. 37; Matt. xxvi. 63, 64; Mark xiv. 63, 64.

acceptable to him, wherever it is offered, in whatever place, and by whatever person.

Verses 25, 26. *The woman saith, I know that Messias cometh*—She probably meant from among the Jews. The Jews and Samaritans, though so much at variance in other things, agreed in the expectation of the Messiah and his kingdom. This the Samaritans probably grounded on the writings of Moses, which, as has been observed, they received as of divine authority. It was also, doubtless, strengthened by the slight acquaintance which they had with the writings of the prophets, and by the hopes which they knew were entertained by the Jewish nation, not to mention the general expectation which now prevailed in many parts of the East, that a great prince was soon to arise in Judea; *which is called Christ*—It would appear from the manner in which this clause is expressed, that it was spoken by the woman; and yet it is manifest that could not have been the case. “Our Lord and the woman spoke a dialect of the Chaldee, at that time the language of the country, and in the New Testament called Hebrew, wherein *Messiah* was the proper term, and consequently needed not to be explained to either of them into Greek, which they were not speaking, and which was a foreign language to both. But it was very proper for the evangelist, who wrote in Greek, and in the midst of those who did not understand Chaldee, when introducing an oriental term, to explain it for the sake of his Greek readers.”—Campbell. *When he is come, he will tell us all things*—Relating to the service of God, which it is necessary for us to know: he will supply our defects of knowledge, rectify our mistakes, and put an end to all our disputes, and will make us fully acquainted with the mind and will of God. The woman seems to have spoken this with joy for what she had already learned, and with a desire of fuller instruction. *Jesus saith*—Hasting to satisfy her desire before his disciples came; *I that speak unto thee am he*—Our Lord did not speak of himself thus plainly to the Jews, because, as they were full of expectation that the Messiah, when he came, would erect a glorious temporal kingdom, and constitute them a free, happy, and prosperous people, if Jesus had openly professed to be that expected deliverer of their nation, many of them would doubtless have taken up arms in his favour, and others have accused him to the Roman governor. Yet he did, in effect, declare what implied it, though he declined using and applying to himself 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.

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A. M. 4034. 27 ¶ And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

28 The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

29 Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

^t Verse 25.

Verse 27. *Upon this came his disciples*—Who, as was said before, were gone into the city to buy food; and marvelled that he talked with the woman—Or rather (as the word *γυναίκα* is without the article) with a woman, which the Jewish rabbies reckoned it scandalous for a man of distinction to do. And that the disciples were not, in such things, superior to the prejudices of their countrymen, is manifest from the whole of their history. They marvelled likewise at his talking with a woman of that nation, which was so peculiarly hateful to the Jews. Yet no man said to the woman, *What seekest thou?—Or to Christ, Why talkest thou with her?*

Verses 28–30. *The woman then*—Seeing other company coming up to interrupt the discourse, immediately left her water-pot—Or pail, behind her, forgetting smaller things, while her thoughts were engrossed with matters of the greatest importance; and went her way with all haste into the city—Where she published the news in the streets, and said to all she met with, *Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did*—Even the most secret circumstances of my past life. 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 speaks thus to excite them to make the inquiry. *Then they went out of the city, &c.*—The Samaritans, struck both with wonder and curiosity, did not delay, but accompanied her instantly, wishing, no doubt, that her news might prove true.

Verses 31–34. *In the mean while*—Before the people came; his disciples prayed him, saying, *Master, eat*—They set the meat, which they had brought, before him, and requested him to partake of it, knowing how much he needed refreshment. *But he said, I have meat to eat that ye know not of*—Meat which yields me much more refreshment than any food which you can have brought me. He refers to the conversation which he had just had with the woman, and to the expected conversion of the Samaritans. When he sat down upon the well, he was weary, and needed sustenance; but this opportunity of saving souls made him forget his weariness and hunger. *Therefore said the disciples*—Not understanding his words in that spiritual sense in which he had spoken them; *one to another*—With some surprise,

31 ¶ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. A. M. 4034. A. D. 30.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him aught to eat.

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months,

^u Job xxiii. 12; Chap. vi. 38; xvii. 4; xix. 30.

considering where he was; *Hath any man brought him aught to eat?*—Has any one been with him while we have been absent, and supplied him with provisions? *Jesus*—Who knew the loss they were at to understand his meaning; *saith unto them*—With a view to explain it; *My meat*—My most refreshing and delightful food, and that which satisfies the strongest appetite of my soul; *is to do the will of him that sent me, &c.*—He made his work his meat and drink; namely, the work he had done, his instructing the woman, and the work he had to do among the Samaritans; the prospect he now had of doing good to many; this was to him the greatest pleasure and satisfaction imaginable. Observe here, reader, 1st, The salvation of sinners is the will of God, and the instruction of them in order thereunto, is his work, 1 Tim. ii. 4. 2d, Christ was sent into the world for this purpose, to bring sinners to God, to bring them to know him, and to be happy in him. 3d, He made this work his business and delight. When his body needed food, his mind was so taken up with this, that he forgot both hunger and thirst, both meat and drink. 4th, He was not only ready, upon all occasions, to enter upon his work, but he was concerned and earnest to go through it, and finish it in all its parts. He resolved never to quit it, or lay it down till he could say, *It is finished*. Many have zeal to carry them out at first, and induce them to undertake the Lord's work; but not zeal to carry them on to the last, and cause them to persevere till they have accomplished it. But our Master has herein left us an example, that we may learn to do the will of God as he did—with diligence and close application, as those that make it their business—with delight and pleasure in it, as persons in their element—with constancy and perseverance, not only inclining them to begin, but aiming at finishing their work.

Verses 35, 36. *Say not ye, There are yet four months, &c.*—Dr. Whitby, Grotius, and many others, understand this, as if our Lord had said, It is a proverbial expression for the encouragement of husbands, that there are but four months between seed-time and harvest. "But I cannot acquiesce," says Dr. Doddridge, "in this interpretation, 1st, Because none of the learned writers referred to above, nor Dr. Lightfoot, who is large on this text, could pro-

A. M. 4034. and then cometh harvest? behold, I
A. D. 30. say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and
look on the fields; *for they are white already
to harvest.

36 † And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and
gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he
that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice
together.

* Matt. ix. 37; Luke x. 2.

duce any such proverb. 2d, Because, indeed, there could be no foundation for it, since the distance between seed-time and harvest must differ according to the different kinds of grain in question. And, 3d, Because if there had been such a proverb, it would have been improper to apply it here, since our Lord was not speaking of the period of time between the prophets' sowing, and the apostles' reaping; (to which four months has no analogy;) but only means to tell them, that though they reckoned yet four months to the *earthly harvest*, the *spiritual harvest* was now ripe. So that I choose, as Sir Isaac Newton does, to take the words in their plainest sense, as an intimation that there were then four months to the beginning of harvest. And I take this passage to be of great importance for settling the chronology of Christ's ministry." *Lift up your eyes, even now, and look on the fields round about you, for they are white already to harvest*—Laden with a plentiful crop of ripe corn. He alluded to the disposition of the people in general to receive the gospel, and more particularly to the multitude of the Samaritans, who, struck with the report of the woman, were coming in such numbers as covered the ground, to inquire after him as the Messiah, and to hear his doctrine; and unto whom he pointed and directed his disciples to look, as being within their view. And, as they laboured together with him in this spiritual harvest, to encourage them, he puts them in mind of the reward, adding, *And he that reapeth*—The harvest of which I now speak; he that by labouring in the word and doctrine converts sinners, and turns them to God; *receiveth wages*—Infinitely more valuable than men can give; and *gathereth fruit unto life eternal*—Both saves himself and those that hear him, 1 Tim. iv. 16. Christ compares the case of a faithful Christian minister to that of a considerate reaper, who is supported in his fatigue, not only by a regard to his own wages, but to the advantage which the public receives by the harvest he gathers in. This the original expression, συναγει καρπον εις ζωην αιωνιον, seems plainly to import, and so is parallel to James v. 20, *He that converteth a sinner shall save a soul from death, &c.*, and suggests a most forcible consideration to diligence and zeal. If the spiritual reaper save his own soul, even that is fruit abounding to his account, fruit gathered to *life eternal*. And if, over and above this, he be instrumental in saving the souls of others too, there also is fruit gathered, good fruit, the fruit that Christ seeks for, Rom. i. 13. This is the comfort of faithful ministers, that their

37 And herein is that saying true, A. M. 4034.
A. D. 30. One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

39 † And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him * for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

† Dan. xii. 3.—* Verse 29.

work has a tendency to, and is instrumental of, the eternal salvation of precious souls.

Verses 37, 38. *Herein is that saying true*—That common proverb; *One soweth and another reapeth*—He alludes to what often happens, namely, that after he has sown his field, a man dies before he gathers in the harvest, and so leaves it to another, who enjoys the advantage of his pains. But the application which our Lord makes of this proverb here, does not imply any discontent in the persons who sow without reaping, as it seems to do in common uses; for the sower and the reaper are represented as rejoicing together in the rewards of their spiritual husbandry. *I sent you to reap that*—The fruit of that; *whereon ye bestowed no labour*—No labour of tilling or sowing the ground. *Other men laboured*—Namely, the ancient prophets, in sowing the seeds of piety and virtue among the Jews, and thereby exposed themselves to great hardships, persecutions, and sufferings. *And ye are entered into their labours*—Ye are employed to reap the fruit of that seed which they with great difficulty sowed, for ye are gathering into the kingdom of God, into the gospel church here, and into the kingdom of glory hereafter, those who, by the writings of the prophets, having been endued with a sense of religion, are prepared for entering into it.

Verses 39, 40. *Many of the Samaritans believed on him*—That is, believed him to be a divinely-commissioned teacher, and even the true Messiah, as appears from verse 42; *for the saying of the woman, who testified, He told me all that ever I did*—A declaration which both struck and convinced them: so is God sometimes pleased to use very weak and unlikely instruments for the beginning and carrying on of a good work. And our Lord, by instructing one poor woman, here spread instruction through a whole town. Let not ministers, then, be either careless or discouraged in their preaching, because their hearers are few and mean; for by doing good to them, good may be conveyed to more, and to persons of greater influence. If believers teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, a great number may learn, and these again may teach others. Philip preached the gospel to a single person in his chariot upon the road, and he not only received it himself, but carried it into his country, and propagated it there. We see here also the good effect of speaking experimentally of Christ, and of the things of God. This woman could say little of them, but what she did say, she spake from the heart, and fee-

A. M. 4034. 40 So when the Samaritans were
A. D. 30. come unto him, they besought him
that he would tarry with them: and he abode
there two days.

41 And many more believed, because of his
own word;

42 And said unto the woman, Now we be-
lieve, not because of thy saying: for ^a we have
heard him ourselves, and know that this is in-
deed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

43 ¶ Now after two days he departed
thence, and went into Galilee.

^a Chap. xvii. 8; 1 John iv. 14.—^b Matt. xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4;
Luke iv. 24.—^c Chap. ii. 23; iii. 2.—^d Deut. xvi. 16.

ingly. Those are most likely to do good to others,
who can tell what God has done for their own souls.
When the Samaritans were come to him—Being
greatly taken with the manner of his deportment,
and the tenor of his discourse; *they besought him
to tarry with them*—For some time at least, as being
desirous of a further acquaintance with him, and of
receiving further benefit from his instructions. For
the meanness of his appearance, when they saw him,
and the manifest poverty of his outward condition,
did not lessen their esteem of him, and expectations
from him. Observe, reader, we may entertain good
hopes of those who have got over the vulgar preju-
dices that men have against true worth in a low
estate. Blessed are they that are not offended in
Christ at the first sight. The evangelist seems to
lay an emphasis on their being Samaritans. See
also Luke x. 33; xvii. 16. The Samaritans had not
that reputation for religion that the Jews had; yet
the Jews, who saw Christ's miracles, drove him from
them, while the Samaritans, who saw not his mira-
cles, nor had shared in his favours, invited him to
them! The proof of the gospel's success is not
always according to *probability*, nor what is expe-
rienced according to what is expected. *And he—
Ever ready to lay hold on every opportunity of
doing good, went with them to their city; and abode
there two days*—Which was a proper medium be-
tween entirely neglecting them, and giving them so
much of his time and company as would have
broken in upon the design of his journey into Gal-
ilee, or might have given umbrage to the Jews.

Verses 41, 42. *And many more believed*—“This
was the more extraordinary, as they not only had a
national prejudice against him as a Jew, but, living
near mount Gerizim, had a particular interest in
maintaining the usual worship there; which must
have been very advantageous to the neighbourhood.
Perhaps on this they would no longer worship there,
which might irritate the rest of the Samaritans, and
in part provoke the ill usage that Christ afterward
met with in this country. Luke ix. 52.”—Dod-
dridge. *Because of his own word*—Which com-
mended itself to their reason and consciences, as
certainly true, and infinitely important. *And said*

44 For ^b Jesus himself testified, that ^c a prophet hath no honour in his own
A. M. 4034. country. A. D. 30.

45 Then when he was come into Gali-
lee, the Galileans received him, ^e having seen
all the things that he did at Jerusalem at
the feast: ^d for they also went unto the
feast.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee,
^e where he made the water wine. And there
was a certain ^f nobleman, whose son was sick
at Capernaum.*

* Chapter ii. 1, 11.—^d Or, *courtier*, or, *ruler*.—^e Second
Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 46 to the end.

*unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy
saying*—Not chiefly on account of it; *for we have
heard him ourselves*—Have heard such excellent
and divine truths from him, accompanied with such
commanding power and evidence, that we are
abundantly satisfied, *that this is indeed the Christ,*
the expected Messiah; *the Saviour of the world*—
And not of the Jewish nation only. The Samari-
tans might probably collect, from what was prophe-
sied by Jacob of the Messiah, Gen. xlix. 10, *to him
shall the gathering of the people be*, that the Gen-
tile nations were to receive some benefit by his
coming, and one way or another to be subjected to
him; and Christ's discourse might confirm that ap-
prehension. But there is no reason at all to believe
they perfectly understood the doctrine of the calling
of the idolatrous Gentiles, which was so long a
mystery even to the apostles themselves. Thus was
the seed of the gospel sown in Samaria. What effect
there was of this afterward doth not appear; but we
find that four or five years after, when Philip preach-
ed the gospel in Samaria, he found so much blessed
remains of this good work now wrought, that the
people, with one accord, gave heed to those things
which Philip spoke, Acts viii. 5–8; but as some
were easily influenced to good now, so were others
to evil afterward, when Simon Magus bewitched
many with his sorceries, verses 9, 10.

Verses 43–45. *After two days, he went into Gali-
lee*—That is, into the country of Galilee: but not to
Nazareth, where he had spent his childhood and youth.
It was at that town only that he had no honour. And
therefore he passed by it, and went to other towns.
Luke, speaking of this journey, says, chap. iv. 14, *Je-
sus returned in the power of the Spirit unto Galilee*.
See also Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14, 15. *The Galile-
ans received him*—Treated him courteously, and
attended his ministry with a disposition to believe,
having conceived a favourable opinion of him by
reason of the miracles they had seen him perform
in Jerusalem during the passover.

Verses 46–53. *There was a certain nobleman*—One
belonging to the king's court, as the word βασιλικός,
here used, properly signifies. The Syriac and Ara-
bic versions render it, a minister, or servant of the

A. M. 4034. 47 When he heard that Jesus was
A. D. 30. come out of Judea into Galilee, he
went unto him, and besought him that he
would come down, and heal his son: for he
was at the point of death.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, ' Except ye see
signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come
down ere my child die.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy
son liveth. And the man believed the word
that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went
his way.

† 1 Cor.

king, namely, of Herod; who, though only tetrarch
of Galilee, yet was commonly distinguished by the
title of king. And, as Capernaum lay in his domin-
ions, it is probable this was one of his courtiers. The
English word *nobleman* conveys the notion of he-
reditary rank, and certain dignities, to which there
was nothing in Palestine, or even in Syria, that cor-
responded. *He besought him that he would come
down and heal his son*—It seems the nobleman
thought it necessary that Jesus should be personally
present in order to his performing the cure. There-
fore, to reprove the weakness of his faith, Jesus said
to him, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will
not believe*—Or, as the latter clause may be render-
ed, *will ye not believe?* although the Samaritans
believed without them. *The nobleman saith, Sir,
come down ere my child die*—Weak as his faith was,
he determined, nevertheless, to urge the matter to
the utmost; and therefore, without any explanation
or apology on the point concerning which Christ
had reproved him, he entreats him to come down
immediately, the case being so extreme, that he
thought a delay might be attended with the most fa-
tal consequences. And shall we be less importunate
when soliciting spiritual blessings in behalf of our
dear offspring? Especially as their lives are so pre-
carious, and we know not how soon these lovely
flowers may be cut down, and all further petitions
for them be for ever superseded. *Jesus saith, Go
thy way, thy son liveth*—Thus showing that it was
not necessary for him to go in person to perform the
cure. *And the man believed the word that Jesus
had spoken*—Though he had never seen or heard
of a parallel case. He had, indeed, heard of Christ's
miracles, but this appears to have been the first, at
least it is the first recorded, in which Christ cured
the patient at a distance, and probably was hitherto
in this respect unequalled. And has not Jesus still
the same power? Can he not heal either our bodies
or souls, though not visibly present? O, let not
his bodily absence abate our faith, while either pray-

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51 And as he was now going down, A. M. 4034.
his servants met him, and told him, A. D. 30.
saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then inquired he of them the hour when
he began to amend. And they said unto him.

Yesterdai at the seventh hour the fever left him,
53 So the father knew that *it was* at the
same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him,
Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his
whole house.

54 This *is* again the second miracle *that*
Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea
into Galilee.

l. 22.

ing for others or for ourselves. *And he went his
way*—Without any further importunity. *And as
he was going, his servants met him*—Eager to bring
him the agreeable news of his son's recovery, and to
prevent him from taking the trouble of bringing
Jesus down. *Then inquired he when he began to
amend*—Being desirous to know whether it happened
at the very time when Jesus said, *Thy son liveth*.
Observe, reader, the more exactly the works of God
are considered, the more faith is increased. *They
said, Yesterdai at the seventh hour*—Or at one in
the afternoon; *the fever left him*—All of a sudden,
and he was restored to health immediately. *So the
father knew that it was at the same hour*—Or at
the very time when Jesus pronounced the healing
word, and that his son therefore had been miracu-
lously cured. *And himself believed, and his whole
house*—Namely, that Jesus, by whom so convincing
and beneficent a miracle had been wrought, must
be, not only, as he before supposed, some great pro-
phet, but even the Messiah himself. What a blessed
change now took place in this family, occasioned by
the sickness of the child, the cure of whose body
was made the means of producing faith in the souls
of all; whereby *salvation came to this house*, and
blessings infinitely more valuable than noble blood,
ample possessions, or royal favour could give! Con-
siderations of this kind should reconcile us to afflic-
tions; for we know not what great good may arise
from them. Blessed Jesus! Thy power was no
less employed in working faith in the souls of the
members of this family, than in curing the body of
the sick child. O may that power work in such a
manner in us that we may be disposed cordially to
believe in and love thee, and receive all the dispen-
sations of thy adorable providence with the most
perfect resignation to, and acquiescence in, thy wise,
holy, and blessed will, knowing on thy own infalli-
ble testimony by thy inspired apostle, *that all things
shall work together for good to them that love and
trust in thee!*

CHAPTER V.

(1,) Christ goes up to a feast at Jerusalem, and there cures a poor impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, 1-9. (2,) The Jews quarrel with him for doing it on the sabbath day, 10-16. (3,) Christ vindicates himself by asserting his authority as Son of God and Mediator, 17-30. (4,) Having declared to the Jews the dignity of his person, office, and character, he proceeds to prove his divine mission by the testimony of John the Baptist, of his own miracles, of his Father, and of the scriptures of the Old Testament, 32-39. (5,) He condemns the Jews for their unbelief, pride, and readiness to receive impostors, 40-47.

A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

AFTER ^athis there was a feast of the Jews: and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem, ^bby the sheep ¹market, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda, having five porches.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent

^a Lev. xxiii. 2; Deut. xvi. 1; Chap. ii. 13.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *After this there was a feast*—Greek, *ἡ εὐχὴ, the feast*; *of the Jews*—This, in all probability, was the feast of the passover; because that solemnity was called *the feast*, by way of eminence, (Matt. xxvii. 15; Mark xv. 6;) and because immediately after it, we find the disciples on the sabbath in the fields, rubbing the ears, probably of barley, a kind of grain which was always fit for reaping at the passover. It is generally thought this was the second passover that Christ attended after the commencement of his public ministry.

Verses 2-4. *Now there is at Jerusalem*—The Syriac seems to have read, *ἦν, there was*, as it is rendered in that version in the past time. Cyril, Chrysostom, and Theophylact favour this reading, as also does Nonnus. "If tolerably supported," says Dr. Campbell, "it would be accounted preferable, as this gospel was written after the destruction of Jerusalem." But if Jerusalem was destroyed, as it probably was, when St. John wrote this, it does not follow that the pool and its porticoes were destroyed also. The pool, or what is said to be it, is shown to travellers at the present time. *By the sheep-market a pool*—Or, *by the sheep-gate*, as Dr. Campbell renders *ἐκ τῆς προβατικῆς*, observing, however, that there is nothing in the Greek which answers to either *gate* or *market*; but the word used being an adjective, requires some such addition to complete the sense: and we have good evidence that one of the gates of Jerusalem was called the sheep-gate. See Neh. iii. 32; xii. 39. But we have no evidence that any place there was called the *sheep-market*. The word *κολυμβηθῆρα*, here rendered *a pool*, signifies a place to swim in. Doddridge, Macknight, Campbell, and many other learned men, understand by it, *a bath*, like those near Jericho, where Aristobulus was drowned by Herod's order, as he was swimming. *Called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda*—That is, *the house of mercy*; *having five porticoes*—Piazzas, or covered walks, being a most agreeable and salutary building in those warm climates, where excessive heat was not only troublesome, but prejudicial to health. Probably the basin had five sides. In

folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting ^{A. M. 4035.} for the moving of the water. ^{A. D. 31.}

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

^b Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39.—¹ Or, *gate*.

these lay a great multitude of impotent folk—The water being highly esteemed on account of some medicinal virtues which attended it, and the benefit many had received by bathing in it: *waiting for the moving of the water*—For an extraordinary commotion to be caused in it. *For an angel went down at a certain season*—Or, as some understand *κατὰ καιρὸν, at that season*, the season of the feast, mentioned verse 1, confining the miracle of the pool to this particular feast. For, since the evangelist does not say that the waters of this pool had their healing quality at any other feast, we are at liberty to make what supposition seems to us most probable. Perhaps the silence of Philo and Josephus upon this miracle may induce some to think that it happened only at one passover. For though many infirm people lay in these porticoes, if the angel, as is probable, descended frequently during that solemnity, the miracle would be no sooner known than multitudes would come and wait at the pool, to be cured by the moving waters. However, if the number of the sick, collected together on this occasion, and the phrase *κατὰ καιρὸν*, rendered, *at a certain season*, shall incline any to believe that these waters had a healing quality at other passovers also, the silence of the writers before mentioned needs not to be much regarded, it being well known that they have omitted much greater transactions, which they had as good an opportunity to know; namely, that multitude and variety of miracles which our Lord performed in the course of his ministry. See Macknight. As the word rendered *angel* means also *messenger*, and is frequently used of any messenger whatever, Dr. Hammond conjectures, that not an angel of God, but an officer, sent by the priests and rulers at a certain time to stir up the waters of this pool, is here intended; and that the warm entrails of animals, which he supposed were cast into it to be washed, communicated this healing virtue to it. But surely all the circumstances of this history, as Dr. Whitby justly observes, render this hypothesis highly improbable. For how is it likely, 1st, That this should be a natural means of curing all sorts of diseased persons, without exception, *the blind, the*

A. M. 4035. 5 And a certain man was there,
A. D. 31. which had an infirmity thirty and
eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that
he had been now a long time *in that case*, he
saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

* Matt. ix. 6; Mark

halt, and the withered? 2d, That it should only
cure the person that stepped in first, though he
might be followed by others the same instant; for
how should the natural virtue of this pool, impreg-
nated with the warm entrails of so many sacrifices,
extend itself only to one man? 3d, That it should
do this only at one time of the year, namely, at the
feast of passover; for this was done, not at *several*
times, but only at a *certain time*, or season, or at
that time, or season. And, lastly, the very founda-
tion of this conjecture is taken away by that observa-
tion of Dr. Lightfoot, that there was a laver in the
temple for the washing of those entrails, and so they
were not likely to be washed in this pool. It is fur-
ther to be observed, that these waters of Siloam were
a type of the kingdom of David, according to Isa.
viii. 6; and of Christ, according to chap. xii. 3 of
the same prophet; whence *Siloam* is interpreted *sent*,
by this evangelist, chap. ix. 7. To this type of the
Messiah, God might therefore give this virtue about
that time, to prepare the Jews to receive his advent,
who was sent to them; and, at the same time, when
a fountain was to be opened for sin and for unclean-
ness, (Zech. xiii. 1,) he might communicate this virtue
to this pool, as a prefiguration of it: whence, as Ter-
tullian observes, "the virtue of this pool then ceased,
when they, persisting in their infidelity, rejected our
Saviour." And this might be one reason why the
Jewish writers are so silent as to its virtue, because,
by its signification, it related to Christ, and by this
miracle confirmed his doctrine. "That the waters
of Bethesda," says Dr. Macknight, "should at this
time have obtained a miraculous healing quality,
was, without doubt, in honour of the personal ap-
pearance of the Son of God on earth. Perhaps it
was intended to show that Ezekiel's vision of waters,
(chap. xlvi. 1, 7,) issuing out of the sanctuary, was
about to be fulfilled; of which waters it is said,
(verse 9,) *They shall be healed, and every thing
shall live whither the river cometh.*

Verses 5, 6. *A certain man was there*—Among
the crowds which now lay in the porticoes of Beth-
esda, was one who had an *infirmity*—A weakness,
as the word *ασθενεια* means; *thirty and eight years*
—He had probably lost the use of his limbs, at least,
on one side, by a paralytic stroke. It is a great af-
fliction to have the body so disabled, that instead of
being the soul's instrument, it is become, even in the
affairs of this life, its burden. What reason many
of us have to thank God for bodily health and
strength, to use them for him, and to sympathize
with those who are deprived of them, and especially
with those, who, like this afflicted man, have been
deprived of them for many years! This poor man

7 The impotent man answered him, A. M. 4035.
Sir, I have no man, when the water A. D. 31.
is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while
I am coming, another steppeth down before me.
8 Jesus saith unto him, ° Rise, take up thy
bed, and walk.

ii. 11; Luke v. 24.

had been in a state of great weakness, attended,
doubtless, frequently with much pain, longer than
most persons live. Shall we complain of one or two,
or a few wearisome nights, or some short fits of
affliction or pain, who, perhaps, for many years,
have scarce known what it has been to be a day ill,
when many others, holier than we, have scarce
known what it has been to be a day well? *When*
Jesus saw him lie—Singling him out from the rest,
and fixing his eyes upon him; *he saith unto him*—
With great compassion; *Wilt thou be made whole?*—
The length and greatness of this man's affliction,
well known to Jesus, as is here observed, together
with his poverty, (verse 7,) were sufficient reasons
for his making choice of him to experience the mer-
cy of his healing power, a power infinitely superior
to the virtue of the waters, while he let the rest re-
main in their affliction. Our Lord seems to have
asked this afflicted man the above-mentioned ques-
tion, to give him an opportunity of declaring his
case in the hearing of the multitude: because such
a declaration would tend to make the miracle more
conspicuous, and to awaken the attention of the in-
habitants of the Jewish capital to the evidence he
was daily giving of his divine mission.

Verse 7. *The impotent man answered, I have
no man*—I am poor as well as lame, and unable to
hire any one to put me into the pool when the water
is troubled, and I have neither friend nor relation
to do this kind office for me. He seems to consider
Christ's question as implying an imputation of care-
lessness and neglect in him, and, therefore, gives
the reason why he was not made whole, notwith-
standing his desire. *While I am coming, another
steppeth down before me*—He signifies that he had
made many efforts to get into the pool, but hitherto
without success, one or another always preventing
him; and none having the charity to say, Your
case is worse than mine; do you go in now, and I
will stay till the next time; for the old maxim is
but too true, *Every one for himself*. Observe, reader,
how mildly this man speaks of the unkindness of
those about him, making no peevish reflections on
any one. As we should be thankful for the least
kindness, so we should be patient under the greatest
contempts: and whatever cause we may think we
have for resentment, yet we should take care that
our expressions be always calm. And observe fur-
ther, to his praise, that though he had waited so long
in vain, yet still he continued lying by the pool side,
hoping that some time or other help would come.

Verse 8. *Jesus saith, Rise, take up thy bed, and
walk*—A strange command to be given to an im-
potent man, that had been long disabled; but this

A. M. 4035. 9 And immediately the man was
A. D. 31. made whole, and took up his bed, and

walked: and ^d on the same day was the sabbath.
10 ¶ The Jews therefore said unto him that
was cured, It is the sabbath day; ^e it is not
lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

^d Chap. ix. 14.—^e Exod. xx. 10; Neh. xiii. 19; Jer. xvii. 21,

divine word was to be the vehicle of a divine power; it was a command to the disease to be gone, to nature to be strong. But it is expressed as a command to him to exert himself. He must *rise and walk*, that is, attempt to do so, and, in the essay, he shall receive strength. Thus the conversion of a sinner is the cure of a chronic disease, and is ordinarily effected by the word, a word of command; *arise and walk; turn and live; make ye a new heart*: but this no more supposes a power in us to obey such commands, without the grace of God, than these words of Christ supposed such a power in the impotent man. But if he had not attempted to help himself, he would not have been cured, but must have borne the blame of his continuing to be weak and helpless. Christ commanded him to take up his bed, 1st, That it might be evident a perfect cure was wrought, and that miraculously; for the man did not recover strength by degrees, but from the extremity of weakness, he suddenly stepped into the highest degree of bodily strength; so that he was able to carry as great a load as any porter, who had been as long used to carry burdens as he had been unaccustomed to any thing of the kind. 2d, Christ intended hereby to proclaim the cure, and make it public: for as it was the sabbath day, by carrying a burden through the streets he made himself very remarkable, and every one would inquire why he did it, by which means the notice of the miracle would spread, to the honour of God. 3d, Christ intended thus to witness against the traditions of the elders, who had stretched the law of the sabbath beyond its intention; and likewise to show, that he was Lord of the sabbath, and had power to make what alterations he pleased respecting it, and to overrule the law. The case may be such, that it may become a work of necessity, or mercy, to carry a bed on the sabbath day; but here it was more; it was a work of piety, being designed purely for the glory of God. 4th, He meant hereby to try the faith and obedience of his patient, who, by carrying his bed, would publicly expose himself to the censure of the ecclesiastical court, and become liable, at least, to be scourged in the synagogue. Now will he venture to subject himself to this reproach and suffering in obedience to Christ? Yes, he will. Those that have been healed by Christ's word, ought to be ruled by his word, whatever it may cost them.

Verses 9-11. *And immediately the man was made whole*—A divine power going along with the command of Christ. What a joyful surprise was this to the poor cripple, to find himself, all of a sudden, so easy, so strong, so able to help himself! What

11 He answered them, He that ^{A. M. 4035.}
made me whole, the same said unto ^{A. D. 31.}
me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that
which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and
walk?

&c.; Matt. xii. 2; Mark ii. 24; iii. 4; Luke vi. 2; xiii. 14.

a new world was he in, in an instant! Reader, nothing is too hard for Christ to do! *And took up his bed, and walked*—Finding himself whole, he did not object against his Deliverer's command, though contrary to the precepts of the doctors. He rose up immediately, and, by carrying away his bed with uncommon vigour, showed the greatness and perfection of his cure, not caring who blamed him, or threatened him for doing it. Thus the proof of our spiritual cure is our rising and walking. Hath Christ healed our spiritual diseases? Let us go whithersoever he sends us, and take up and bear whatever he is pleased to lay upon us, and walk before him. *And the same day was the sabbath*—That is, Either the first holy convocation in the feast of unleavened bread, that is, the morrow after the passover solemnity, which was one of the greatest sabbaths, (chap. xix. 31,) or the ordinary sabbath happening on the passover week, and consequently the day on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, as mentioned Matt. xii. 1-8. *The Jews*—Who saw him pass along the streets in this manner; *said, It is the sabbath day, it is not lawful to carry thy bed*—How is it, then, that thou art so presumptuous as to profane this holy day? It does not appear whether they who thus spoke were magistrates, who had power to punish him, or common people, who could only inform against him; but thus far was commendable, that while they knew not by what authority he did it, they were jealous for the honour of the sabbath, and could not, without concern, see it profaned; like Nehemiah, chap. xiii. 17. *He answered, He that made me whole*—He that with a word restored my strength in an instant; *said unto me, Take up thy bed, &c.*—As if he had said, I do not do this in contempt of the law and the sabbath, but in obedience to one who, by making me whole, hath given an undeniable proof that he is greater than either. He that could work such a miracle as to heal me in a moment of an inveterate disease, doubtless might give me such a command as to carry my bed; he that could overrule the powers of nature, might doubtless overrule a positive law, especially in an instance not of the essence of the law; he that was so kind as to make me whole, would not be so unkind as to bid me do what was sinful. Christ, by curing another paralytic, proved his power to forgive sins; here, to give law: if his pardons are valid, his edicts are so, and his miracles prove both.

Verses 12, 13. *Then asked they, What man is that, &c.*—Dropping all mention of the cure, they only fix on what seemed liable to exception. They

A. M. 4035. 13 And he that was healed wist not
A. D. 31. who it was : for Jesus had conveyed
himself away, ²a multitude being in *that*
place.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole : ¹sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

² Or, from the multitude that was.

do not ask, Who made thee well? but, Who bade thee take up this bed on the sabbath day? that is, as they interpreted it, Who bade thee profane the sabbath? Though he had just told them it was the author of his cure that gave him that command; for all that they proposed was, not to hear of any good that had been done to engage their admiration and applause; but to lay hold on some occasion to find fault, to gratify the pride and malice of a censorious temper. *And he that was healed wist not*—Did not know at that time; *who it was*—That had cured him; *for Jesus had conveyed himself away*—Greek, *εξεβησεν*, had slipped away. The word, as Casaubon observes, is an elegant metaphor borrowed from swimming, and well expresses the easy, unobserved manner in which Christ, as it were, glided through the multitude, leaving no trace behind of the way he had taken.

Verses 14–16. *Afterward, Jesus findeth him in the temple*—The same day, probably, in which he was healed, whither, it is likely, he had repaired to return thanks to God for his signal recovery. Thus, when God has, at any time, restored us to our health, we ought to attend him with solemn praises; and the sooner the better; while the sense of the mercy is fresh in our minds. Jesus, happening to be now in the temple, and meeting with the man, that he might render the mercy he had conferred on him complete, takes this opportunity to put him in mind of his having brought the distemper upon himself by his wicked courses; *and said, Behold, thou art made whole*—By the singular mercy of God, thou art now restored to health and vigour; *sin no more*—Guard against all known sin; *lest a worse thing come unto thee*—Lest some heavier judgment should be inflicted on thee: for the deliverance thou hast now received would be a dreadful aggravation of any future guilt thou mightest contract. *The man*—Having received information from those that stood by who it was that spoke to him, and knowing him to be the person to whom he was indebted for his cure; *departed*—From the temple; *and told the Jews*—Who had before examined him, that it was Jesus who had made him whole, expecting, no doubt, by this discovery, to have procured him that honour and respect which were due to so much power and goodness. *And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus*—One would have expected, that as soon as the man who had been thus miraculously healed had published the name of his benefactor, crowds would have immediately thronged about Jesus to

15 The man departed, and told the ^{A. M. 4035.}
^{A. D. 31.} Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

17 ¶ But Jesus answered them, ¹My father worketh hitherto, and I work.

¹ Matt. xii. 45; Chap. viii. 11.—² Chap. ix. 4; xiv. 10.

have heard the words of his mouth, and to have received the blessings of his gospel. But, instead of this, behold the malignity of our fallen nature, and force of stubborn prejudice! 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, and especially the defenders of it.

Verses 17–20. *Jesus answered*—“By the Jews, who in the preceding verses are said to have persecuted Jesus, we are to understand the rulers, as appears from verse 33, where Jesus, speaking to the persons who sought to kill him, (verse 18,) says unto them, *Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth*. But the messengers that were sent to John were *priests* and *Levites*, (chap. i. 19,) persons of character who would not have undertaken the office, unless by the appointment of the rulers, called on that occasion, as well as here, *the Jews*. Hence the apology which Jesus now made for himself is such as was proper to be pronounced before the most capable judges; for it is the most regular defence of his character and mission that is anywhere to be found in the gospels, comprehending the principal arguments in behalf of both, setting them forth with the greatest strength of reason, clearness of method, and conciseness of expression.”—Macknight. *My Father worketh hitherto*—From the beginning of the creation till now he hath been working without intermission, particularly in doing good to men by his unwearied providence. For on the sabbath day, as well as on other days, through the invisible operation of his almighty power, he supports the whole frame of nature, and carries on the motions of the heavens, upon which the vicissitudes of day and night, and of the seasons depend, so necessary to the production of food, with the other means of life. *And I work*—I imitate my Father, and work also continually. This is the proposition which is explained from verses 19–30, and confirmed and vindicated in the 31st and following verses. As the Jews built their observation of the sabbath upon God’s having rested thereon from the works of creation, this argument was decisive: nevertheless, the apology offended them exceedingly, and

A. M. 4035. 18 Therefore the Jews ^b sought the
A. D. 31. more to kill him, because he not only
had broken the sabbath, but said also, that God
was his Father, ⁱ making himself equal with
God.

19 ¶ Then answered Jesus, and said unto
them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ^k The
Son can do nothing of himself, but what he
seeth the Father do: for what things soever he
doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

20 For ^l the Father loveth the Son, and
showeth him all things that himself doeth: and
he will show him greater works than these, that
ye may marvel.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and

^b Chap. vii. 19.—ⁱ Chap. x. 30, 33; Phil. ii. 6.—^k Verse 30; Chap. xvii. 28; ix. 4; xii. 49; xiv. 10.—^l Matt. iii. 17; Chap. iii. 35; 2 Pet. i. 17.—^m Luke vii. 14; viii. 54; Chap. xi. 25, 43.

they sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath—Which they were confident he had done; but said also, that God was his Father—Greek, *Πατέρα ιδιον*, his own proper Father, as the expression signifies; his Father in so peculiar and appropriating a sense as, in effect, to make himself equal with God; and therefore asserting that he acted like God, and arguing his own right to work on the sabbath day from God's working upon it. Since the whole nation of the Jews thought God to be their Father, (chap. viii. 41,) they would not have accounted it blasphemy in Christ to have called God his Father, had they not interpreted it in so high and appropriating a sense. The conclusion which they drew from his words, our Lord did not deny, but showed that in all things he acted agreeably to the will of God, and that he was equal in power to God, doing whatever he saw the Father do, an honour which flowed to him from the immense love of the Father. The expression, *the Son can do nothing of himself*, manifests, not his imperfection, but his glory, for it implies 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, verse 30, &c.; chap. vi. 38; 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. For the Father loveth the Son—Namely, with a peculiar, an infinite love; and showeth him all things that himself doeth—A proof of the most intimate unity; his most secret counsels lie open to the Son: and he will show him—By doing them; greater works than these—Which he has hitherto performed; will enable him to do greater miracles than any he has done hitherto; that ye may marvel—Which though they may not convince, will certainly astonish you, and make it impossible for you to gainsay him, at least, with any show of reason. Thus they mar-

quickeneth them; ⁿ even so the Son A. M. 4035.
quickeneth whom he will. A. D. 31.

22 For the Father judgeth no man; but
^a hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23 That all men should honour the Son, even
as they honour the Father. ^o He that honour-
eth not the Son, honoureth not the Father
which hath sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ^p He that
heareth my word, and believeth on him that
sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not
come into condemnation; ^q but is passed from
death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour
is coming, and now is, when ^r the dead shall

^a Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18; Verse 27; Chap. iii. 35; xvii. 2; Acts xvii. 31; 1 Pet. iv. 5.—^o 1 John ii. 23.—^p Chap. iii. 16, 18; vi. 40, 47; viii. 51; xx. 31.—^q 1 John iii. 14.—^r Verse 28; Eph. ii. 1, 5; v. 14; Col. ii. 13.

volled, and were astonished, when he raised Lazarus, and when they were compelled to witness the awful prodigies that attended his death.

Verses 21–23. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, &c.—Here he declares what are those greater works, namely, raising the dead and judging the world. These two, quickening and judging, are proposed, verses 21, 22. The acquittal of believers, which presupposes judgment, is treated of in verse 24; the quickening some of the dead, verse 25; and the general resurrection, verse 28. For the Father judgeth no man—Without the Son; but he doth judge by that man whom he hath ordained, Acts xvii. 31. That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father—Honour him as the Maker, Upholder, Redeemer, Saviour, Governor, and Judge of the world, and that either willingly, by yielding to him the homage of faith, love, and obedience, and so escaping condemnation, and attaining eternal life; or unwillingly, and so feeling the wrath of the Judge. This demonstrates the equality, or sameness, rather, of the Godhead of the Son and the Father. If our Lord were God only by office, or investiture, and not in the unity of the divine essence, he would not be honoured even as, that is, with the same honour as that wherewith the Father is honoured. He that honoureth not the Son—With the same equal honour, greatly dishonoureth the Father which sent him.

Verses 24–30. Verily, he that heareth my word, &c., hath everlasting life—Such a person is already entitled to it, yea, it is already begun in his soul, and he shall shortly possess it in its full perfection: and shall not come into condemnation—For any former offences; but is passed from death unto life—That is, from that state of spiritual death, or of alienation from the life of God, (see Eph. iv. 18,) in which men naturally are, to spiritual life and felicity, in union and communion with God. Verily, verily, I say unto you—I renew the important declaration in the strongest terms; the hour is coming, and now is

A. M. 4035. hear the voice of the Son of God :
A. D. 31. and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself ;

27 And ^a hath given him authority to execute judgment also, ^b because he is the Son of man.

28 Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 ^a And shall come forth ; ^b they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

^a Verse 22 ; Acts x. 42 ; xvii. 31.—^b Daniel vii. 13, 14.
^c Isa. xxvi. 19 ; 1 Thess. iv. 16 ; 1 Cor. xv. 52.—^d Daniel xii. 2 ; Matt. xxv. 32, 33, 46.—^e Verse 19.

—That is, it is just at hand ; *when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God*—Within the space of a few months some dead bodies shall be raised to life by the word of his power. See Mark v. 41 ; Luke vii. 14 ; John xi. 43 ; and Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. Or rather, he meant, that many souls then dead in sin, should be quickened by his grace, and made spiritually alive. *For as the Father hath life in himself*—Originally and essentially ; *so hath he given to the Son*—In order to these purposes of glorious and divine operation ; *to have life in himself*—To be communicated unto whomsoever he will. Hence the apostle (1 Cor. xv. 45) terms the second Adam, *a quickening spirit : and hath given him authority*—Not only to quicken men now, but also to execute final judgment ; *because he is the Son of man*—Because he humbled himself so low as to become the Son of man, the Father conferred on him the high honour and glorious power of judging men and angels, that is, exalted the human nature, united to the divine, to this dignity and authority, Phil. ii. 9-11. *Marvel not at this, the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, &c.*—“Be not surprised at my saying, the Son of man has power to raise a few particular persons from the dead. There is a far greater power committed to him, even that of raising all men at the last day, and of judging and rewarding them according to their works.” *I can of my own self do nothing*—Now in this judgment I will not act absolutely or arbitrarily, but according to the laws of equity, unalterably established by my Father ; so that I shall not act therein so properly by my own, as by my Father’s authority. *As I hear I judge*—In allusion to human courts, where the judges found their sentences upon the testimony of witnesses, and the laws of the country. Yet the expression by no means implies that our Lord, at the great day, shall receive information from any one whatsoever, concerning the persons he is to judge. Having been himself privy to their actions, he needs no evidence, but knows all things that ever were thought, said, or done by mankind, from the beginning to the end of

30 ^a I can of mine own self do no- A. M. 4035.
thing : as I hear, I judge : and my judg- A. D. 31.

ment is just ; because ^b I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

31 ¶ ^a If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

32 ^b There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

33 Ye sent unto John, ^c and he bare witness unto the truth.

34 But I receive not testimony from man : but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

^a Matt. xxvi. 39 ; Chap. iv. 34 ; vi. 38.—^b Chap. viii. 14 ; Rev. iii. 14.—^c Matt. iii. 17 ; xvii. 5 ; Chap. viii. 19 ; 1 John v. 6, 7, 9.—^d Chap. i. 15, 19, 27, 32.

time, fully and certainly. *And my judgment is just*—Not only because it is thus a judgment according to truth and equity, but likewise, *because I seek not my own will, but the will of my Father, &c.*—I have no interest to pursue, no inclination to fulfil, different from that of my Father.

Verses 31-35. *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true*—Heylin and Wesley read, *is not valid ; Doddridge, is not [to be admitted as] true ; and Campbell, is not to be regarded ;* observing, “In every country, where there are standing laws, and a regular constitution, there is what is called a forensic, or judicial use of certain words, which differs considerably from familiar use.” Thus the word *δικαιος*, rendered *a just person*, (Matt. xxvii. 24,) seems to mean no more than, *not guilty of the crime charged*. “The like holds of the word *αληθης*, (here rendered *true*,) which, when used in reference to the procedure in judicatories, denotes, not what is in itself true, but what is *proved*, or what is accounted legal proof. Thus it is said, that a man’s testimony of himself *is not true*. A man may certainly give a true testimony of himself ; but, in law, it is not evidence ; and is therefore held as untrue. This sense of the word often occurs in this gospel.” As if he had said, I have certainly entered a very high claim, and asserted my dignity in very strong terms, but I do not require any man to believe me merely on the authority of my own testimony. *There is another that beareth witness of me*—A person of undoubted reputation and veracity. He refers to the testimony of John, given him in the hearing of their own deputies. But at the same time he observed, that the truth of his mission did not depend on human testimony, though it was given by one who was a burning and shining light, and in whom they greatly rejoiced, because the prophetic spirit, which had so long ceased, seemed to be again revived in him. For he proceeds ; *But I receive not*—Or, I have no need to receive ; *testimony from man : but these things*—Concerning John, whom ye yourselves reverence ; *I say, that ye may be saved*—Namely, from that destruction which John fore-

A. M. 4035. 35 He was a burning and ^d a shining
A. D. 31. light : and ^e ye were willing for a sea-
son to rejoice in his light.

36 ¶ But ^f I have greater witness than *that*
of John : for ^g the works which the Father
hath given me to finish, the same works that I
do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath
sent me.

^d 2 Peter i. 19.—^e Matthew xiii. 20 ; xxi. 26 ; Mark vi. 20.
^f 1 John v. 9.—^g Chapter iii. 2 ; x. 25 ; xv. 24.—^h Matthew
iii. 17 ; xvii. 5 ; Chapter vi. 27 ; viii. 18.

told would be the portion of those who should reject me. So really and seriously did Christ will their salvation. Yet they were not saved. Most, if not all of them, died in their sins. *He was a burning and a shining light*—Inwardly burning with love and zeal; outwardly shining with all holiness. Some infer from this expression that the Baptist was now dead; yet he does not seem to have been killed till a little before the third passover. The reason is, the miracle of the loaves, performed in the desert of Bethsaida immediately after word was brought of John's death, is said to have happened a little before that feast, John vi. 4. If so, our Lord's meaning is, that John was a burning and a shining light, not while he lay in prison, but while his ministry lasted; for during his imprisonment his light may be said to have been extinguished. Accordingly it is added, *And ye were willing for a season*—*ἵνα ὥραν*, for an hour; *to rejoice in his light*—Ye hearkened to him with great pleasure, till his credit was impaired in your estimation by his imprisonment. Or the meaning may be, that they did not continue long to manifest that regard for his preaching, which, at his first appearance, they seemed to promise; because his doctrine was too strict and severe to be approved of, or endured long by so carnal and worldly-minded a people.

Verses 36–38. *But I have greater witness than that of John*—The testimony of one who has infinitely greater authority and power than he; *for the works which the Father hath given me to finish*—The miracles which he hath commissioned me to perform; *bear witness of me*—In a manner most convincing to every unprejudiced mind; *that the Father hath sent me*—As his Ambassador to men, with full authority to reveal his will. *And the Father himself hath borne witness of me*—And that in the most public manner, namely, at my baptism. *Ye have neither heard his voice, &c.*—As if he had said, I speak not of my supposed father, Joseph. Ye are utter strangers to him of whom I speak. Or, You show yourselves to be as ignorant of him as men are of a person they never either saw or heard. Bishop Pearce considers the clause as a parenthesis, and thinks the sense, in connection with what precedes and follows, is, “Not that my Father ever appeared visibly, or spake audibly to any of you; but he did it by the mouths of his prophets.” To their testimony, however, he had lately added his

37 And the Father himself which ^{A. M. 4035.}
hath sent me, ^{A. D. 31.} hath borne witness
of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at
any time, ⁱ nor seen his shape.

38 And ye have not his word abiding in
you : for whom he hath sent, him ye believe
not.

39 ¶ ^k Search the Scriptures ; for in them ye

ⁱ Deut. iv. 12 ; Chapter i. 18 ; 1 Timothy i. 17 ; 1 John
iv. 12.—^h Isaiah viii. 20 ; xxxiv. 16 ; Luke xvi. 29 ; Verse
46 ; Acts xvii. 11.

own voice from heaven. But the sense in which Dr. Whitby takes the words, seems to connect them more naturally with the preceding verse: thus, “Nor are you to expect that the Father should testify of me otherwise than by his works, for that which was granted to your fathers belongs not to you, namely, to see his glory and hear his voice out of the midst of the fire. *And have not his word abiding in you*—You do not show a due regard even to those sacred oracles, which you acknowledge to be divine; either you do not cordially believe them, or they have not that influence upon your spirit and conduct which, in all reason, they ought to have.” The scriptures of the Old Testament, if they had understood, believed, and laid them to heart as they ought to have done, would, doubtless, have disposed them to receive Christ. But this revelation of the divine will was not *in them*. It was among them, in their country, in their hands, but not in their hearts; they beheld it with their eyes, and it sounded in their ears; but it did not rule in their souls. But how did it appear that they had not the word of God abiding in them? it appeared by their not *believing* and receiving *him whom God had sent*. There was so much said in the Old Testament concerning Christ, to direct people when and where to look for him, and so to facilitate the discovery of him, that if they had duly considered those things, they could not have avoided the conviction that Jesus was the Christ, and that he was sent of God; so that their not believing in him, and receiving his doctrine, was a certain sign that the word of God did not abide in them. Observe, reader, 1st, The indwelling of the Word and Spirit, or grace of God in us, is best tried and known by the effects which it produces: particularly by our receiving whom and what he sends, the messengers, the commands, the threatenings, the promises, the providences, which he sends; and especially Christ whom he has sent. 2d, If his word abide in us, if we converse with it by frequent meditation, consult it upon every occasion, and conform to it in our conversation, we shall then readily receive the testimony of the Father concerning Christ, and therefore shall believe in and receive him in all the characters and offices which he sustains, and in which he is offered to us in the gospel.

Verses 39, 40. *Search the Scriptures*—Because the Jews were exceedingly averse to acknowledge

A. M. 4035. think ye have eternal life: And ¹they
A. D. 31. are they which testify of me.

40 ^m And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

41 ¶ ⁿ I receive not honour from men.

¹ Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Luke xxiv. 27; Chap. i. 45.

Jesus for their Messiah, notwithstanding that the evidences of his mission were so unexceptionable, he appeals, lastly, to their own scriptures, which, for further proof, and their full satisfaction, he desires them to search, because these writings, as they justly supposed, contained the knowledge of eternal life, and of the way leading to it, and therefore the knowledge of the Messiah. As if he had said, I can with confidence refer you to them, knowing that they confirm my pretensions in the most ample manner, the characters of the Messiah pointed out by them, being all fulfilled in my person. It must be observed that the word *ερευνητε*, here rendered imperatively, *search*, may with equal propriety be translated as Le Clerc, L'Enfant, Vitringa, Raphelius, &c., contend it ought to be, in the present tense, *ye search*, the ambiguity of the word justifying either translation. If thus rendered, the sense of the passage will be; *Ye search the Scriptures, because in them ye think ye have eternal life*, or, infallible directions from God, concerning the true way of obtaining it. Now *they testify of me*; yet, or, nevertheless, *ye will not come to me that ye might have life*.—Dr. Doddridge, who reads the clause in that manner, observes, he thinks the following words, which express their high opinion of the Scriptures, rather suit this translation than the common one, and that it is exceeding probable that, at a time when the Pharisees were so impatient of the Roman yoke, they would with great diligence search the sacred oracles for predictions relating to the Messiah; though it is too plain they had an unhappy bias on their minds, which prevented the good effects which might have been expected from that inquiry, had it been impartial. It must be observed, however, that Origen, Chrysostom, and Austin, confirm our version, which certainly is fully as agreeable to the scope of the passage; for having told them that they would find abundant evidence of his mission in the Scriptures, he observed, that their want of faith was not owing to any deficiency in the proofs of his mission, but to the wickedness and obstinacy of their own dispositions. It is justly observed by Grotius, on the word *ερευνητε*, *search*, or, *ye search*, that it does not merely mean *to read*, but to weigh and consider with an attentive mind, as it is taken chap. vii. 52, where the Jews bid Nicodemus *search and look*; and 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, where we read of the ancient prophets *inquiring and searching diligently*, respecting the salvation to be received through the Messiah, and the time of its manifestation, of which they had prophesied. The expression means the same with that used Acts xvii. 11, namely, *ανακρινειν τας γραφας*, where we read of the Jews at Berea *searching the Scriptures*

42 But I know you, that ye have ^{A. M. 4035.}
^{A. D. 31.} not the love of God in you.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

^m Chap. i. 11; iii. 19.—ⁿ Verse 34; 1 Thess. ii. 6.

daily, to know whether the things declared to them by Paul and Silas really accorded with those divine oracles or not. *For in them ye think*—Or rather, as *δοκειτε* evidently means, *ye know, or, are assured; ye have eternal life*—Ye know they show you the way to eternal life; and these very Scriptures testify of me, and of the necessity of believing in, receiving, and obeying me, in order thereto. *And yet*, such is the obstinacy of your hearts, that, notwithstanding you profess so great a regard for them, *ye will not come to me*—Will not believe in, and make application to me; *that ye may have life*—Even that eternal life which they direct you to seek, and assure you may be obtained in this way; but you rather choose to die under the force of your inveterate prejudices. It is justly observed by Dr. Whitby here, that if the Jews were justified in supposing that the doctrine of eternal life was contained in the scriptures of the Old Testament, and that they, by searching, might find it there, it must be to them a sufficient rule of faith and practice: but that, if in this they erred, it behoved Christ to correct in them an error so pernicious.

Verses 41–43. *I receive not honour from men*—I need it not; I seek it not from you for my own sake. As if he had said, Though I speak of your coming to me as necessary in order to your salvation, it is not out of an ambition of drawing multitudes after me, who may approve and applaud my teaching; for the whole of my conduct proves that I seek not the praise of men. But I say it out of a tender regard for your salvation and reformation; *for I know you*—I am fully acquainted with the state of your minds, and the conduct of your lives; *that ye have not the love of God in you*—That, notwithstanding the distinguished profession of piety which you make, you are destitute of that great and only principle of true religion, the love of God: *For I am come in my Father's name*—With evident credentials from him; *and yet ye receive me not*—Which, if you had really loved him, you would undoubtedly have done: *if another shall come in his own name*—Without such credentials, and without any commission from God; *him ye will receive*—Provided he assume the majesty of a king, and promise you temporal wealth, power, and glory. Of this infatuation the Jews gave many proofs during their wars with the Romans, and a little before the destruction of Jerusalem. For then many impostors arose, pretending to be the Messiah, and promising them deliverance, by which, although they wrought no miracles, yet they drew great multitudes after them, as their own historian, Josephus, informs us; and met with a much better reception, even from the Pharisees and rulers, than Christ did, notwithstanding

A. M. 4035. 44 ° How can ye believe, which
A. D. 31. receive honour one of another, and
seek not ^p the honour that *cometh* from God
only?

45 ¶ Do not think that I will accuse
you to the Father: ^a there is *one* that ac-

° Chapter xii. 43.—^p Romans ii. 29.—^a Romans ii. 12.

ing all his miracles. And no doubt Christ meant to include these, and all who appeared while the sanhedrim existed.

Verse 44. *How can ye believe which receive honour one of another*—That is, while ye seek the praise of men, rather than the praise of God? In other words, “How can such persons as you believe in me, whose character and station are entirely different from what you have all along told the people the Scriptures teach concerning the Messiah? This confession of your own ignorance is not to be expected from you, who, in all your actions, seek the praise of men, (Matt. xxiii. 5,) and not the praise of God, which is the only true praise, and is to be obtained by a steady regard to truth and virtue, in opposition to all earthly passions whatever.” Thus our Lord shows, that “their infidelity was owing, in a great measure, to their pride. They who had all along preached glorious things concerning the empire and grandeur of the Messiah, would not ascribe that august character to a mere teacher, who was destitute even of the ordinary advantages of birth, fortune, and erudition; because it would have been such a confession of ignorance and unskilfulness in the Scriptures, as must have exposed them to the contempt of those whom they had misled.”—Mac-knight.

Verse 45. *Do not think that I only will accuse you to the Father*—Our Lord proceeds to caution them against supposing, “that in rejecting him they sinned against no person but him, and that he alone would accuse them to the Father for their infidelity; for that Moses, in whose laws they trusted to have

custeth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye A. M. 4035.
trust. A. D. 31.

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: ^r for he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

^r Gen. iii. 15; xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 18; xlix. 10; Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Chap. i. 45; Acts xxvi. 22.

salvation, was likewise dishonoured by it, inasmuch as he wrote of him, namely, under the names of *the Seed of Abraham; Shiloh; and a Prophet like to himself*, whom God would raise up unto them from among their brethren, and whom he commanded them to hear. Wherefore, seeing they refused to believe in him, Moses would accuse them as guilty of disbelieving his writings.” “This,” says Dr. Doddridge, “is one of the most expressive passages that can be imagined, in which Moses, their great law-giver, is represented as looking down with indignation upon these elders, who gloried in being the most distinguished of his disciples; and seeing how injuriously they treated Jesus, the great Prophet, turning himself to God with a severe accusation against them, and urging his own predictions as an aggravation of their inexcusable infidelity.” *For had ye believed Moses*—Had ye believed his writings, which are daily read in your synagogues; *you would have believed me*—For these writings describe me not by types and figures only, but by particular and direct prophecies. See the margin. *But if ye believe not his writings*—Which it is plain from your conduct that you do not, though they are daily in your hands, and you strenuously assert their divine authority; *how shall ye believe my words*—I have no reason to be surprised that you do not credit me upon my own testimony. Thus Jesus asserted his own personal dignity, as the Son of God and Judge of the world, at the same time that he proposed the evidences of his mission from God with such strength of reason, ^s perspicuity, and brevity, as are unequalled.

CHAPTER VI.

- (1.) Christ feeds five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes, 1–14. (2.) To avoid being proclaimed a king, he crosses the sea of Tiberias, and walks on the water, 15–21. (3.) The multitudes follow him in boats to Capernaum, 22–25. (4.) He reproves them for the carnal and worldly views with which they sought him, and directs them to seek to enjoy spiritual blessings by believing on him, 26–29. (5.) He represents himself as the bread of life, prefigured by, but far more excellent than, the manna, 30–40. (6.) He enlarges on the necessity and benefit of feeding upon him as such, 41–58. (7.) Many of his followers, offended with his doctrine and reproofs, finally desert him, 59–66. (8.) He is confessed by Peter to be the Christ the Son of God; and, while he is adhered to by the other apostles, he intimates the treachery of Judas, 67–71.

A. M. 4036. **A**FTER * these things Jesus went
A. D. 32. over the sea of Galilee, which is
the sea of Tiberias.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 ^b And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 [†] When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

6 (And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.)

7 Philip answered him, ^d Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley-

* Fourth Sunday in Lent, gospel, verse 1 to verse 15.
^a Matt. xiv. 15; Mark vi. 35; Luke ix. 10, 12.—^b Leviticus xxiii. 5, 7; Deut. xvi. 1; Chapter ii. 13; v. 1.—[†] Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 5 to verse 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verses 1-4. *After these things*—The history of between ten and eleven months is to be here supplied from the other evangelists; *Jesus went over the sea of Galilee*—Luke tells us (chap. ix. 10) he went with his disciples into a desert belonging to Bethsaida: of the reason of which, see notes on Matt. xiv. 13, 14; Mark vi. 30-32. *And a great multitude followed him*—Eagerly desiring to hear so divine a teacher; *because they saw his miracles, wrought on them that were diseased*—And were struck with the power and goodness which he manifested in performing them. *And Jesus went up into a mountain*—That he might be heard and seen with the greater advantage; *and there he sat with his disciples*—And the multitude about him. *And the passover was nigh*—This circumstance, together with the observation made verse 10, that *there was much grass in the place*, shows that the spring was now far advanced, and therefore determines the time of the following miracle with sufficient precision.

Verses 5-14. *When Jesus lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come to him*—That is, gathered round him; *he saith unto Philip*—Namely, after he had first taught the people many things, as we learn from the other evangelists, and had *healed them that had need of healing*, Mark vi. 34; Luke ix. 11; *Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?*—He addressed himself to Philip particularly, because he, being a native of Bethsaida, was best acquainted with that country. *This he said to prove*

loaves, and two small fishes: * but A. M. 4036. what are they among so many? A. D. 32.

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. (Now there was much grass in the place.) So the men sat down in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth ^f that Prophet that should come into the world.

15 ¶ When Jesus therefore perceived that

^c Matthew xiv. 14; Mark vi. 35; Luke ix. 12.—^d Numbers xi. 21, 22.—^e 2 Kings iv. 43.—^f Genesis xlix. 10; Deuteronomy xviii. 15, 18; Matthew xi. 3; Chapter i. 21; iv. 19, 25; vii. 40.

him—To try what idea he had conceived of his divine power, and to give him an opportunity of observing what followed more attentively. *Philip answered, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient, &c.*—The Roman denarius, or penny, being equal to about seven pence half-penny of English money, two hundred of them were equal to about six pounds five shillings sterling, as much, probably, as their whole stock amounted to. *One of his disciples saith*—In answer to Jesus's inquiring how many loaves they had, Mark vi. 38; *There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes*—He meant which might be purchased of him; *but what are they*—To satisfy the hunger of so great a company? It seems, this disciple did not think on the proofs which Jesus had formerly given of his power, or did not form a just notion thereof. *Jesus said, Make the men sit down*—For an explanation of the circumstances of the miracle recorded in the following verses of this paragraph, see notes on Matt. xiv. 15-21; Mark vi. 30-44. *Then those men*—Who were present upon this occasion, and were thus miraculously entertained, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, after all the wonderful cures he had wrought upon the sick that same day; *said, This is of a truth that prophet*—Who has been so long and impatiently expected by us, even the Messiah himself; *that should come into the world*—According to the prediction of Moses, Deut. xviii. 18.

Verses 15-21. *When Jesus perceived*—Through the knowledge which he had of their thoughts and

A. M. 4036. they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone

16 ¶ And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

22 ¶ The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw

¶ Matt. xiv. 23; Mark vi. 47.

intentions; that they would come and take him by force—That they had formed a purpose of doing so; to make him a king—Believing that the Messiah was to rule as well as teach his people; he departed again unto a mountain himself alone—Having ordered his disciples to cross the lake, and dismissed the multitude. To this mountain, according to Matthew and Mark, he retired to pray. For a further explanation of this, and the following verses, to verse 21, see notes on Matt. xiv. 22-33.

Verses 22-24. "In this and the two following verses," says Dr. Campbell, "is contained a sentence more involved than any in this gospel. Indeed it is so unlike the composition of this evangelist, as to give ground to suspect that it has been injured in transcribing. He often indeed uses tautologies; but, except in this instance, they occasion no darkness or perplexity. I have adopted the reading of the Vulgate as preferable upon the whole, namely, *On the morrow the people, who were on the sea-side, knowing that there had been but one boat there, and that Jesus went not into the boat with his disciples, who went alone, (other boats, however, arrived from Tiberias, nigh the place where they had eaten, after the Lord had given thanks,) knowing besides, that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, embarked, and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.*"

Verses 25-27. *When they had found him on the other side*—Namely, in the synagogue of Capernaum, as appears from verse 59; *they said unto him*—As soon as the worship was over, and even before they quitted the place; *Rabbi, when camest thou hither?*—They ask this question because, as Jesus did not go on the preceding evening with his disci-

that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples

were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone;

23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 ¹ Labour not for the meat which perish-

¹ Or, Work not.

ples, they expected to have found him on the other side of the sea, and could not conceive when he could come, or what imaginable means he could have of crossing the water. *Jesus, modestly waiving the recital of those extraordinary circumstances which attended his passage, diverted the discourse to a more important and edifying subject; and knowing, by an intimate penetration of their very hearts, that they were governed only by carnal motives in this attendance upon him, humble and zealous as it might appear, he said—With great solemnity, Verily, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles—Because, having been eye-witnesses of the miracles which I performed, you are convinced by them that I am a divine teacher, and are now disposed to hearken unto and obey my doctrine: but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled—And have from thence concluded, that you shall gain great secular advantages by following me: having been once fed, you expect that I will feed you frequently by a miracle; and the satisfaction you have found in that meal has made you conceive great hopes of temporal felicity under my administration. These are the views with which you are following me; but you are entirely mistaken in them, for your happiness does not consist in the meat that perisheth, neither is it that sort of meat which the Messiah will give you. 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. Labour not for the meat which perisheth—For bodily food, or for any merely temporal blessing; not for that only, not chiefly: not at all, but in subordination to divine knowledge and grace, faith*

A. M. 4036. eth, but ^h for that meat which en-
A. D. 32. dureth unto everlasting life, which
the Son of man shall give unto you: ¹ for him
hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we
do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, ^k This
is the work of God, that ye believe on him
whom he hath sent.

30 They said therefore unto him, ^l What

^h Verse 54; Chapter iv. 14.—¹ Matthew iii. 17, xvii. 5; Mark i. 11; ix. 7; Luke iii. 22; ix. 35; Chapter i. 33; v. 37; viii. 18; Acts ii. 22; 2 Peter i. 17.

and love; *the meat that endureth to everlasting life*—Which, by invigorating all the faculties of the soul, and making it wise and good, holy and happy, renders it incorruptible and immortal, entitled to, and prepared for, everlasting felicity. *Which meat, or which life, the Son of man shall give you*—If with sincerity, earnestness, and faith, you apply to him for it. It is his gift, *χαρισμα*, a gift of grace, Rom. vi. 23: and yet we are commanded to *labour* for it, as if it were to be procured by our own industry, and sold upon that valuable consideration. But when we have laboured with the utmost diligence for it, still we have not merited it as our *hire*, but the Son of man gives it. And it is an encouragement, that he who has the giving of it is the Son of man, our kinsman and brother; for, in consequence of that, we may hope that the sons of men, who seek it and labour for it, shall not fail to obtain it. *For him hath God the Father sealed*—By this very miracle, as well as by his whole testimony concerning him. Having given him authority, he has given us assurance of it; having intrusted him with unlimited powers, he hath satisfied us by undoubted proofs that he has done so. Sealing a writing is a mark of the authenticity of it. God the Father sealed his Son, or manifested that he had commissioned him to be the Teacher, Redeemer, Saviour, and Governor of his church, by causing his Holy Spirit to rest on him, by the voice from heaven uttered once and again, and by the testimony he bore to him in signs and wonders.

Verses 28, 29. *Then said they*—Desiring to appear willing to receive his instructions, as well as his bounties; *What shall we do that we may work the works of God?*—Works pleasing to God, so as to secure his favour, and eternal life. *Jesus answered, This is the work of God*—The work most pleasing to God, and the foundation of all others; *that ye believe on him whom he hath sent*—That you acknowledge him for the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, (chap. xx. 31; 1 John iv. 14, 15;) that you credit and obey his doctrine; rely, for acceptance with God, on his mediation; apply to him for, and receive, his pardoning and renewing grace. See on chap. iii. 16–19. Thus our Lord calls them to a work they never thought of; the owning him to be the true Messiah; the receiving him as such, and trust-

sign showest thou then, that we may
see, and believe thee? what dost thou
work? A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

31 ^m Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, ⁿ He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

^k 1 John iii. 23.—^l Matt xii 38; xvi. 1; Mark viii. 11; 1 Cor. i. 22.—^m Exodus xvi. 15; Num. xi. 7; Neh. ix. 15; 1 Cor. x. 3.—ⁿ Psa. lxxviii. 24, 25.

ing in him for salvation, present and eternal, which was necessary, notwithstanding all their acts of obedience to the law, whether moral or ceremonial.

Verses 30, 31. *They said, What sign showest thou—and believe thee?*—Since thou requirest us to give thee credit, and to regard thee as invested with a higher character than has been claimed by any one before, produce thy credentials; give some evidence of a superior kind to what has been done by others. Thus these unreasonable men speak, though they had just before seen the astonishing miracle of the loaves and fishes, one of the most extraordinary displays of creating power that could well be conceived, and though several of them lived in the neighbourhood of Capernaum, where he had long multiplied his wonders! But the greatest miracles are lost on persons who are blinded by prejudice, and whose minds are earthly, sensual, and devilish! The views and opinions, however, of those that speak to Christ in this discourse, are so various, (compare verses 34, 41, 42,) and the evangelist so expressly declares that there was a debate between some and others of them, (verse 52,) that it would be wrong to imagine these to have been the perverse and ungrateful sentiments of the whole multitude, who had followed him with so much eagerness from place to place, for several days. *Our fathers did eat manna*—By extolling the miracle of the manna, and by calling it *bread from heaven*, and by insinuating that it was Moses's miracle, the Jews endeavoured to disparage both Christ's mission and his miracle of the loaves, which they affected to despise, as no miracle in comparison. It was only a single meal of terrestrial food, at which nine or ten thousand had been fed: whereas Moses with celestial food, fed the whole Jewish nation, in number upward of two millions, and that not for a day, but during the space of forty years in the wilderness.

Verses 32, 33. *Jesus said, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven*—It was not Moses who in ancient times gave the manna to your fathers, neither was the manna *bread from heaven*, though it be so called by the psalmist, on account of the thing which it typified: for it dropped from the air only; *but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven*—It was my Father that gave to your ancestors the manna,

A. M. 4036. 33 For the bread of God is he which
A. D. 32. cometh down from heaven, and giveth
life unto the world.

34 ° Then said they unto him, Lord, ever-
more give us this bread.

35 And Jesus said unto them, ° I am the
bread of life: ° he that cometh to me, shall

• Chap. iv. 15.—° Verses 48, 58.—° Chap. iv. 14; vii. 37.
° Verses 26, 64.—° Verse 45.

and he now giveth you the true spiritual, heavenly bread, of which the manna was only a symbolical representation, and which is sufficient to sustain, not a single nation only, but the whole world. *For the bread of God*—The bread only worthy of that name; *is he*—Or rather, *is that which cometh down*, as *καταβαινον* should here be rendered, being a participle, referring to *o apros, the bread*, which is of the masculine gender: for it appears, from what follows, that our Lord did not intend at once to lay aside the veil, wherein he had wrapped his meaning: for the request made to him in the very next verse, *Give us always this bread*, shows that he was not yet understood as speaking of a person, which he must have been if his expression had been as explicit as that of our translation. *From heaven*—Not from the aerial, but from the highest heavens; *and giveth life unto the world*—Not that which preserveth a mere temporal life to one people only, but imparteth spiritual and eternal life to as many of the whole world as will be persuaded to partake of it; and that from generation to generation.

Verses 34, 35. *Then said they, Evermore give us this bread*—On which it seems our life depends: let us always live upon this heavenly manna. Thus said some of the wiser and better part of them, though they did not yet fully understand his meaning. *Jesus said unto them*—Proceeding to give them a clear and full explication of the important truth he spoke of; *I am the bread of life*—Having life in myself, and giving life to all that believe in me: nor is bread so necessary to the support of your bodies, as a believing regard to me is to the life of your souls. *He that cometh unto me shall never hunger*—Shall not be destitute of spiritual nourishment; *and he that believeth on me shall never thirst*—Shall find the most restless desires of his soul satisfied, and being conscious of having already received the noblest refreshment and nourishment, shall grow up to a state of complete and everlasting satisfaction and enjoyment. *To come to him, and believe on him, are equivalent expressions; or are corresponding terms, explaining each other.* Thus our Lord assigned one of the many reasons why he called himself *the bread of life*. See verses 47–51. The conclusion from this part of his discourse was so evident, that he left his hearers to draw it for themselves. It was this, “Since matters are so, I am evidently greater than Moses, even in respect of that for which you extol him most. He gave your fathers manna, which

never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

36 ° But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 ° All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and ° him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

° Matthew xxiv. 24; Chapter x. 28, 29; 2 Timothy ii. 19; 1 John ii. 19.

was bodily food only, and nourished nothing but the natural life. But I am myself the bread of life and food of the soul, making men both immortal and happy.”

Verses 36, 37. *But I said, &c.*—But valuable as these blessings of my grace are, you are little disposed to pursue and accept them. *For ye also have seen me, and believe not*—You have seen a manifestation of my true character, in my life and conversation, and have been eye-witnesses of the ample proofs which I had given of my divine mission, in the miracles which I have already performed; signs certainly sufficient to convince you that I am the Messiah: nevertheless, you do not believe that I am he, but reject me as an impostor. Therefore, your infidelity proceeds not from want of evidence, as you pretend, (verse 30,) but from the perverseness of your own disposition. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me*—Nevertheless, though you reject me, yet I shall not be universally rejected, nor shall the purposes of my mission be entirely frustrated; for all that hearken to the teaching of my Father, and in consequence thereof see themselves to be in a lost estate, guilty, depraved, weak, and wretched, and therefore follow the drawings of his grace, (see verses 44, 45, where our Lord’s meaning is explained,) *will come to me*—By faith: such as these the Father in a peculiar manner giveth to the Son. *And him that cometh to me*—Being thus convinced of sin, humbled, and penitent; *I will in no wise cast out*—I will give him pardon, holiness, and happiness, and even heaven, if he *continue in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel*. Thus our Lord encouraged his disciples, who had already believed on him; and at the same time invited those who were disposed to believe, from the consideration that he would not reject them, however low their circumstances might be, however vile they might appear in their own eyes, or however much they might have formerly injured him, by speaking evil of him and opposing him. “The expression, *ου μη εκβαλω εξω*, is extremely beautiful and emphatical. It represents an humble suppliant, as coming into the house of some prince, or other great person, to cast himself at his feet, and to commit himself to his protection and care. He might fear his petition would be rejected, and he be thrust out of doors: but our Lord assures him to the contrary. His house and heart are large enough to receive, shelter, and supply all the indigent and distressed.”—Doddridge.

A. M. 4036. 38 For I came down from heaven,
A. D. 32. "not to do mine own will, " but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, " that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, " that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

* Matt. xxvi. 39; Chap. v. 30.—" Chap. iv. 34.—" Chap. x. 28; xvii. 12; xviii. 9.

Verses 38-40. *For I came down from heaven*—Into this lower world; *not to do mine own will*—Or to seek any separate interest of my own; *but the will of him that sent me*—Who is loving to every man, and willeth not the death of a sinner. *And this is the Father's will*—This he revealeth to be his will; *that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing*—It is the will of my Father that every thing necessary be done, both for the conversion of sinners and for the preservation of those in the paths of righteousness who are already converted. He even willeth all men to be saved, yea, eternally saved; and in order thereto, to *come to the knowledge of the truth*, and to persevere therein. But he willeth these things conditionally, and not absolutely: men through his grace must repent, and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance: they must believe in Christ, and in the truths and promises of his gospel, with a faith that worketh by love: they must resist the devil, steadfast in the faith; overcome the world, and crucify the flesh: they must *endure unto the end*, believing, loving, and obeying; must be *faithful unto death*, and then they shall receive the crown of life. *And this is likewise the will of him that sent me*—This also he wills conditionally; *that every one which seeth the Son*—Seeth the character and mission of the Son in the miracles which he works, and in the other evidences wherewith his mission is attended, as in verse 36; or who *recognises the Son, views him with an attentive mind*; as *θεωπων* seems evidently to imply; that *sees* him so as to know him; and in consequence of that knowledge, cordially *believeth on him*—Receiving him by faith, and trusting in him as an all-sufficient Saviour; *may have everlasting life*—It is the fixed determination of the Father, to bestow everlasting life on all who persevere in this faith; and therefore, in execution of my Father's will; *I will raise all such up at the last day*—I will make them completely happy, both in soul and body, in the enjoyment of a glorious immortality: nor are there any purposes or decrees of God inconsistent with this. Thus did Jesus place the character of the Messiah in a light very different from that in which his hearers had been accustomed to view it; and taught them, that instead of temporal blessings,

41 The Jews then murmured at A. M. 4036.
him, because he said, I am the bread A. D. 32.
which came down from heaven.

42 And they said, " Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

44 ^b No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

* Verses 27, 47, 54; Chap. iii. 15, 16; iv. 14.—" Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3; Luke iv. 22.—" Cant. i. 4; Verse 65.

which they expected from him, they were to receive none but such as were spiritual.

Verses 41-47. *The Jews then murmured at him*—The dispositions of the greatest part of the Jews being carnal, the doctrine of our Lord respecting the spiritual nature of the blessings which his followers were to receive, and especially his affirming that he was the bread of life, and that he came down from heaven, greatly offended them. *And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, &c.*—Was he not born into the world as other men are, and are we not well acquainted with his parents, and know him to be earth-born? How then can he pretend to have come down from heaven? *Jesus answered, Murmur not among yourselves*—On account of my words, for it is not want of truth in them, but want of affection to my doctrine, and your not considering the testimony God hath given to it, that makes you thus to murmur at and reject what I say. Set yourselves, therefore, to reflect seriously on your present state, and on your true interest. I know indeed that your prejudices against me are strong, and, without the influences of divine grace, will prove invincible and fatal: for, such is the moral blindness and degeneracy of human nature, that *no man can come to me*—Namely, by a saving faith; *except the Father which hath sent me draw him*—By the influence of his Holy Spirit on the heart, saving faith being *of the operation of God, and the gift of God*, Col. ii. 12; Eph. ii. 8. In other words, no man can believe in Christ to the saving of his soul, unless God give him power: God *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. That the expression, applied to reasonable agents, does not import any force or constraint, is plain from Jer. xxxi. 3, where God says to Israel, *With loving kindness have I drawn thee*; that is, by the manifold benefits which I have bestowed on thee, and particularly by the revelation of my will committed to thee, and have prevailed with thee to obey me. Thus also our Lord uses the expression, John xii. 32; *If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me*; that is, being put to death on the cross, and raised from the dead, and exalted

A. M. 4036. 45 ° It is written in the prophets, A. D. 32. And they shall be all taught of God.

° Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46 ° Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ° He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

° Isa. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 34; Mic. vi. 2; Heb. viii. 10; x. 16.—° Verse 37.—° Chapter i. 18; v. 37.—° Matt. xi. 27; Luke x. 22; Chap. i. 18; vii. 29; viii. 19.

into heaven, and preached through the world, I will, by my word and Spirit, persuade many to follow me to heaven. Thus also, Hosea xi. 4, God says, *he drew Israel with the cords of a man, with bands of love.* Wherefore, by the Father's drawing men to Christ we may understand his persuading them to believe on him, by the several proofs wherewith he has supported his mission, by the doctrine of his gospel, and by those influences of his grace, which are necessary to give men a right discernment of the evidences of religion, and of the certainty and importance of the great truths of it, and to impress these things deeply on their minds. Accordingly, in the following verse, the effect which the Father's drawing hath upon men, is described by their *hearing and learning* of him. *It is written in the prophets, (see the margin,) they shall be all taught of God—*Namely, not merely by his word, but also and especially by his Spirit, termed therefore, (Eph. i. 17,) *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation.* "Before the coming of Christ the Father spake to the world concerning him by the prophets, and when he appeared in the human nature on earth, he demonstrated the truth of his mission by the testimony of John, and by voices from heaven, declaring him to be his beloved Son, and commanding all men to hear him. He did the same likewise by the doctrines which he inspired Jesus to preach, by the miracles which he gave him to perform, and by the influences of the Spirit which he empowered him to dispense." *Every man therefore, &c.*—Every one that hath heard and understood what the Father hath said concerning the Messiah, whether by the prophets or by John the Baptist, or by the voices from heaven, or by my doctrine and miracles, and has also been enlightened, and drawn by the influences of the Holy Spirit; *cometh unto me*—Will believe on me, and cordially receive me under the character I profess. *Not that any man hath seen the Father*—Not that I mean, when I speak of men's hearing and learning of God, that they can see God personally, and be taught of him in the manner that a scholar is taught of his master; *save he who is of God*—No man hath seen the Father personally, except the Son, who is come to men as the great ambassador from God; he, indeed, being stably resident with him, and inseparably united to him, has seen the Father, and enjoyed that intimacy with him which no creature can pretend to have known.

48 ° I am that bread of life.

A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

49 ° Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 ° This is the bread which cometh down from heaven: that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread ° which came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and ° the bread that I will

° Chapter iii. 16, 18, 36; Verse 40.—° Verses 33, 35. ° Verse 31.—° Verses 51, 58.—° Chap. iii. 13.—° Heb. x. 5, 10.

Verses 48–50. *I am the bread of life*—Jesus, having explained the nature of the dignity which he had claimed in the foregoing part of his discourse, (verses 33–40,) and demonstrated that it really belonged to him, here repeats what he had said verse 35, and then runs a comparison between himself, considered as the bread from heaven, and the manna which Moses provided for their fathers in the desert, and which they admired so greatly, saying, *Your fathers did eat manna, and are dead*—The manna did not preserve them, either from spiritual, or temporal, or eternal death. *This is the bread*—That of which I now speak is the true bread; *which cometh down from heaven*—And is of such a nature, *that a man may eat of it and not die*—Not spiritually, not eternally. His soul, being quickened and made alive to God by partaking of it, shall, by continuing to feed on it, be preserved in spiritual life, and nourished to life eternal; and the death of his body will be only a short sleep, which will soon terminate in a resurrection to immortal glory.

Verse 51. *I am the living bread*—Because it was a matter of infinite importance to his hearers that they should form a just judgment of his ability to save them, and believe in him as the Saviour of the world, he affirmed a third time that he was himself the living bread, which came down from heaven to make and keep men alive to God, and render them immortal; and that all who did eat of it should live for ever, because he was about to give them his flesh to eat, by making it an expiation for the sins of the world. The intelligent reader will observe that there is a beautiful gradation in our Lord's discourse. The first time that he called himself *the bread of life*, (verse 35,) he assigned the reason of the name somewhat obscurely: *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, &c.* The second time he called himself *the bread of life*, (verse 47,) he spake more plainly: *He that believeth on me hath everlasting life; therefore, I am the bread of life.* And by connecting this with the affirmation, (verse 46,) that he was the only teacher of mankind that had ever personally seen, and conversed intimately with, the Father, he intimated that he gave life to men by his doctrine, being on that account also *the bread of life.* The third time he called himself *bread*, he added to the name the epithet of *living*; not only because he gives life to men by quickening their

A. M. 4036. give is my flesh, which I will give for
A. D. 32. the life of the world.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, ° How can this man give us his flesh to eat ?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ° ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 ° Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh

° Chap. vii. 43 ; ix. 16 ; x. 19.— Chapter iii. 9.— ° Matt. xxvi. 26, 28.

souls, raising their bodies from the dead, and making them eternally happy, but because he giveth them life in these senses, by means of his human nature, which was not an inanimate thing, like the manna, but a living substance. For he told them plainly, that the bread which he would give them was his flesh, which he would give for the life of the world—And spake of men's eating it in order to its having that effect. But the meaning of this expression he had directed them to before, when, in calling himself the bread of life, he always joined believing on him as necessary to men's living by him. Wherefore to eat, in the remaining part of this discourse, is to believe. See Macknight.

Verses 52, 53. *The Jews therefore strove among themselves*—Greek, *εμαχοντο*, literally, *they fought*, that is, they debated with great violence, some being inclined to believe, others to reject this doctrine; some, doubtless, taking his words in one sense, others in another, and some vindicating, and others deriding and censuring them, and, as if what he had advanced was to be taken in a literal sense, the generality saying, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*—What a monstrous and unintelligible doctrine is this! Observe, reader, the effects of this discourse of Christ: the Jews are tried here; the disciples, verses 60, 66; the apostles, verse 67. *Then Jesus*—Proceeding in the same figurative language he had used before, and without condescending to make any further explication; *said unto them, Verily, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, &c., ye have no life in you*—As if he had said, However you may censure my doctrine as unintelligible and absurd, yet nothing can be more certain than it, or more important to you. For except you be entirely united to me by a firm and lively faith in the truth and importance of my doctrine, and a cordial dependence, for acceptance with God, on the merit of the sacrifice which I shall offer for the sins of the world, thereby deriving spiritual strength and nourishment from me, through the influences of my Spirit, in the use of those means of grace which I shall institute, you can have no spiritual life in you here, nor attain eternal life hereafter. The reader will easily observe, that by *eating his flesh and drinking his blood*, our Lord did not mean any corporeal action whatever, but men's receiving in faith, and

my blood, hath eternal life; and I A. M. 4036.
will raise him up at the last day. A. D. 32.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, ° dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 ° This is that bread which came down

° Verses 27, 40, 63; Chapter iv. 14.— ° 1 John iii. 24; iv. 15, 16.— Verses 49–51.

with gratitude, those blessings, to confer which he assumed the human nature. The expression therefore implies a true and lively faith in “the revelation he came to make, concerning the merciful counsels of God for the salvation of sinners; or, as he himself expresses it, verse 63, *The word that he spake to them*, especially concerning his incarnation, and his dying to make atonement for sin. Which articles of the Christian faith, being particularly understood here, give propriety to the metaphors of *eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood*, by which the whole of that faith is denominated. The reason is, of all the discoveries made by Christ, those concerning his incarnation, and the nature and ends of his death, received and meditated upon with a lively faith, afford sovereign and salutary nourishment unto the minds of sinners. They are as effectual for sustaining the spiritual life in the soul, as flesh, fitly prepared, is for nourishing the animal life in the body.” The sacrament of the eucharist was plainly intended to affect our minds with a sense of these important truths, and our Lord might probably think of that intended institution while he spoke: but as this was a future thing, and utterly unknown to his hearers, it would be very unwarrantable to interpret this text as chiefly referring to that ordinance. See Macknight and Doddridge.

Verses 54–58. *Whoso eateth my flesh, &c., hath eternal life*—Has the principles of eternal life implanted in him, and shall enjoy it; *for I will raise him up, &c.* *For my flesh is meat indeed, &c.*—My flesh and blood are the true nutriment of the soul: they feed it and make it grow: they give vigour to all the faculties, preserve it in spiritual life, and make it fit for heaven. *He that eateth my flesh, &c., dwelleth in me, and I in him*—By an intimate and inseparable union. *As the living Father*—The great source of life and felicity; *has sent me, and I live by the Father*—Being one with him: or, as to my human nature, live by his support, protection, and care; he continually dwelling in me, and communicating his Spirit to me in the richest abundance of gifts and graces; *so he that eateth me*—That confides in, and cleaves to me, by a lively operative faith; *shall live by me*—A spiritual, holy, and happy life, through the Spirit which I will communicate to him: he shall be united to me by an internal and vital union. *This is the bread*—This, of which I

A. M. 4036. from heaven: not as your fathers
A. D. 32. did eat manna, and are dead: he

that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue,
as he taught in Capernaum.

60 ¶ Many therefore of his disciples, when
they had heard *this*, said, This is a hard say-
ing; who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his dis-
ciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth
this offend you?

† Verse 66; Matt. xi. 6.—* Chap. iii. 13; Mark xvi. 19;
Acts i. 9; Eph. iv. 8.

speak, or, I am the bread; *which came down from heaven*—For the purposes aforesaid. *Not as your fathers did eat manna, &c.*—This bread is not like the manna which your fathers ate, who died notwithstanding; and it is not to be eaten the same way that your fathers did eat the manna, nor with the same effect; for *he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever*—He shall be so far from dying, as your fathers did in the wilderness, that his life and happiness shall have no end, but shall run parallel with the longest line of eternity itself.

Verse 59. *These things*—The things recorded in the preceding verses; *said he in the synagogue*—He spoke them openly in the hearing of all the people who attended at public worship in the synagogue; and that probably after prayer, and the reading of the law, in consequence of the question said to be asked him, verse 25. Nor are we to wonder at the dialogue which passed here; for conversations between different persons, and even debates, were not unusual in the Jewish synagogues: there are many other instances of disputes, which either Christ or his apostles had with the Jews in these places of worship. See Matt. xii. 9-13; Luke xiii. 10-17; Acts xiii. 44-47; and xvii. 17. It was evidently for wise reasons that our Lord involved a part of his discourse in figurative and mysterious language; as, in particular, that which related to eating his flesh and drinking his blood; or to his sufferings and death, and the life and salvation to be obtained thereby.

Verse 60. *Many of his disciples*—That is, of those who followed him as such; *when they had heard this*—Had heard the above discourse; *said, This is a hard saying*—A strange discourse, a doctrine difficult to be believed. Hard indeed it must have appeared, as it does still appear, 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 it*—Who can understand, believe, and obey it? “Most of the metaphors in this discourse (and particularly that of *food*, to signify doctrine, and of *eating* and *drinking*, to signify believing) were abundantly easy, and might have been understood at the very first by the Jews, being found in their Scriptures, and used in their schools. Only, not being able to

62 ¶ *What* and if ye shall see the
Son of man ascend up where he was
before?

63 ¶ It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh
profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto
you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

64 But ¶ there are some of you that believe
not. For ¶ Jesus knew from the beginning who
they were that believed not, and who should
betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore ¶ said I unto you,

* 2 Cor. iii. 6.—† Verse 36.—* Chap. ii. 24, 25; xiii. 11.
† Verses 44, 45.

comprehend what he meant by *his flesh*, they took the whole literally, and were so offended at the thought of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, a thing not only prohibited by Moses, but repugnant to the customs of all civilized nations, that many of them who were his disciples, when they heard it, said it was absurd.”

Verses 61-65. *When Jesus knew*—Greek, *εἰδὼς ὅτι ο ἰησοῦς ἐν εαυτῷ*, *Jesus knowing in himself; that his disciples murmured at it*—Though they did not speak out their objections and scruples; *said, Doth this*, which you have just now heard, *offend you*—And do you stumble at it as incredible? *What if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up*—*ἀναβαίνοντα, ascending; where he was before?*—How much more incredible will it then appear to you, that he should give you his flesh to eat? Or, will not that convince you of the truth of my having come down from heaven? Will it not show you, likewise, that I never intended you should eat my flesh in a corporeal manner? It is very probable that what Christ here says of his ascension, was, partly at least, intended to intimate to them the necessity of taking his discourse in a figurative sense, as it would so soon be evidently impossible to eat his flesh, which was to be received into heaven. *It is the Spirit*—The spiritual meaning of these words; *that quickeneth*—By which God giveth spiritual life. *The flesh*—The bare, carnal, literal meaning; *profiteth nothing*. *The words that I speak*, the doctrines that I preach, *unto you are spirit and life*—Are to be taken in a spiritual sense; and when they are so understood and believed, or marked, learned, and digested, they are made the means of spiritual and eternal life to the hearers. *There are some of you who believe not*—And so receive no life by them; *for Jesus knew from the beginning*—Namely, of his ministry; *who they were that believed not, and who should betray him*—He knew the inward disposition of every particular person that heard him, and foresaw which of his disciples would be so base as to betray him. From this we infer with certainty that God foresees future contingencies:

“But his foreknowledge causes not the fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.”

Therefore said I, &c.—Because I know perfectly

A. M. 4036. that no man can come unto me, A. D. 32. except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 ¶^b From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord,

^b Verse 60.—^c Acts v. 20.—^d Matt. xvi. 16; Mark viii. 29;

the inward frame of your minds, that the prejudices of corrupt nature lie strongly against such a doctrine as I publish, and that nothing but divine grace can subdue them, therefore I told you plainly, *that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father*—And it is given to those only who will receive it on God's own terms. See the note on verses 37, 44.

Verses 66–69. *From that time many of his disciples went back*—This discourse of our Lord was, in all its different branches, so offensive to many, who till now had followed him, and professed to be his disciples, that, from this time, they ceased to attend on or hear him. So that he now began to purge his floor: the proud and careless were driven away, and those only remained who were meet for the Master's use. *Then said Jesus unto the twelve*—Jesus, perceiving this defection to be very general, asked the twelve if they were going to leave him with the rest. *Then Peter*—With his usual zeal; *answered, Lord*—If we were really disposed to quit thee; *to whom shall we go?*—Or, what advantage could we expect by it? *Thou hast the words of eternal life*—Thou, and thou alone, speakest the words which show the way to life everlasting; and hast even now been directing us therein; and God forbid that any other hopes and views should ever be preferred by us to these! *And*—However others may be governed by their carnal prejudices, and a deluded multitude may treat thee with contempt; *we firmly believe, and assuredly know, on the most convincing evidence, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*—On which persuasion we are determined to cleave to thee, to continue to learn of thee as thy disciples, to confide in thee for salvation, present and eternal, and to hazard all in thy service. So that Peter's implicit faith in our Lord's doctrine was founded, as it was right it

to whom shall we go? thou hast^e the words of eternal life. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

69^d And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 Jesus answered them, ^e Have not I chosen you twelve, ^f and one of you is a devil?

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son of Simon*: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

Luke ix. 20; Ch. i. 49; xi. 27.—^e Luke vi. 13.—^f Ch. xiii. 27.

should be, on his faith in him as the Messiah, the Son of God.

Verses 70, 71. *Jesus answered them*—And, yet even ye have not all acted, nor will you act, suitably to this knowledge and faith. For, *have I not chosen, or elected, you twelve*—To the honour and happiness of a peculiar intimacy with me, and to a station of the most distinguished eminence and importance in my church? *And yet one of you, as I well know, is a devil*—Is now influenced by one, and will become my accuser and betrayer. As the word *διαβολος*, rendered *devil*, sometimes signifies a *false accuser*, Mr. Locke considers our Lord as intimating here, that the reason why he had not more plainly declared himself to be the Messiah, was, because he knew Judas would, on that ground, have accused him of rebellion against the Romans. But, as Dr. Doddridge observes, “there does not appear to be any proof that Judas from the beginning intended to betray Christ. It is more than probable, that he at first engaged with him in expectation of secular advantages, and finding those views disappointed, he might now begin to form that detestable scheme which he afterward executed. If this was the occasion on which he first entertained the thought, as it probably might be, one would imagine that such an intimation of his secret wickedness must have struck him to the heart.” *He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon*—He meant Judas, though he did not at this time think fit to name him. Christ called Judas a *devil*, because he foresaw that he would be an apostate and a traitor. So likewise in rebuking Peter, who had expressed an utter aversion to his suffering at Jerusalem, he called him *Satan*, on account of that one act, by which he opposed the great design of his coming into the world. And he might much more give Judas the name of *devil*, who resembled Satan so nearly, in the wickedness of his dispositions and actions.

CHAPTER VII.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ discourses with his brethren about his going up to the feast of tabernacles, and stays some time after them, 1-13. (2.) Going up privately to Jerusalem, in the midst of the feast, he vindicates his conduct in the temple, and further urges the proofs of his divine mission, 14-24. (3.) With a reference to various censures passed on him by the Jews, he discourses concerning himself, whence he came, and whither he was going, 25-36. (4.) On the last day of the feast he graciously invites sinners to believe on him, that they might receive the Holy Ghost in his gifts and graces, 37-39. (5.) By these, and other gracious speeches, several of the Jews are convinced of his divine mission; and the resolution of some officers, sent by the sanhedrim to apprehend him, is disarmed, and they return without him, to the mortification of the Pharisees, 40-49. (6.) A short debate arises between Nicodemus and his brethren, 50-53.

A. M. 4036. A. D. 32. AFTER these things Jesus walked

in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, ^a because the Jews sought to kill him.

2 ^b Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

3 ^c His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world.

^a Chap. v. 16, 18.—^b Lev. xxiii. 34.—^c Matt. xii. 46; Mark iii. 31; Acts i. 14.—^d Mark iii. 21.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1. *After these things*—That is, after he had miraculously fed the five thousand, walked on the sea to his disciples, and discoursed with the multitude concerning the bread of life, as is recorded in the preceding chapter; *Jesus walked in Galilee*—That is, continued there, and instructed his disciples for some months after the second passover; *for he would not walk in Jewry*—Would not continue in Judea; *because the Jews*—Those of them who did not believe in him, and in particular the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees; *and sought an opportunity to kill him*—Either by private assassination, tumultuous assault, or legal process, being incensed by the growing fame of his miracles, and the freedom of his discourses.

Verses 2-9. *Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand*—Instituted in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in tents in the wilderness, and celebrated in booths erected for that purpose, with great solemnity and joy. For a particular account of the time, manner, and reason of this feast, see Lev. xxiii. 34-43. *His brethren, therefore*—So called, according to the Jewish way of speaking: namely, his near kinsmen, probably his cousins, the sons of his mother's sister; *said unto him, Depart hence*—From this obscure place; *and go into Judea*—"As they did not believe on him, they condemned him in their own minds, and intimated that he acted altogether absurdly in passing so much of his time in Galilee, and the other remote corners of the country, while he pretended to so public a character as that of the Messiah; that it would be much

5 (For ^d neither did his brethren believe in him.) A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, ^e My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

7 ^f The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, ^g because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; ^h for my time is not yet full come.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

10 But when his brethren were gone up,

^e Chapter ii. 4; viii. 20; Verses 8, 30.—^f Chapter xv. 19; Chap. iii. 19.—^g Chap. viii. 30; Verse 6.

more for his interest to make disciples in Jerusalem and Judea, the seat of power; and that he ought to work his miracles there as publicly as possible, before the great and learned men of the nation, whose decision in his favour would have great influence to induce others to believe on him." *Then Jesus said, My time is not yet come*—Either to manifest myself, or go up to Jerusalem. Jesus, knowing the malice of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, did not incline to be among them longer than was absolutely necessary, lest they should take away his life prematurely. *But your time is always ready*—You may go up with safety any time you please, since you have done nothing to make the Jews unfriendly to you as I have done; who by the strictness of my doctrine, and the freedom of my reproofs, have provoked their malice to the highest pitch. *The world cannot hate you*—Because you are of the world; *but me it hateth*—And all who bear the same testimony. *Go ye up unto this feast*—Whenever it suits you to go without waiting for me. *I go not up yet*—He does not say, I will not go up at all, but not yet. There may be reason for deferring a particular duty, which yet must not be wholly omitted. *My time is not yet full come*—Namely, the time of his sufferings, which the evangelist calls his hour; (chap. viii. 20;) or the time of his going up to the feast. *When he had said these words, he abode still in Galilee*—Namely, a few days longer.

Verse 10. *But when his brethren*—His carnal relations and their friends, in whose company he did not choose to travel; *were gone up, then went he also to the feast*—In obedience to the divine command,

A. M. 4036. then went he also up unto the feast,
A. D. 32. not openly, but as it were in secret.

11 ¶ Then ⁱthe Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12 And ^kthere was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for ^lsome said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

13 Howbeit, no man spake openly of him, ^mfor fear of the Jews.

^lChap. xi. 56.—^kChap. ix. 16; x. 19.—^jMatt. xxi. 46; Luke vii. 16; Chap. vi. 14; Verse 40.—^mChap. ix. 22; xii. 42; xix. 38.

and because it would give him an opportunity of honouring God, and doing good; but *not openly*—Not publicly, with a train of attendants, as he had often done: *but as it were in secret*—With as much privacy as possible; and that probably rather for fear of giving offence than of receiving injury: he would not unnecessarily provoke the government, which his being accompanied with a multitude of people would have done. And this suggests another reason for his delay. Had he taken this journey at the usual time, the multitudes who were on the road would have gathered round him, and accompanied him to Jerusalem, and at once have excited the notice, and provoked the malice and envy of his enemies; he therefore did not set out till the greater part of the people were gone, and then went up as privately as possible, neither preaching nor working miracles by the way.

Verses 11–13. *Then the Jews*—The men of Judea, particularly of Jerusalem, not seeing him appear as usual; *sought him at the feast*—Namely, at the beginning of it; *and said, Where is he?*—What is become of Jesus? What can have prevented his coming to the feast? As he had formerly attended the principal feasts, and signalized himself by the miracles which he wrought, he had made himself the subject of much discourse and observation. *And there was much murmuring among the people*—*Γογγυσμος πολυς, much whispering*: many private debates, especially among those who were come from distant parts. The word *murmuring* is not proper in this place, as it conveys the notion of discontent and grumbling, which does not appear to be suggested by the original term. It expresses solely the secrecy and caution which the people found it convenient to use in speaking on this subject, being prompted not by their resentments but by their fears. And it stands opposed to *παρησια, openly*, which occurs in the next verse. *For some said, He is a good man*—Eminently pious and benevolent; *others*—Being under the force of strong prejudices, and suspecting the worst; *said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people*—Seduces and misleads the ignorant populace, and the wiser part of the nation must see that he will undoubtedly at last draw his followers into ruin, as some other impostors have lately done. See Acts v. 36, 37. *Howbeit*—Though they thus privately de-

14 ¶ Now, about the midst of the A. M. 4036.
feast, Jesus went up into the temple A. D. 32.
and taught.

15 ⁿAnd the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man ^oletters, having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, ^pMy doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 ^qIf any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be

ⁿMatt. xiii. 54; Mark vi. 2; Luke iv. 22; Acts ii. 7.—^oOr *learning*.—^pChapter iii. 11; viii. 28; xii. 49; xiv. 10, 24
^qChap. viii. 43.

bated the matter among themselves; *no man spake openly of him*—Namely, in his favour; *for fear of the Jews*—Of those that were in authority, these being jealous of his growing fame, and looking with a very malignant eye on all who took any peculiar notice of him, or manifested any regard for him. In the mean time, those that thought contemptibly of him, might doubtless have spoken their minds as freely as they pleased, being in no danger of punishment from the rulers or higher classes of the people.

Verses 14–18. *Now about the midst of the feast*—Which lasted eight days; *Jesus went up into the temple and taught*—Probably on the sabbath day. His business was to preach the gospel of the kingdom, and he readily did it in every time and place of concourse: and doubtless vast multitudes would be assembled in the temple on this occasion. *And the Jews who heard him marvelled*—Were amazed, both at the excellence and importance of the doctrines which he delivered, and at the clear, convincing, and forcible manner in which he declared them: *saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned*—How comes he to be so well acquainted with sacred literature, as to be able thus to expound the Scriptures with such propriety and gracefulness; *having never learned*—Seeing he hath never learned this at any place of education? *Jesus answered, My doctrine is not mine*—It is not the product of human wisdom: I have neither been taught it by masters, nor have I acquired it by my own study: *but his that sent me*—It is the doctrine of God, who has inspired me with it because I am his messenger. *If any man will do his will*—*Εαν τις θελη, if any man be willing*, especially if he be also desirous and determined, in dependance on divine grace, to do God's will, as far as he is acquainted with it; *he shall know of the doctrine, &c.*—A universal rule this with regard to all persons and doctrines. They that are thoroughly willing and desirous to comply with the will of God, shall certainly have his will made known to them. Observe here, reader, who these are: they are such as are impartial and sincere in their inquiries concerning it, and are not biased by any carnal inclinations or interests; they are such as are convinced of the infinite importance of knowing and doing his will, in

A. M. 4036. of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. A. D. 32.

18 ^a He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

19 ^a Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? ^a Why go ye about to kill me?

^a Chap. v. 41; viii. 50.—^a Exod. xxiv. 3; Deut. xxxiii. 4; John i. 17; Acts vii. 38.

order to their eternal salvation, being persuaded that only those that know and do it shall enter the kingdom of heaven, Matt. vii. 21. They are such as carefully and diligently use the means which God has appointed to be used in order thereto; especially the means of prayer, for supernatural light, and of hearing, reading, and meditating on the word of God. Such shall know the doctrine of Christ, and the will of God; 1st, Because Christ has promised to give them that knowledge, namely, by opening the eyes of their understanding, which he is well able to do. Those who improve the light they have, and carefully walk according to it, shall, by divine grace, have that light increased, and be thereby secured against all destructive and hurtful errors. 2d, Because they are prepared to receive that knowledge. Those that are inclined to submit to the rules of the divine law, are disposed to admit the rays of the divine light. Those whose desire and care it is to resemble God, are in the fittest disposition to become acquainted with him. *Whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself*—Pious and good men can easily judge of any teacher, whether he and his doctrine come from God; not only because the divine wisdom and goodness are interested to secure such from capital errors, but because they themselves have no predominant evil inclinations to prejudice them against the truth when it appears; and because they can discern how far any doctrine is conformable to the principles of piety and virtue which they possess. *He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory*—If one teaches what makes for the advancement of his own worldly interest, or for the gratification of his pride, or any other evil passion, the doers of the will of God will immediately know that such a teacher is an impostor. *But he that seeketh his glory that sent him, &c.*—Whereas, if a teacher proposes doctrines which have a tendency to reform men, and to advance the glory of God, without regard to the opinion of the world, or to his own temporal interest; *the same is true*—He must certainly be sent of God, and should not by any means be suspected of imposture; and *no unrighteousness is in him*—No falsehood, no design to deceive the world. See Macknight.

Verses 19, 20. *Did not Moses give you the law*—As if he had said, But you are unrighteous; for you violate the very law for which you profess so much zeal. There is a remarkable beauty in this sudden turn of the sentiment. Some of the Jews called

20 The people answered and said, A. M. 4036. 'Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?' A. D. 32.

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22 ^a Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, ^a but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumsise a man.

^a Matt. xii. 14; Mark iii. 6; Chap. v. 16, 18; x. 31, 39; xi. 53. ^a Chap. viii. 48, 52; x. 20.—^a Lev. xii. 3.—^a Gen. xvii. 10.

Jesus a false prophet, because on the sabbath day he had healed the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, (chap. v. 9,) pretending that it was a gross violation of the law of Moses, such as no good man, far less a prophet, would be guilty of. In answer to these evil surmises, he told them plainly, that however much they pretended to reverence the authority of Moses in his law, they made no scruple to violate the most sacred of his precepts; having entered into a resolution of murdering him, directly contrary to every law of God and man; and being now employed in laying secret plots against his life: a reproof this, which came in with singular propriety and force, immediately after Jesus had, by the most convincing arguments, proved his mission from God. *The people answered, Thou hast a devil*—Either thou art mad, or thou art actuated by the malice of the devil, or by a lying spirit; *who goeth about to kill thee?*—Probably these, who spake thus, came from distant parts of the country, and did not know the design of the priests and rulers.

Verses 21-24. *Jesus answered, I have done one good work, and ye all marvel*—I have done a miracle of an extraordinary kind on the sabbath day, an action which ye think inconsistent with the character of a good man, and therefore ye wonder that I should have performed it. But I can easily vindicate my character, by an argument which it is not in your power to gainsay. *Moses therefore gave you circumcision*—That is, the law of circumcision. Dr. Campbell joins the words *ita retro*, here rendered *therefore*, to the end of the former verse, following Theophylact, and some whom he terms "our best authors," observing, that "nothing can be more incongruously connected than the words are in the English, and most other modern translations; where our Lord's performing a miracle is represented as the cause why Moses gave them circumcision." Thus also Doddridge, Wesley, Wynne, and Worsley, who translate the last clause of the preceding verse, *I have done one work, and ye all marvel at it, or, on account of it*. If we retain the common pointing, as all the versions do, the interpretation of this verse (verse 22) must be, *Because that Moses gave you the precept concerning circumcision, ye even circumsise a man on the sabbath day*. But the correction just now proposed makes the sense more clear and elegant, thus: *Moses gave you the law of circumcision*, (though indeed it was far more ancient than he, being a precept enjoined to and ob-

A. M. 4036. 23 If a man on the sabbath day
A. D. 32. receive circumcision, ² that the law
of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry
at me, because ¹ I have made a man every
whit whole on the sabbath day?

24 ² Judge not according to the appearance,
but judge righteous judgment.

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is
not this he whom they seek to kill?

¹ Or, without breaking the law of Moses.—*J* Chap. v. 8, 9, 16.
² Deut. i. 16, 17; Prov. xxiv. 23; Chap. viii. 15; James ii. 1.

served by, the patriarchs,) and on the sabbath day ye circumcise a man. If a man receive circumcision on the sabbath day, that the law of Moses may not be broken—The precept of circumcision required, that every male should be circumcised the eighth day from his birth. Though the eighth day happened on the sabbath, this ceremony was not deferred: and the law of circumcision vacated the law of the sabbath. Are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole—Or, have made a whole man sound; on the sabbath day?—Since you think yourselves bound to dispense with the strict observation of the sabbath for the sake of another precept, which is only of a ceremonial nature, how can ye be angry with me, because, in pursuance of the great end of all the divine laws, I have cured a man who was infirm in all his members, and that with far less bodily labour than that with which you perform the ceremony of circumcision, and cure the wound that is made by it? Judge not according to the appearance, &c.—Consider the nature of the things, and judge impartially, without regard to your own prejudices, or the superstition of your teachers. Dr. Campbell renders the clause, Judge not from personal regards, thinking that translation gives more exactly the sense of the original expression, *μη κρινετε κατ' οψην*. "There can be no question," says he, "that this precept is of the same import with those which enjoin strict impartiality between the parties, or to have no respect of persons in judgment. The application of it is obvious on this occasion. If the Jews had been strictly impartial and equitable, they would have seen that they could not vindicate Moses for enjoining such a violation of the sabbatical rest as was occasioned by circumcising, while they condemned Jesus for his miraculous cures, which required less labour, and were not less evidently calculated for promoting a good end. Nay, they could not excuse themselves for the one practice, if Jesus was blameable for the other."

Verses 25-27. Then—While our Lord was thus discoursing in the temple; some of them of Jerusalem—Some of the inhabitants of the city, who knew more of the designs of the sanhedrim than the others who had spoken before; said, Is not this he whom they seek to kill?—Seek an opportunity to put to death? But lo—He is not only come up hither to the feast, but speaks openly and freely in the very temple itself, and they are so far from seizing him, that they do not so much as say any thing to pro-

hibit him. Do the rulers know indeed—Are they now fully convinced; that this is the very Christ—And that therefore they were mistaken in their former censures? Howbeit, we know this man, whence he is—And therefore have sufficient reason to conclude, that he cannot be the Messiah: for, when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is—This Jewish tradition was true in regard to his pre-existing and divine nature: in that respect, according to the obvious popular sense of Isa. liii. 8, 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. And "it is evident from Matt. ii. 4, 5, that the Jews apprehended the Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem; and from a multitude of other places, that they knew he was to be a descendant of David." Archbishop Tillotson supposes, that the words, no man knoweth whence he is, "refer to an expectation the Jews had, that he would be born of a virgin. As for the notion which Justin Martyr mentions, that the Messiah should, for a while, be hid, it seems more modern, and they must put a strange interpretation on Isa. liii. 8; Mic. v. 2; and Psa. cx. 4, to draw any such consequence from these passages, as Dr. Whitby and M. L'Enfant suppose they did."—Doddridge.

27 ^b Howbeit, we know this man, whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple, as he taught, saying, ^c Ye both know me, and ye

^a Verse 48.—^b Matthew xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3; Luke iv. 22.
^c Chap. viii. 14.

hibit him. Do the rulers know indeed—Are they now fully convinced; that this is the very Christ—And that therefore they were mistaken in their former censures? Howbeit, we know this man, whence he is—And therefore have sufficient reason to conclude, that he cannot be the Messiah: for, when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is—This Jewish tradition was true in regard to his pre-existing and divine nature: in that respect, according to the obvious popular sense of Isa. liii. 8, 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. And "it is evident from Matt. ii. 4, 5, that the Jews apprehended the Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem; and from a multitude of other places, that they knew he was to be a descendant of David." Archbishop Tillotson supposes, that the words, no man knoweth whence he is, "refer to an expectation the Jews had, that he would be born of a virgin. As for the notion which Justin Martyr mentions, that the Messiah should, for a while, be hid, it seems more modern, and they must put a strange interpretation on Isa. liii. 8; Mic. v. 2; and Psa. cx. 4, to draw any such consequence from these passages, as Dr. Whitby and M. L'Enfant suppose they did."—Doddridge.

Verse 28. Then cried Jesus—Probably with a loud and earnest voice, and with allusion to the words which they had just spoken in a private manner to each other, and which they imagined he could not have heard, as he taught in the temple at some distance from them; Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am—Or, as it seems the clause should rather be rendered, Do you know both me, and know whence I am? Thus it is read by Doddridge, Wesley, Wynne, and also by Campbell, who observes upon it, "As the words are plainly capable of being read as an interrogation, it is, in every respect, most eligible to translate them so in this place. In the way they are commonly rendered they contain a direct contradiction to what our Lord says, chap. viii. 14, 19. Nor does it satisfy that both may be true in different senses, since these different senses do not appear from the context. Nay, in effect, he contradicts them in the same breath, inasmuch as he tells the people, that they know not him who sent him. When they said, We know whence this man is, the same thing was evidently meant as when they said, (chap. vi. 42,) Is not this Jesus, the son of

A. M. 4036. know whence I am: and ^dI am not
A. D. 32. come of myself, but he that sent me
* is true, ^fwhom ye know not.

29 But ^eI know him: for I am from him, and
he hath sent me.

30 Then ^bthey sought to take him: but ⁱno
man laid hands on him, because his hour was
not yet come.

31 And ^kmany of the people believed on him,
and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more
miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

32 ¶ The Pharisees heard that the people

^a Chapter v. 43; viii. 42.—^b Chapter v. 32; viii. 26;
Romans iii. 4.—^c Chapter i. 18; viii. 55.—^d Matthew xi.
27; Chap. x. 15.—^e Mark xi. 18; Luke xix. 47; xx. 19;
Verse 19; Chap. viii. 37.

Joseph, whose father and mother we know? Now
our Lord tells them plainly, that they did not know
his father, and consequently could not tell whence
(that is, of what parentage) he was. *And I am not
come of myself*—With vain and false pretences to a
divine mission; *but he that sent me*—And gives daily
proof thereof, by the miracles which I perform in
his name; *is true*—And therefore will not bear wit-
ness to a deceiver. Or, as the words may be para-
phrased, “Though you pretend to know me and
whence I am, it does not follow that I am destitute
of the prophetic characters of the Messiah, and an
impostor, come to you of my own accord. I am
really sent to you by God, who is true in all the pro-
phesies he uttered by his servants concerning the
Messiah, for they are all fulfilled in me.” But him
you know not—On the contrary, “You are wholly
ignorant of his blessed perfections and gracious
counsels, and have no inclination to obey his will.”

Verses 30-32. *Then they sought to take him*—
“The defence which he made did not pacify his
enemies, for some of them would gladly have appre-
hended him; however, none of them had the cour-
age to lay hands on him, being restrained by Provi-
dence, because the season of his sufferings was not
yet come.” *And many of the people believed on
him*—“In the mean time the miracle which he had
lately performed on the infirm man was so great
and so well known, and this defence, by which he
justified himself, so clear and convincing, that many
of the people believed on him, publicly affirming,
that he was the Messiah.” *The Pharisees heard
that the people murmured*—Or, *whispered*, rather,
see on verse 12; *such things concerning him*—And
were greatly displeased and alarmed at it; and, with
the other members of the sanhedrim, particularly
the chief priests, among whom were many Saddu-
cees, (Acts iv. 1,) *sent officers*—From the chamber
in which they held their council, into the adjacent
court of the temple; *to take him*—To apprehend
and bring him before them, thinking thus, it seems,
to confute his pretensions, and punish him. This,
as appears from verses 45, 50, 53, took place on the
last and great day of the feast.

murmured such things concerning A. M. 4036
him; and the Pharisees and the chief A. D. 32.
priests sent officers to take him.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, ¹Yet a little
while am I with you, and *then* I go unto
him that sent me.

34 Ye ^mshall seek me, and shall not find
me; and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves,
Whither will he go, that we shall not find him?
will he go unto ⁿthe dispersed among the Gen-
tiles, and teach the ¹Gentiles?

¹ Verse 44; Chap. viii. 20.—² Matt. xii. 23; Chap. iii. 2;
viii. 30.—³ Chap. xiii. 33; xvi. 16.—⁴ Hos. v. 6; Chap.
viii. 21; xiii. 33.—⁵ Isa. xi. 12; James i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1.
⁶ Or, *Greeks*.

Verses 33, 34. *Then said Jesus*—Continuing his
discourse, (from verse 29,) which they had inter-
rupted, *Yet a little while am I with you*—My minis-
try among you is drawing toward a conclusion; you
ought, therefore, while it lasts, to make the best pos-
sible improvement of it. *For ye shall seek me, and
shall not find me*—You shall earnestly desire my
presence with you, but shall not obtain it. “This
seeking for the Messiah was general through the na-
tion, during the calamities in Judea, occasioned by
Titus and his armies; and has continued among the
Jews ever since, in all the countries where they
have been dispersed, but to no purpose, for their
Messiah having already appeared, it is in vain to ex-
pect another. By thus predicting his own death,
our Lord insinuated that he both knew the present
disposition of the council, and foresaw that they
would soon put an end to his ministry by taking
away his life.” *And where I am*—Or, where I shall
then, and always be; *ye cannot come*—Referring to
his speedy exaltation to the heavenly world, and the
impossibility of their being admitted thither: for so
a similar expression, used chap. viii. 21, evidently
means, namely, *Ye shall seek me, and shall die in
your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come*. Perhaps,
also, our Lord might refer to the impotent malice
with which, after his exaltation to the Father’s right
hand, they should oppose his triumphant cause.

Verses 35, 36. *Then said the Jews, Whither will
he go*—Jesus spake concerning his death, resurrec-
tion, and ascension, but the Jews did not understand
him; for they imagined that he threatened to leave
them, and go among their brethren of the dispersion.
Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles—
Greek, τῶν Ἑλλήνων, of the Greeks, that is, the Jews
scattered abroad in different nations, Greece particu-
larly; *and teach the Gentiles*—Τῶν Ἑλλήνων, the
Greeks, the heathen themselves. By *Greeks*, we
are here to understand idolatrous Gentiles, and not
Hellenists, or Jews, who used the Greek language;
for these were the *dispersed among them*. There is,
therefore, says Dr. Doddridge, a sarcasm “in these
words, beyond what commentators have observed.
They insinuate that if he was to go into foreign coun-

A. M. 4036. 36 What manner of saying is this
A. D. 32. that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

37 ° In the last day, that great day of the feast, Je-

° Leviticus xxiii. 36.—† Isaiah lv. 1; Chapter vi. 35; Revelation xxiii. 17.

tries, to address himself to the Jews there, who might be supposed not so well instructed as those who lived in Judea and at Jerusalem, he would not be able to make any proselytes, even among these; but would be constrained to apply himself to the ignorant and stupid Gentiles, to seek disciples among them; which, to be sure, appeared to these haughty scorn-ers one of the most infamous circumstances that could be imagined, and most incompatible with the character of the true Messiah." *What manner of saying is this*—This saying is unintelligible and absurd: for though his meaning be, that he is going to preach among the Gentiles, surely it is possible for us to follow him thither.

Verse 37. *In the last day, &c.*—Namely, the eighth day, when, according to the institution of Moses, (Lev. xxiii. 34, 36; Num. xxix. 35, where see the notes,) there was to be a holy convocation, or general and solemn assembly of the people, attended with some extraordinary sacrifices. This day is called *the great day of the feast*, on account of the high esteem in which the nation of the Jews held it, as a day kept holy solely on their own account. On the seven preceding days they held that sacrifices were offered, not so much for themselves as for the whole world; in the course of them, seventy bullocks being sacrificed for the seventy nations of the world: but the sacrifices of this day they considered as being offered for Israel alone, on whose behalf only several solemnities of the day were observed. Tremellius, on this text, observes, from the Talmud, that the Jews used on this day to march round the altar seven times, singing hosannas, with palm branches in their hands, in memory of the Israelites, in the days of Joshua, marching round Jericho seven times on the day of its fall. He informs us also, from the same authority, that on this day they drew water with great joy from the fountain or brook of Siloam, at the foot of mount Zion, and carried it to the priests in the temple, with the sound of the trumpet and great rejoicing, where they poured out part of it, mingled with wine, as a drink-offering, which they accompanied with prayers to God for rain. For, as at the passover, they offered an omer, to obtain from God his blessing upon the harvest; at pentecost, their first-fruits, to request his blessing on the fruits of the trees; so, at the feast of the tabernacles, they offered water, as a token of their desire for a plentiful rain to fall at the following seed-time; the people, in the mean time, singing, *With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation*, Isa. xii. 3. Part of the water they drank, with loud acclamations, in commemoration of the mercy shown to their fathers, who were relieved by the miracle of a great stream

of water made to gush out of a rock, when the nation was ready to die with thirst, in a sandy desert, where there was neither river nor spring.

38 ¶ He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

¶ Deut. xviii. 15.—† Prov. xviii. 4; Isa. xii. 3; xlv. 3; Chapter iv. 15.

of water made to gush out of a rock, when the nation was ready to die with thirst, in a sandy desert, where there was neither river nor spring.

The Jewish writers pretend that Haggai and Zechariah were the institutors of these rites, and that in performing them they acted according to the directions of these prophets. Be this as it may, it is probable, as Dr. Lightfoot has shown, from some Jewish writers, that among other things intended to be expressed hereby, the ceremony was also meant to be emblematical of their desire and expectation of the coming of the Messiah, and of the effusion of the Holy Spirit under his dispensation. But whatever might be the original intention of these ceremonies, we learn from the same writer (Tremellius) that the Jews had miserably perverted it, by the addition of their own magical ceremonies. Christ, therefore, probably intended to lead them back to the principal design and meaning of the institution, and to draw their minds from the terrestrial water, and all earthly and temporal things, to the water of life, and to himself, the chief scope of this feast and of all other ceremonies. For, as it was his custom to raise moral and spiritual instructions from sensible occurrences, he took this opportunity of inviting, in the most solemn and affectionate manner, all who were in pursuit, whether of knowledge, holiness, or happiness, to come unto him, and drink, in allusion to the rite they were then employed about. *Jesus stood*—Probably on some eminence, where he could be seen and heard by the surrounding multitude, as the priest did who poured out the water mentioned above; *and cried*—"Intentâ voce, quo magis attentionem excitaret," (Grotius,) with a loud voice, that he might excite the greater attention. *If any man thirst*—That is, sincerely and earnestly desire true happiness, and long for the blessings promised under the administration of the Messiah; *let him come unto me*—By faith. Let him believe that I am able and willing to satisfy his most ardent and enlarged desires, and rely on me to do it; *and drink*—That is, he shall drink; he shall receive the blessings for which he thirsts; for I am most ready freely to communicate every needful blessing, and particularly those supplies of the Spirit, which you profess sincerely and earnestly to desire. Compare Isa. lv. 1.

Verses 38, 39. *He that believeth on me*—With a living faith, and with his heart unto righteousness; *as the Scripture hath said*—As God in the Scriptures hath promised and attested in many places; *out of his belly*—From within him, from his mind and heart; *shall flow rivers of living water*—He shall receive spiritual blessings, or communications of divine grace, in so great an abundance, that he

A. M. 4036. 39 (* But this spake he of the Spirit, A. D. 32. which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

40 ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

41 Others said, * This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come † out of Galilee?

42 † Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ

* Isa. xlv. 3; Joel ii. 28; Chap. xvi. 7; Acts ii. 17, 33, 38. † Chap. xii. 16; xvi. 7.—^a Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Chap. i. 21; vi. 14.—^b Chap. iv. 42; vi. 69.

shall not only be refreshed and comforted himself, but shall be instrumental in refreshing and comforting others. The expression, *Out of his belly shall flow rivers*, is used with allusion to receptacles round springs, out of which great quantities of water flow by pipes: and the figure therefore signifies the plenitude of spiritual gifts and graces to be possessed by believers, and the happy effects which they should produce in the world. Thus the apostles and first messengers of Christ were both watered themselves and enabled to water others, Gentiles as well as Jews, not with small streams, but with large rivers of divine knowledge and grace, so that the countries, which till then had been barren, became exceeding fruitful in holiness and righteousness. Accordingly the evangelist adds, by way of explication, *this spake he of the Spirit*—Of the Holy Spirit's gifts and graces; *which they who believed on him should receive*—*Ἐμελλον λαμβανειν*, were about to receive, namely, after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, according to his promise, chap. xiv. 16; and xvi. 7. The extraordinary gifts of the Spirit had, in a great measure, ceased since the death of Zechariah and Malachi. They had been faintly manifested in the approach of the Messiah, as to Zechariah and Elizabeth, to Simeon and Anna, and especially to John the Baptist, who is said to have been filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb; but the full effusion of these gifts, foretold by Isaiah and Joel, took not place till after the ascension of Christ, and was yet to come. On the day of pentecost, and not before, these extraordinary gifts were communicated to the apostles, evangelists, and many other believers, to fit them for converting the world. The universality, however, of the invitation and promise here given, makes it evident that, on this occasion, our Lord had the ordinary influences of the Spirit in his eye, which the evangelist's remark, that *the Holy Ghost was not yet given*, will not exclude; because, even these might at that time be said not to have been given, as they had been given but sparingly, in comparison of the plentiful distribution which was to be made of them to all believers after Christ's ascension. Accordingly, the ordinary influences of the Spirit are often in Scripture represented as the consequences and reward of faith, Gal. iii. 14; Eph. i. 12-14.

cometh of the seed of David, and out A. M. 4036 of the town of Bethlehem, † where A. D. 32. David was?

43 So † there was a division among the people because of him.

44 And † some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

† Verse 52; Chap. i. 46.—^a Psa. cxxxii. 11; Jer. xxiii. 5; Mic. v. 2; Matthew ii. 5; Luke ii. 4.—^b 1 Samuel xvi. 1, 4. † Verse 12; Chap. ix. 16; x. 19.—^c Verse 30.

Verses 40-44. *Many of the people therefore*—Even the officers sent to apprehend Christ, (see verse 46,) as well as many others of our Lord's hearers; *when they heard this saying*—Namely, the gracious invitation above mentioned, which indeed was a more free declaration and promise than he commonly made, were so affected thereby, that they exclaimed, *Of a truth this is the Prophet*—Namely, the prophet like unto Moses, mentioned Deut. xviii. 15. For, as the article is prefixed, it is most natural to render the expression, *the prophet*. And yet, as in the next verse this prophet is distinguished from *the Christ*; perhaps they only intended to signify that they thought one of the ancient prophets was revived. For many of the Jews supposed, that not only Elias, but also another of the prophets, would appear again among them, before the coming of the Messiah: to which opinion the question put to John, (chap. i. 21.) *Art thou that prophet*, may be considered as referring. See the note there. *Others said, This is the Christ*—The Messiah himself. *But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?*—This they spoke because they were led away with a common mistake, that Jesus was born in Nazareth. *Hath not the Scripture said, &c.*—Is not your acknowledging a Galilean for the Messiah contrary to the Scriptures, which have determined his nativity to Bethlehem, the town of his ancestor David? But how could they forget that Jesus was born there? Had not Herod the Great given them terrible reason to remember it, by the general massacre made of all the infants in that town and neighbourhood. *So there was a division among the people because of him*—They were divided in their sentiments, and a warm disension took place among them on his account. *And some would have taken him*—The contention was carried to such a height, that his enemies, considering him as the cause of it, and knowing on what errand the officers were come, threatened to apprehend him, and would have done it, had they not been restrained by the providence of God.

Verses 45-49. *Then came the officers to the chief priests, &c.*—Namely, without accomplishing the purpose for which they were sent; *and they*—The chief priests and other members of the sanhedrim, perceiving the officers had not executed their commission; *said, Why have ye not brought him*—Ac-

A. M. 4036. 46 The officers answered, ' Never
A. D. 32. man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48 ' Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (' he that

⁴ Matt. vii. 29. — Chap. xii. 42; Acts vi. 7; 1 Cor. i. 20, 26; ii. 8. — Chap. iii. 2. — Gr. to him.

According to the orders you received from us? *The officers answered, Never man spake like this man*—Surely no man living ever addressed his hearers in so engaging and irresistible a manner. They seem to have intended to intimate, that, had the chief priests and Pharisees heard him themselves, his discourse must have disarmed their resentment against him. *Then answered the Pharisees*—Far from being softened by the account the officers gave; *Are ye also deceived*—Ye, who have the advantage of knowing our sentiments concerning this man? *Have any of the rulers*—Men of rank or eminence; or of the Pharisees—Men of learning or religion; *believed on him?* *But this people*—ὄχλος οὗτος, this populace; who knoweth not the law—This ignorant rabble; so they affected to call Christ's friends; *are cursed*—Are, by that ignorance, exposed to the curse of being thus seduced.

Verses 50–53. *Nicodemus, he who came to Jesus by night*—Having now got a little more courage; *being one of them*—Being present, as a member of the great council, *saith to them, Doth our law judge* (κρινει, condemn) *any man before it hear him*—Before the magistrate, appointed to execute it, summon him into his presence, that he may hear from him what he has to say in his own defence; *and know what he doeth*—Namely, from credible witnesses? As if he had said, Do not we ourselves act as if we knew not the law, if we pass sentence on a man before we hear him? *They answered*—By personal reflection; the argument they could not answer, and therefore did not attempt it. For, notwithstanding that perfect knowledge of the law, and that high reverence for its precepts, which they made such boast of, they were acting directly contrary to the most essential principles of equity established by it. But, being greatly exasperated by Nicodemus's reproof, which was the more poignant and provoking, because it was well founded; and being in a violent passion with him, for condemning their conduct, and speaking favourably of Jesus, they asked him, with an air of disdain and surpris mixed with fierce-

ness, *Art thou also of Galilee*—Art thou one of his party? One of the ignorant, low faction, that has leagued to support a Galilean Messiah in opposition to the law, which has determined the Messiah's nativity to Bethlehem? *Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet*—They could not but know the contrary. They knew Jonah arose out of Gath-hepther; and Nahum from another village in Galilee. Yea, and Thisbe, the town of Elijah the Tishbite, was in Galilee also. They might, like wise, 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. Add to this, that many of the people had heard the shepherds declare, on the testimony of the angel, that he was born at Bethlehem, and had wondered at the words which had been told them by the shepherds, Luke ii. 15–18. Nay, and the chief priests and Pharisees were not ignorant that the wise men from the East went to Bethlehem to worship him soon after he was born, as *king of the Jews*: the memory of which facts could not be lost in the space of thirty years. Here, then, we have a striking instance of the power of prejudice to shut men's eyes against the clearest truth. Dr. Campbell, however, thinks they did not mean all that they expressed; because, when men's passions are inflamed, they are not wont to be accurate in their words, or distinct in recollecting, on the sudden, things which make against them; and that therefore this expression of the Pharisees, whom prejudice, pride, and envy had concurred in blinding, need not appear surprising to us. *And every man went unto his own house*—The council separated immediately: for, being conscious that their poor answer would not bear examination, they took care, by rising up and dispersing, to prevent a reply. So that short, plain question of Nicodemus, spoiled all their measures, and for the present frustrated their designs. *A word spoken in season, how good is it!* especially when God gives it his blessing.

51 ' Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

⁵ Deut. i. 17; xvii. 8, &c.; xix. 15. — Isa. ix. 1, 2; Matt. iv. 15; Chap. i. 46; Verse 41.

CHAPTER VIII.

Here, (1,) Christ having spent the night in retirement returns to the temple, where an adulteress is brought before him; but he avoids giving judgment in her case, and turns the consciences of his enemies on themselves, 1-11. (2,) He speaks of himself as the light of the world, urges the concurrent testimony of the Father, and gives the Jews repeated warning of the danger they would incur by persisting in their infidelity, 12-29. (3,) He continues his discourse with the Jews in the treasury the day after the feast of tabernacles; and labours to convince them how vain their pretences to liberty, and to the privileges of the children of Abraham were, while they continued to reject him, and were the servants of sin, 30-47. (4,) He promises immortality to his followers; and, speaking of his own existence as prior to that of Abraham, the Jews in the temple attempt to stone him, but he miraculously escapes from their hands, 48-59.

A. M. 4036. JESUS went unto the mount of
A. D. 32. Olives:

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down and taught them.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery: and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this A. M. 4036.
woman was taken in adultery, in the A. D. 32.
very act.

5 * Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the

* Lev. xx. 10;

Deut. xxii. 22.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verses 1, 2. *Jesus went unto the mount of Olives*—Went to lodge there, that he might be out of the reach of his enemies, and that in retirement he might, by secret converse with his heavenly Father, be animated to all the labours and dangers before him. *And early in the morning*—In order that his retirement might not break in upon the opportunity of public service, which the present concourse of people at Jerusalem afforded him; *he came again into the temple*—With a view to teach the people, great numbers of whom coming to worship there, before they returned to their respective habitations in the country; (the feast being now ended;) *came unto him*—Flocked around him, to receive his instructions; and, notwithstanding the late conspiracy which had been formed against him, *he sat down and taught them*—As freely and as boldly as he had ever done. Such was his compassion for them, and his zeal for the glory of his heavenly Father!

Verses 3, 4. *And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman, &c.*—While he was thus employed, the scribes and Pharisees set a woman before him, that had been taken in the act of adultery; and standing round him, desired his opinion of the affair, which, it appears from verse 6, they did with an insidious intention. "Probably," says Dr. Macknight, "the Romans had modelled the laws of Judea according to the jurisprudence of Rome, and in particular had mitigated the severity of the punishment of the adulteress. Wherefore, if Jesus should say that the law of Moses ought to be executed upon this adulteress, the Pharisees hoped the people would stone her immediately, which would afford them an opportunity of accusing him before the governor, as a mover of sedition. But, if he should determine that the innovations practised by the Romans in such cases should take place, they resolved to represent him to the people as one who made void the law out of complaisance to their heathen masters. This their craft and wickedness

Jesus fully knew, and regulated his conduct towards these depraved hypocrites accordingly, for he made them no answer."

Verses 5, 6. *Now Moses commanded that such should be stoned*—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. It may be inferred, however, from Ezek. xvi. 38-40, that though the law of Moses did not expressly enjoin it, the Jews considered stoning as being the proper punishment of all kinds of adultery, for there the prophet represents God as saying, concerning Jerusalem, *I will judge thee as women that break wedlock are judged; they shall stone thee with stones.* Add to this, we find Philo and the ancient Christian fathers using the phrases, "those that were stoned," and "those that were punished for adultery," as synonymous terms. *This they said, tempting him, that they might 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. *But Jesus stooped down, and wrote on the ground*—Perhaps there were in this woman's case some circumstances tending to alleviate her guilt, such as her past innocence, known to Jesus, her present repentance, which he could easily discern, and the strength of the temptations by which she had been hurried into sin. There may have been something likewise in her accusers' characters well known to him, which made it proper for them to desist from the prosecution. Also, Jesus might now, as on other occasions, decline assuming the character and office of a civil magistrate. Lastly, the persons who demanded his opinion were by no means the judges to whom the execution of the law was committed; but Pharisees, who at the bottom were gross hypocrites, notwithstanding they professed the greatest concern for the

A. M. 4036. ground, as though he heard them
A. D. 32 not.

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, ^b He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard *it*, ^c being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last :

^b Deut. xvii. 7; Rom. ii. 1. — ^c Rom. ii. 22. — ^d Luke ix. 56; xii. 14; Chap. iii. 17.

honour of the divine law. Whatever was the reason, Jesus did not encourage this prosecution; but *with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not*—Or had not been attending to what they said: for, to write on the ground is the action of one who, being wholly wrapped up in his own thoughts, does not take notice of any thing that passes without.

Verses 7-9. *When they continued asking him*—That is, pressed him with great importunity to give an answer, thinking, no doubt, that they had him at a great advantage; *he lifted up himself, and*, without replying directly to their demand, *said, He that is without sin among you*—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; *first cast a stone at her*—He alludes to the law, (Deut. xvii. 7,) which ordered, that the hands of the witnesses, by whose testimony an idolater was convicted, should be first upon him, and afterward the hands of all the people. Our Lord's meaning was, Persons exceedingly zealous in getting punishment executed on others, ought to be free themselves at least from gross sins; for which cause, as you are all guilty of equal, or greater, or it may be, the like offences, and deserve the wrath of God, you should show mercy to this sinner, who may have fallen through the strength of temptation, rather than of evil inclination, and who is now truly sorry for her offence. Our Lord's words made such an impression on the minds of these hypocrites, and raised in them such strong convictions of sin, as soon put their zeal to shame; and made them afraid to stay, lest Jesus should have made their particular sins public. *And he again stooped down and wrote on the ground*—Giving them an opportunity to withdraw, which they embraced; *and being convicted by their own consciences*—That is, their consciences smiting them with remorse, because, at some time or other of their lives, they had been guilty, either of the very sin for which they proposed to have this woman stoned, or of some crime or crimes equally great: *they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last*—*Ἀρχαῖνοι ἀπο τῶν πρεσβυτέρων εἰς τὸν ἐσχάτων*. This, Keuchenius interprets, *beginning at the most honourable, even unto the lowest of them*: and this they did,

and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, ^d Neither do I condemn thee: go, and ^e sin no more.

12 ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, 'I am the light of the world: he that

• Chapter v. 14.—^f Chapter i. 4, 5, 9; iii. 19; ix. 5; xii. 35, 36, 46.

although, when they first came, they had been exceedingly incensed against her. *And 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.

Verses 10, 11. *When Jesus saw none but the woman*—None of those who had been soliciting his judgment, but only the woman they had brought before him; *he said, Where are those thine accusers?*—Is there no one remaining to bear witness against thee? *hath no man condemned thee*—Hath no judicial sentence been passed upon thee? *She said, No man, Lord: Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee*—Neither do I take upon me to pass any such sentence, nor to order thee to be punished at this time: but thou must not therefore think that I approve thy conduct. Thou hast committed a great sin, and I charge thee to beware of committing it any more. Let this deliverance lead thee to repentance. "The English word *condemn*," says Dr. Campbell, "is used with so great a latitude of signification, for *blaming, disapproving*, as well as passing sentence against, that I thought it better, in order to avoid occasion of mistaking, to use a periphrasis, which hits exactly the meaning of the Greek word *κατακρίνω*, in these two verses." He therefore renders the expression in the former verse, *Hath no man passed sentence upon thee?* and in the latter, *Neither do I pass sentence on thee*. "In this transaction Jesus appears unspeakably great, having displayed on the occasion a degree of wisdom and knowledge, power and goodness, vastly more than human. His wisdom he showed in defending himself against the malicious attacks of his enemies; his knowledge, in discovering the invisible state of their minds; his power, in making use of their own secret thoughts and convictions, to disappoint their crafty intentions; and his goodness, in pitying, and not punishing instantly, one who had been guilty of an atrocious act of wickedness."—Macknight.

Verse 12. *Then spake Jesus again*—Addressing himself to his disciples and the multitude; *I am the light of the world*—It was with singular propriety that our Lord spake thus, after the wonderful display which he had just made, by the above-mentioned

A. M. 4036. followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. A. D. 32.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go: but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

¶ Chap. v. 31.—Chap. vii. 28; ix. 29.—Chap. vii. 24. Chap. iii. 17; xii. 47; xviii. 36.—Verse 29; Chap. xvi. 32.

remarkable decision, of his wisdom and knowledge, as well as of his power and goodness. He probably alluded to Mal. iv. 2, where the Messiah is foretold under the name of the *Sun of righteousness*; or to the bright shining of the sun that morning. As if he had said, I am the spiritual Sun, that dispels the darkness of ignorance and superstition, with which the minds of men are overcast; for by my doctrine and example I show clearly everywhere the will of God and the way of salvation: and I never leave those in darkness who walk by my light, as the sun leaves travellers when he sets, and occasions the darkness of the night. For *he that followeth me*—That adheres to, and continues to learn of me; that imitates my example, and governs himself by the dictates of my word and Spirit; *shall not walk in darkness*—In ignorance or error, sin or 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, and joy, till he is guided by it to life everlasting.

Verses 13, 14. *The Pharisees, therefore*—Namely, some of them who were then present, but different persons from those who had brought in the woman, being enraged at the late disappointment of their brethren; *said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself*—And therefore, by thine own confession, *thy record*—Or testimony, rather, as *μαρτυρία* signifies; *is not to be admitted as true*—But may rather be suspected of vain glory. They retort upon our Lord his own words, (chap. v. 31,) *If I testify of myself, my testimony is not true*. He 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 true*—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, verse 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.

Verses 15-19. *Ye judge after the flesh*—As the flesh, that is, corrupt nature, dictates. The same carnal prejudices still prevail in the minds of the

15 Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

18 I am one that bear witness of myself; and the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy

¶ Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15; Matt. xviii. 16; 2 Cor. xiii. 1; Heb. x. 28.—Chap. v. 37.

Jews, and prevent their reception of Christ; they laying it down as a first principle, that he is to be a great temporal prince and deliverer. And the admission of false principles, which are constantly taken for granted, and never examined, will, it is to be feared, be attended with fatal consequences to thousands more. *I judge no man*—Not thus; not now; not at my first coming. Dr. Macknight paraphrases the verse thus: "Ye judge of me according to outward appearances, and condemn me for this, among other things, that *I judge no man*. You think that I cannot be the Messiah, because I do not destroy those who oppose me, as you imagine the Messiah will do; but in this you are altogether mistaken, for the design of the Messiah's coming is not to destroy, but to save mankind." *And yet if I judge, my judgment is true*—That is, just, equitable: *for I am not alone, &c.*—If I should condemn any person for disbelieving my divine mission and rejecting me, the condemnation of such a one would be just, because my mission is true, being confirmed, not by my own testimony only, but by the Father's also; and because every sentence of that kind, which I should pass, would be pronounced by the authority, and agreeable to the will of my Father. The Son is not alone in judging, any more than in testifying; for the Father *is in him, and he in the Father*, chap. xiv. 10, 11. *It is written in your law*—For which you profess to have so great and sacred a regard; *that the testimony of two men is true*—That is, to be admitted as true; and that matters of the greatest consequence are, without scruple, to be determined by it. See the margin. As if he said, You could not justly complain if I should punish you for your unbelief in such a case as this, since your own law directs you to believe every matter that is confirmed by the concurring testimony of two witnesses, as my mission evidently is. *For I am one that bear witness of myself*—Not by words only, but by all the actions of my life, which are agreeable to the character of a messenger from heaven; *and the Father, that sent me, beareth witness of me*—By the miracles which he enables me to perform, (see chap. v. 32, 36,) so that you are altogether culpable in rejecting me. Then said they, *Where is thy Father*—The other witness to whom thou so frequently appealest? Men-

A. M. 4036. Father? Jesus answered, ° Ye neither know me, nor my Father: ° if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

20 These words spake Jesus in ° the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and ° no man laid hands on him, for ° his hour was not yet come.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ° ye shall seek me, and ° shall

° Verse 55; Chap. xvi. 3.—° Chap. xiv. 7.—° Mark xii. 41. ° Chap. vii. 30.—° Chap. vii. 8.—° Chap. vii. 34; xiii. 33.

tion him plainly, that we may know how far he is to be regarded, and produce him as a witness. *Jesus answered*—Showing the perverseness of their question; *Ye neither know me nor my Father*—As plainly appears by your conduct. *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also*—If ye had properly understood who I am, and had formed a right judgment of my person, character, and mission, and regarded me as you ought to have done, you would also, long before this time, have known who and what my Father is, in another manner than you now do; for I bear his complete resemblance, and it is my great business to reveal him to those who submit to my instructions. Our Lord here 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.

Verse 20. *These words spake Jesus in the treasury*—Which was a certain part of the women's court, where the chests were placed for receiving the offerings of those who came to worship; and consequently was a place of great concourse. *And no man laid hands on him*—Though he so plainly intimated that God was his Father, and charged the Jews with being ignorant of him, while they boasted that he was in a peculiar sense their God; yet, their spirits were kept under such a powerful, though secret restraint, that no one seized him; which was the more wonderful, as it was a place much frequented by his greatest enemies, and from which it would not have been easy for him to have escaped without a miracle; *for his hour was not yet come*—In which he was, by divine permission, to be delivered into the hands of these wicked men.

Verse 21. *Then said Jesus again*—Probably in the same place where the preceding discourse was pronounced; and still confiding in the protection of Divine Providence; *I go my way*—That is, I shall speedily go away from among you; *and ye shall seek me*—Shall inquire after the Messiah; *and shall die in your sins*—Impenitent and unbelieving, and therefore unpardoned. Or, ye shall die, suffering the punishment of your sins: you shall perish for your unbelief and rejection of me, by a singular stroke of divine vengeance. The threatening, thus explained, conveys a prediction of the destruction of their city and state, in which probably some, that

die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, ° Ye are from beneath; I am from above; ° ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

24 ° I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: ° for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

° Verse 24.—° Chap. iii. 31.—° Chap. xv. 19; xvii. 16; 1 John iv. 5.—° Verse 21.—° Mark xvi. 16.

were now our Lord's hearers, afterward perished. *Whither I go ye cannot come*—Either to molest me, or to secure yourselves. Though you should be ever so desirous of being admitted into my presence, the favour will not be granted you. He repeats what he had said to them in a former discourse, (see on chap. vii. 33, 34,) that it might make the deeper impression upon them. "He meant, that after his ascension into heaven, when the Roman armies were spreading desolation and death in every corner of the land, they would earnestly desire the coming of the Messiah, in expectation of deliverance, but should perish for their sins, and under the guilt of them, without any Saviour whatsoever, and be excluded for ever from heaven." Some think, that in saying this, our Lord opposed a common error of the Jews, who imagined, that by death they made atonement for all their sins.

Verses 22-24. *Then said the Jews*—Showing at once the great perverseness of their disposition, and their contempt of his declaration; *will he kill himself? &c.*—Thus they made a jest of his threatening, and instead of trembling at his word, turned it into ridicule. *He said, Ye are from beneath*—The slaves of earth, and the heirs of hell; *I am from above*—I am from heaven, and shall quickly return thither; *ye are of this world*—And your treasure and hearts are here; *I am not of this world*—My thoughts and affections are set upon that celestial state and place from whence I came, and I incessantly labour to conduct men thither. But, as to you, I labour in vain. *I said, therefore, that ye shall die in your sins*—And it is really a great and awful truth, and deserves another kind of regard than you give it; *for if ye believe not that I am he*—Greek, οτι εγω ειμι, that I am, that is, the person whom I have represented myself to be, namely, the bread of life, the heavenly manna, the light of the world, the Messiah. For there is evidently an ellipsis in the words, to be supplied by comparing them with verse 12. See chap. xiii. 19; Mark xiii. 6; Acts xiii. 25, where exactly the same phrase occurs. *Ye shall die in your sins*—And therefore will be, in effect, the murderers of your own souls. What follows shows this to have been our Lord's meaning; though he did not express himself fully, having handled these matters before at great length, in this and other discourses. It is justly observed by Dr.

A. M. 4036. 25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say, and to judge of you: but ^b he that sent me is true; and ^c I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye

^b Chap. vii. 28.—^c Chap. iii. 32; xv. 15.—^d Chap. iii. 14; xii. 32.—^e Rom. i. 4.—^f Chap. v. 19, 30.—^g Chap. iii. 11.

Doddridge here, that "the repetition of the threatening from verse 21 is a very awful rebuke to the folly of their answer, verse 22: as if our Lord had said, It very ill becomes you to trifle and amuse yourselves with such silly and spiteful turns, when your life, even the life of your souls, is at stake; and to talk of my killing myself, when, by your unbelief and impenitency, you are plunging yourselves into eternal death! Thus do those passages in our Lord's discourses, which to a careless reader might seem flat tautologies, appear, on an attentive review, to be animated with the most penetrating spirit, and to be full of divine dignity."

Verses 25-27. *Then said they, Who art thou?*—This question they ask in derision, and not with any desire to be instructed. *And Jesus saith, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning*—Namely, of my public ministry, or from the time I first spake to you. Or, as Whitby renders it, *I am what I before told you I was*; a sense of the expression, *την αρχην*, (here rendered, *from the beginning*;) which he justifies by several passages of the Septuagint, particularly Gen. xiii. 4; xli. 21; xlii. 18, 20; that is, I am one sent of God to reveal his will to you. *I have many things to say and to judge of you*—That is, you say and judge many things of me, which from my words and deeds will appear to be false; but I have many things to say of you, what you are as to your spirit and conduct, and what you will be through the just judgment of God, which, though you will not believe, will be found true; for *he that sent me to say them is true, and I speak those things which I have heard of him*—I deliver truly what he hath given me in charge, and he will finally verify my words. *They understood not*—So exceeding stupid were they, and so blinded by the prejudices of their minds; *that he spake to them of the Father*—Of God, as the person who sent him.

Verses 28, 29. *Then said Jesus, When ye have lifted up the Son of man*—From the earth on the cross; and have proceeded so far as to put him to a violent death, then, instead of seeing his cause and interest overborne by that outrageous attempt, *shall ye know*—By some new and convincing tokens; *that I am he*—This, doubtless, refers to the prodigies

have ^d lifted up the Son of man, A. M. 4036. ^e then shall ye know that I am ^f *he*, and ^g *that* I do nothing of myself; but ^h as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And ^b he that sent me is with me: ^c the Father hath not left me alone; ^d for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, ^e many believed on him.

31 ¶ Then said Jesus to those Jews which be-

^b Chap. xiv. 10, 11.—^c Verse 16.—^d Chap. iv. 24; v. 30; vi. 38.—^e Chap. vii. 31; x. 42; xi. 45.

attending his death, his resurrection, and ascension, the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon his disciples, the amazing miracles wrought by the apostles in his name, and the wonderful success which he should give to the gospel through their ministry; *and that I do nothing of myself*—Nothing by my own authority, separate from that of my Father; *but as my Father hath taught me, I speak*—I teach such doctrines only as he has commissioned me to declare; *and he that sent me is with me*—Besides, my Father is always with me to bear his testimony to the truth of what I say, and to support and vindicate me. *The Father hath not left me alone*—Never from the moment I came into the world, nor will he ever leave me; *for I do always those things that please him*—I always act agreeably to his will, and faithfully and constantly pursue the important work which he has committed to my trust.

Verses 30-32. *As he spake these words, many believed on him*—Believed that he was the Messiah, and were strongly inclined to follow him as such. Some have supposed that the ambiguity of the expression, in verse 28, (*When you have lifted up the Son of man*;) induced those here spoken of to believe him to be the Messiah; supposing that it intimated an exaltation to some temporal authority and power. "Hearing him speak," says Dr. Macknight, "of a temporal kingdom, as they supposed, they began now to think that he entertained some sentiments worthy of the Messiah; and on that account acknowledged him as such." But surely it is much more reasonable to suppose, from the evangelist's affirming that they believed on him, without giving any intimation that their faith was in any respect erroneous, and especially from what Jesus says to them in the next verse, that they really had felt their hearts impressed with what they heard from him in the preceding discourse, and were induced to believe on him with a true and saving faith, by the dignity and force attending his words on this occasion. *Then Jesus*—Knowing the weakness of human nature, the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the difficulties which they would meet with, if they attempted to act according to their present inclinations and purposes; *said to those which be-*

A. M. 4036. **lieved on him, If ye continue in my**
A. D. 32. **word, then are ye my disciples indeed;**

32 **And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

33 ¶ **They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?**

34 **Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say**

▪ Rom. vi. 14, 18, 22; viii. 2; James i. 25; ii. 12.—Lev. xxv. 42; Matt. iii. 9; Verse 39.

lieved on him—And were now ready to profess their faith; *If ye continue in my word*—Continue to attend on my instructions, and believe and obey them; *then are ye my disciples indeed*—And I will finally own you as such; *and ye shall know the truth*—The whole truth comprehended in my gospel, as far as is necessary or conducive to your salvation, or to your holiness, usefulness, or comfort; *and the truth shall make you free*—Shall put you in possession of that state of glorious liberty which it is the privilege of my disciples to enjoy. Our Lord meant, that the instructions of his word, accompanied with the illumination of his Spirit, would remove their prejudices, correct their errors, enlarge their views, and by giving them the *full assurance of understanding* in the doctrine of the gospel, would scatter their doubts, bring satisfaction, peace, and serenity to their minds; and also that it would free them from the slavery of sin and Satan, the love of the world, and the lusts of the flesh, and all the consequences thereof; and even from the yoke of the ceremonial law, under which they at present groaned, from the spirit of bondage, and the tormenting fear of death.

Verses 33–36. *They answered him*—Namely, the other Jews that were present, not those that believed, as appears by the whole tenor of the conversation; *We be Abraham's seed*—A person always free, and a peculiar favourite of Heaven; *and were never in bondage to any man*—A bold, notorious untruth. At that very time they were in bondage to the Romans, and their ancestors had been slaves, first in Egypt, and afterward in Assyria and Babylon. *How sayest thou, Ye shall be made free*—Upon becoming thy disciples? *Jesus answered, Whosoever committeth sin*—Greek, ποιωσιν αμαρτιασιν, *worketh, or acteth known sin; is the servant—Δουλος, the slave; of sin*—Namely, as far as he knowingly commits it. *And the servant—Or slave; abideth not in the house for ever*—That is, as a person who is only a slave in a family, does not abide always in the house of his master, but is liable to be dismissed at his lord's pleasure, or transferred to another; much less can you, who are the servants, not of God, but of sin, promise yourselves, that ye shall still, on account of your descent from Abraham, continue in the possession of those privileges, which, by undeserved mercy, you hitherto enjoy; *but the Son abideth ever*—The eldest son and heir of the family continually abides in his Father's house:

unto you, * **Whosoever committeth** A. M. 4036.
sin, is the servant of sin. A. D. 32.

35 **And the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever.**

36 ¶ **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.**

37 **I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.**

* Rom. i. 16, 20; 2 Pet. ii. 19.—† Gal. iv. 30.—‡ Rom. viii. 2; Gal. v. 1.—§ Chap. vii. 19; Verse 40.

and his power and influence there are always increasing. The casting out of Ishmael, though a son of Abraham by the bond-woman, beautifully illustrates this exposition of the passage, and the connection. Dr. Macknight paraphrases the verse thus: "As a slave cannot be so assured of his master's favour as to depend upon it, that he shall never be turned out of the family, since it is always his master's right, and in his power, to sell or keep him, as he shall think fit, so my Father can, when he pleases, turn you, who are habitual sinners, out of his family, and deprive you of the outward economy of religion, in which you glory, because through sin you have made yourselves bondmen to his justice. Whereas, if you will become God's children, you shall be sure of remaining in his family for ever. And the only way to arrive at the blessed relation, is to submit to the authority of his Son, in which case the Son will adopt you as co-heirs with himself." *If, therefore, I, who am the only-begotten Son of God, and the heir of all things, and who have power of receiving whom I will into the family, shall make you free*—You, claiming in virtue of my right and authority, will be free indeed—Free from the slavery of sin, the tyranny of Satan, and the bondage of corruption; free to do good, free in respect of your right to the inheritance, and free in your possession of present privileges, remaining in the house of God without danger of being ever thrust out. Archbishop Tillotson is of opinion, that this alludes to a custom in some of the cities of Greece, and elsewhere, whereby the son and heir had the liberty to adopt brethren, and give them the privileges of the family. "But I rather imagine," says Dr. Macknight, "that the allusion is to something more generally known. For, as in all countries the sons succeed their fathers in the possession of their estates, such slaves as gained the good-will of the son by their obliging behaviour during his minority, were sure to be well treated by him when he came to his estate; perhaps might in time obtain their freedom, and even some small share of the inheritance itself."

Verses 37–40. *I know that ye are Abraham's seed*—That ye are descended from Abraham, as Ishmael and Esau, and their posterity also were, I know; but what can that avail you, while you are so unlike Abraham, in your spirit and conduct, as it is plain you are? *For you seek to kill me*—Who am not only an innocent person, but the Lord of life and

A. M. 4036. 38 ^a I speak that which I have seen
A. D. 32. with my Father: and ye do that
which ye have seen with your father.

39 They answered and said unto him, ^a Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, ^a If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40 ^a But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, ^b which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

^a Chapter iii. 32; v. 19, 30; xiv. 10, 24.—^c Matthew iii. 9; Verse 33.—^b Romans ii. 29; ix. 7; Galatians iii. 7, 29.
^c Verse 37.

glory, invested with an extraordinary commission from God to instruct and save you: a crime this, the heinousness of which no words can describe. Thus having answered their objection concerning freedom, (verses 34—36,) he here answers the other branch of it, concerning their being Abraham's offspring. *Because my word hath no place in you*—In your minds and hearts, and has not any weight with, or influence upon you, but is of a tenor directly contrary to your prejudices and lusts. *I speak that which I have seen with my Father*—And which I know to be agreeable to his mind and will; but with which it is impossible to reconcile your practice. For ye do that which you have seen with your father—To whom you manifest a visible conformity, in your dispositions and actions. By which he intimated, that their devices, designs, and works were as truly diabolical, as his doctrine was divine. *They answered, Abraham is our father*—As if they had said, Observe on whom thy reflection falls. Thou reproachest that holy patriarch, who was peculiarly dear to God. *Jesus saith, If ye were Abraham's children*—His true and genuine progeny, his spiritual seed; ye would do the works of Abraham—Ye would resemble that great and good man in faith and holiness; and therefore, “instead of seeking to take the life of one who is come to you from God, with a revelation of his will, ye would believe on him; in imitation of Abraham, who, for his faith in all the divine revelations, and his obedience to all the divine commands, however hard they were to flesh and blood, was ennobled with the grand titles of the father of the faithful, and the friend of God.” *But now ye seek to kill me*—And that for no other reason but because I have told you the truth, clearly, fully, and faithfully, which I have heard of God—Received in commission from him. *This did not Abraham*—He did nothing like this; but was famous for his humanity, justice, and piety, giving the readiest credit, and the most joyful welcome, to all the messages which God sent him. Some render the clause, *Abraham would not have done this*; that is, he would not have acted thus, if he had lived now.

Verses 41—43. *Ye do the deeds of your father*—By your deeds ye show whose children ye are. *They said, We be not born of fornication*—We are not bastard Jews, a mixed, spurious blood, descended

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. A. M. 4036.
Then said they to him, We be not ^a born of fornication; ^a we have one Father ^a even God. A. D. 32.

42 Jesus said unto them, ^a If God were your Father, ye would love me: ^b for I proceeded forth and came from God; ^c neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 ^d Why do ye not understand my speech; ^e even because ye cannot hear my word.

^a Verse 26.—^b Isa. lxiii. 16; lxiv. 8; Mal. i. 6.—^c 1 John v. 1.—^d Chap. xvi. 27; xvii. 8, 25.—^e Chap. v. 43; vii. 28, 29.—^f Chap. vii. 17.

from Gentile idolaters or apostate Israelites; nor are we ourselves worshippers of idols: but have one Father, even God—Whose true children we are, by virtue of our descent from his people, and our profession of his religion. It seems that they perceived, at length, that Jesus spake not so much of natural as of spiritual lineage; and that they alluded to the marriage-covenant, which, in Scripture, is said to have subsisted between God and the Jewish nation, and by which their obligation to reverence, love, and obey him, was represented as fidelity to their heavenly husband, and their violation of that obligation, as spiritual whoredom. *Jesus said, If God were your Father*—And you were his genuine children, as you profess to be; *you would love me*—And therefore would be far from forming designs to take away my life; *for I proceeded forth and came from God*—Greek, ἐξηλθον και ηκα, I proceeded, namely, originally, and do come from God, and appear among you as his messenger. *Neither came I of myself*—As the false prophets did, who had neither their mission nor message from God; *but he sent me*—As is evident from the many proofs of my mission, which I am daily giving you. Observe, reader, all that really have God for their Father, have a true love to the Lord Jesus, an esteem for his person, a grateful sense of his love, a sincere regard for his cause and interest, a complacency in the salvation effected by him, and in the method and terms of it, and a care to keep his commandments, which is the surest evidence of our love to him. We are here in a state of probation: and God is trying, so to speak, how we will conduct ourselves toward him; and we shall be treated accordingly in a state of retribution. God has taken various methods to prove mankind, and this was one: he sent his Son into the world with sufficient proofs both of his Sonship and mission, concluding that all, who called him Father, would kiss his Son, and bid him welcome, who was firstborn among many brethren. By this our adoption will be proved or disproved, namely, by our loving, or not loving Christ. *Why do ye not understand my speech*—What is the reason that you do not comprehend the true meaning of the things which I have spoken to you? *Even because*—Or, interrogatively, *Is it not because ye cannot hear my word*—Cannot give obedience thereto, it being contrary to your lusts? Not being desirous to do my

A. M. 4036. 44 * Ye are of *your* father the devil,
A. D. 32. and the lusts of your father ye will do:
he was a murderer from the beginning, and
'abode not in the truth; because there is no
truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he
speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the
father of it.

45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

46 * Which of you convinceth me of sin? And

* Matt. xiii. 38; 1 John iii. 8.—† Jude 6.—* Fifth Sunday in Lent, gospel, verse 46 to the end.

will, you cannot understand my doctrine, chap. vii. 17. Or, as Dr. Campbell renders the clause, *Ye cannot bear my doctrine*. For, "the verb, *ακουειν*, denotes frequently in Scripture, and even in profane authors, not barely *to hear*, but *to hear patiently*; consequently, *not to hear*, often means *not to bear*. The English verb, *to hear*, has also sometimes the same meaning."

Verses 44-47. *Ye are of your father the devil—Ye are the genuine children of Satan; and the lusts—Τας επιθυμιας, the desires; of your father ye will do—Namely, resolutely and obstinately, as the words, θελετε ποιειν, evidently imply. The account which Josephus gives of the wickedness of the Jews, about this time, abundantly vindicates this assertion of our Lord from any appearance of undue severity. He was a murderer—Greek, ανθρωποκτονος, manslayer, or man-killer; from the beginning—The common term for murderer, in the New Testament, is φονευς. And it seems "not without intention, that the devil, a being not of earthly extraction, is rather called a manslayer than a murderer, as marking with greater precision his enmity to the human race."—Campbell. Satan was a manslayer in inclination, from the beginning of his becoming a devil, and actually such from the beginning of the world: for, from the beginning of the creation, he contrived and designed the ruin of mankind. And he has ever since endeavoured to work their ruin; sometimes by seducing them into sin by his lies, (for as he abode not in the truth, there is no truth in him,) and sometimes by instigating them to kill those whom God sends to reclaim them; as well as in various other ways. Withal, having early departed from holiness and truth, a habit of lying has become perfectly natural to him; and when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own—Speaketh what is proper to himself, he being the proper parent, and, as it were, creator of lying. Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not—Ye, his children, disbelieve me, because, instead of soothing you in your sins, and flattering you with lies, I tell you the truth, to which, like your father, you are utterly averse. Which of you convinceth me of sin?—Greek, ελεγχει με περι αμαρτιας, which of you convicteth me of sin. The word convinceth is not the proper term in this place; for it relates only to the opinion of the person himself, about whom the question is.*

if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

47 * He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

48 ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and ^b hast a devil?

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

† Chapter x. 26, 27; 1 John iv. 6.—‡ Chapter vii. 20; x. 20; Verse 52.

But our Lord here, in order to show that the unbelief of his hearers had no reasonable excuse, challenges them openly to convict him, if they could, in any instance, of a deviation from truth or righteousness. As if he had said, Bring evidence of such a deviation, evince it to the world: prove that I have not received my commission from God; or that I have done something to render me unworthy of credit. Show, if you can, that I have taught false doctrine, reproved you unjustly for your actions, or committed sin myself. If you cannot, but must acknowledge that my life is as unprovable as my doctrine; that the latter is confirmed by the former, and that both are such as become a messenger of God; what is the reason that ye do not believe me? *He that is of God, heareth God's words*—He that is a child of God, humbly receiveth the revelations which God makes of himself by his messengers, hears his words, and obeys his commands, with joy and reverence. *Ye, therefore, hear them not*—Ye reject the revelations, doctrines, commandments, promises, and threatenings, and his word in general, declared by me, his Messenger, and my servants, for no other reason but because you are not his children.

Verses 48-53. *Then answered the Jews, 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? The Jews and Samaritans bearing a mortal hatred to one another on account of religion, it happened, that in common language, Couthi, or Samaritan, was used to signify, not merely a Samaritan by country, but one by principle and disposition; and so denoted oft-times an inveterate enemy to the Jewish nation and religion, and a man of wicked morals. Thus, in our own language, a Turk signifies one of a barbarous disposition; and a Jew, one who is covetous and rich. Jesus to this insolent charge answered with great meekness, I have not a devil—As the whole series of my discourses and actions shows; nor can any of you produce any thing, in all that I have said or done, which looks like lunacy or impiety: but, the truth is, I honour my Father—By bearing a steady and consistent testimony to the doctrine he hath sent me to reveal to the world: and because this doctrine is contrary to your corrupt prejudices and passions,*

A. M. 4036. 50 And I ¹seek not mine own glo-
A. D. 32. ry: there is one that seeketh and
judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ²If a man
keep my saying, he shall never see death.

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we
know that thou hast a devil. ¹Abraham is
dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a
man keep my saying, he shall never taste of
death.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abra-
ham, which is dead? and the prophets are

¹ Chap. v. 41; vii. 18.—² Chap. v. 24; xi. 26.—³ Zech. i. 5;
Heb. xi. 13.—⁴ Chap. v. 31.

you dishonour me—By these and such like opprobrious reflections, in hope of discrediting my message. But as to what personally relates to me, I am little affected with it; for *I seek not my own glory: there is one, however, that seeketh*—And will secure it; and who now *judgeth*—Of all that passes, and will at length evidently show the exact notice he has taken of it, to my honour and to your confusion. For God will not only finally glorify me, but will confer the highest honours and rewards on all my faithful servants: and therefore, *Verily, I say unto you*—I assert it as an indisputable truth; *If a man—Eav tis, if any one; keep my saying*—Firmly believe, and steadily obey my word; *he shall never see death*—He shall never see spiritual and eternal death; and temporal death, the dissolution of his mortal nature, shall, with respect to him, hardly deserve the name of death; his soul, the real and true man, not dying at all, but passing into the paradise of God, and his body only falling asleep for a short season. Hereby our Lord proves that he was not a Samaritan, for the Samaritans, in general, were Sadducees. *Then the Jews*—Understanding him as asserting that his disciples should be exempted from the common lot of mortality; *said, Now we know that thou hast a devil*—Now we have full proof that thou art possessed by a demon, which hurries thee on to this madness and pride, otherwise thou couldst never talk at this extravagant rate. Abraham, the great friend of God, and the founder of our nation, is dead, and the prophets, holy and divinely inspired as they were, whom God raised up in succeeding ages, were so far from being able to bestow immortality on their followers, that even they themselves are long since dead; and *thou sayest*—In great presumption and pride; *If a man, if any one, keep my saying*, (see on verse 51,) *he shall never taste of death*—Not only he shall not die eternally, (in which sense the Jews did not understand our Lord's words,) but he shall not die at all. See on chap. vi. 50. *Art thou greater than our father Abraham, &c.*—Art thou more in favour with God than Abraham and the prophets were? who, though strict observers of all the divine precepts, were not able to procure an immunity from death for themselves, far less for their followers.

dead: whom makest thou thy- A. M. 4036.
self? A. D. 32.

54 Jesus answered, ¹If I honour myself, my
honour is nothing: ²it is my Father that hon-
oureth me, of whom ye say, that he is your
God.

55 Yet ³ye have not known him; but I
know him: and if I should say, I know him
not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know
him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham ⁴rejoiced to see my
day: ⁵and he saw *it*, and was glad.

¹ Chap. v. 41; xvi. 14; xvii. 1; Acts iii. 13.—² Chap. vii.
28, 29.—³ Luke x. 24.—⁴ Heb. xi. 13.

Verses 54, 55. *Jesus answered, If I honour myself, (referring to their words, Whom makest thou thyself?) my honour is nothing*—If I should speak in praise of myself, you would call it vain and foolish; and say to me as the Pharisees did lately, (verse 13,) *Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true*, nor to be regarded. Wherefore, instead of giving a description of my dignity, I shall only tell you, it is my Father that honoureth me, which he does in a remarkable manner, by the miracles which he enables me to perform, by the descent of his Spirit upon me at my baptism, and by his voice uttered from heaven, declaring me to be his beloved Son. This I think may be sufficient to convince you that I am able to do for my disciples what I said, especially when I tell you further, that my Father is he of whom ye say, *that he is your God*—And whom you pretend to worship as such. *Yet ye have not known him*—Yet you are ignorant of him. You neither form right conceptions of his attributes, nor acknowledge him in the manner you ought to do; so that you give the lie to your profession. *But I know him*—Perfectly and intimately; and *if I should say, I know him not*—If I should retract my pretensions to that peculiar and intimate knowledge of him, which I have so often professed; *I should be a liar like unto you*—And you would have reason to doubt my testimony as to other things. *But I know him, and keep his saying*—Τον λογον, his word. I have both a perfect acquaintance with him, and obey his laws. This clause plainly shows that Christ is not speaking here of a speculative, but of a practical knowledge of God.

Verses 56-59. *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day*—*ἠγαλλίασατο ἵνα ἴδῃ τὴν ἡμέραν, exulted with desire, to see my day.* “The words *ἵνα ἴδῃ*, *that he might see*, immediately following the verb, show,” as Dr. Campbell observes, “that it cannot mean here, *rejoiced*, but rather signifies, *desired earnestly, wished, longed.*” Indeed, the expression may with the strictest propriety signify, “leaping forward with joy to meet the object of our wishes, as well as exulting in the possession of it.” By his *day*, our Lord seems to mean, the time when the promised seed should come, in whom all nations

A. M. 4036. 57 Then said the Jews unto him,
A. D. 32. Thou art not yet fifty years old, and
hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I
say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

† Exod. iii. 14; Isa. xliii. 13; Chap. xvii. 5, 24; Col. i. 17;

were to be blessed by being converted from idolatry to the knowledge and worship of the true God; and put in possession of all the blessings attendant on true religion. He earnestly desired, as if our Lord said, to see the great transactions of my life, by which these blessings were to be procured for all nations, and to take a view of the happy state into which the world would be brought, when they were bestowed upon them. *And he saw it, and was glad*—His faith was equivalent to seeing. By the favour of a particular revelation, Abraham had a distinct foresight of these things, and was exceedingly transported with the prospect. If then you want to know my person and character, you may form some notion of both from the disposition with which Abraham regarded me. Our Lord, therefore, plainly enough assumed the character of the Messiah on this occasion. *Then said the Jews, Thou art not yet fifty years old, &c.*—Understanding what he said in a natural sense, they thought he affirmed that he had lived in the days of Abraham; which they took to be ridiculous nonsense, as he was not arrived at the age of fifty; for they had no conception of his divinity, notwithstanding he had told them several times that he was the Son of God. *Jesus saith, Verily, &c., before Abraham was, I am*—Greek, *πριν Αβρααμ γενεσθαι εγω εμι*, “before Abraham was born, I am, that is, I had a glorious existence with the Father, and am still invariably the same, and one with him.” So Doddridge. Thus also Dr. Campbell, who observes, “I have followed here the version of Erasmus, which is close, both to the sense and to the letter: *Antequam Abraham nasceretur ego sum*. Diodati renders the words in the same way in Italian. Heylin and Wynne translate in English in the same manner. *Εγω εμι*, (which we translate *I am*,) may indeed be rendered *I was*. The present for the imperfect, or even for the preter-perfect, is no unusual figure with this writer. However, as an uninterrupted duration, from the time spoken of to the time then present, seems to have been suggested, I thought it better to follow the common method.” Our Lord here, in the strongest terms, appears to assert his proper divinity, declaring himself to be, what St. John more largely expresses, (Rev. i. 8,) *the Alpha*

59 ¶ Then took they up stones A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32.
to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, ‘going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Rev. i. 8.—† Chap. x. 31, 39; xi. 8.—† Luke iv. 30.

and Omega, the beginning and the end, who is, was, and is to come, the Almighty. See also Exod. iii. 14; Heb. i. 12.

As to rendering this clause, *Before Abraham was born, I was*: notwithstanding the nicest critical distinctions, it must at least be acknowledged that this is a very unusual sense of *εγω εμι*, and the less necessary, as the proper and common translation affords us a just and important sense, and one to which none but the enemies of our Lord’s divinity can object. It is indeed striking to observe the unnatural construction to which they have recourse who stumble at this text. The Socinians, with the most perverse impropriety, render the passage thus: “Before Abraham was made Abraham,” that is, the father of many nations, in the spiritual sense of the promise, “I am the Messiah.” Grotius and others, of too much learning not to discern the proper force of the words, are of opinion that our Lord only affirms of himself that he was before Abraham in the divine decree. But 1st, Christ says this in answer to the objection of the Jews, which had no respect to the priority of these two persons in the decree of God, but as to actual existence. 2d, This sense of the passage is trifling indeed, if our Lord was no more than a man, it being certain that all creatures, of whatsoever order, existed equally soon in the divine decree. Besides, that our Lord did really exist at the time mentioned in the text, is plain likewise from chap. xvii. 5. Nor is it to be imagined that, if our Lord had been a mere creature, he would have ventured to express himself in a manner so nearly bordering on blasphemy, or have permitted his beloved disciple so dangerously to disguise his meaning; a meaning indisputably clear to every plain and unprejudiced reader; a full proof whereof is the manner in which his hearers now received it: for, filled with rage, upon the blasphemy, as they thought it, of his claiming divinity to himself, they immediately prepare to inflict the punishment of a blasphemer upon him, by stoning him. *But Jesus hid himself*—Greek, *εκρυβη*, was hidden, or concealed, probably suddenly became invisible; and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, unobserved, and so passed by—Or passed on, with the same ease as if none had been there.

CHAPTER IX.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ gives sight to a man born blind, by anointing his eyes with clay, and causing him to wash in the pool of Siloam, 1-7. (2.) The man's neighbours converse among themselves, and with him, concerning the cure, 8-12. (3.) The Pharisees examine him and his parents; upbraid him for owning Christ, and excommunicate him, 13-34. (4.) Christ meets with him, and directs him to believe in himself as the Son of God, 35-38. (5.) Christ declares to the Pharisees that, while he enlightens some, he would leave them, who were so self-conceited, to perish in their ignorance, 39-41.

A. M. 4036. **AND** as Jesus passed by, he saw
A. D. 32. a man which was blind from his
birth.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

* Verse 34.—† Chap. xi. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verses 1-3. *And as Jesus passed by*—The word Jesus is not in the Greek, which is *παρὰ τὸν εὐδὲν ἀθροῦνον τυφλόν*, and passing on; he found a man blind from his birth—This chapter, therefore, seems to be a continuation of the preceding. As Jesus and his disciples (having left the temple, where the Jews were going to stone him) were passing through one of the streets of the city, they found a blind beggar, who, to move the people's compassion, told them he was born in that miserable condition. The disciples, on hearing this, asked their Master whether it was the man's own sin, or the sin of his parents, which had occasioned his blindness from the womb. It seems the Jews, having derived from the Egyptians the doctrines of the pre-existence and transmigration of souls, supposed that men were punished in this world for the sins they had committed in their pre-existent state. The purport of that doctrine was, that, if a man behaved himself amiss, his soul was afterward sent into another body, where he met with great calamities, and lived in a more miserable condition than before; whereas a more advantageous situation, and happier condition than the former, were supposed to be the rewards of distinguished virtue; a notion which they borrowed from the Pythagoreans, and which seems to be hinted at by Josephus, (*Bell.*, lib. ii. cap. 12,) and is plainly referred to, *Wisd.* viii. 19, 20; compare *Matt.* xiv. 2; xvi. 14. "From the account which Josephus gives, however, of this matter, it appears, the Pharisees believed that the souls of good men only went into other bodies; whereas the souls of the wicked, they thought, went immediately into eternal punishment: an opinion somewhat different from that which the disciples expressed on this occasion. For, if they spake accurately, they must have thought that, in his pre-existent state, this person had been a sinner, and was now punished for his sins then committed, by having his soul thrust into a blind body. Nevertheless, from what they say, we cannot certainly determine whether they thought that, in his pre-existent state, this person had lived on earth as a man, which is the notion Josephus describes, or whether they fancied he had pre-existed in some higher order of being,

3 Jesus answered, neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: ^b but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 ° I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

* Chap. iv. 34; v. 19, 36; xi. 9; xii. 35; xvii. 4.

which was the Platonic notion." Now the disciples might possibly have been acquainted with these opinions, and might put the question in the text, on purpose to know their Master's decision on so curious a subject. It seems more probable, however, as Theophylact has observed, after Chrysostom, that, as they were plain, illiterate fishermen, they had not heard of any such notions. Another opinion imbibed by the Jews during their captivity was, that all their sufferings descended upon them from the crimes of their forefathers, and were wholly unmerited on their part. It was this opinion which drew from the pen of Ezekiel that severe remonstrance and animated vindication of the ways of Providence, in his eighteenth chapter. Some remains of this opinion might have possessed the minds of the apostles: and they might have supposed they saw in the man born blind a case which could not be accounted for, but by supposing him to suffer for his parents' guilt. But our Lord showed them that the case admitted of a very different solution; *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents*—So as to bring this suffering upon him; nor was the punishment of either the chief design of this dispensation of Providence; *but that the works of God*—Namely, his miraculous works; *should be made manifest in him*—Particularly his sovereignty, in bringing him into the world blind; his power, in conferring the faculty of sight upon him; and his goodness, in bearing witness to the doctrine by which men are to be saved.

Verse 4. *I must work the works of him that sent me*—Called in the preceding verse the works of God; that is, I must not cease doing this, however the malice of the Jews may be irritated thereby; I must not desist from doing the will of my heavenly Father, in order to please them; *while it is day*—While I have an opportunity; while the time lasts, which is appointed to work in, and while the light lasts, which is given to work by. Observe, reader, Christ himself had his day; 1st, All the business of the mediatorial kingdom was to be done within the limits of time, and in this world; for at the end of the world, when time shall be no more, the kingdom shall be delivered up to God, even the Father, and the mys

A. M. 4036. 5 As long as I am in the world,
A. D. 32. ^d I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, ^e he spat on

the ground, and made clay of the A. M. 4036
spittle, and he ¹anointed the eyes of A. D. 32.
the blind man with the clay,

^d Chap. i. 5, 9; iii. 19; viii. 12; xii. 35, 46.—^e Mark vii. 33;

viii. 23.—¹ Or, spread the clay upon the eyes of the blind man.

tery of God shall be finished. 2d, All the work he had to do in his own person, here on earth, to set us an example of holy living, was to be done before his death. The time of his abode in this world was the day here spoken of. And the time of our life is our day, in which it concerns us to do the work of the day. During the day of life we must be busy, and that in doing the work appointed us: it will be time enough to rest when our day is ended. Our Lord adds, *The night cometh, when no man can work*—As if he had said, I see death approaching, which, as it puts a period in general to human labours, so will close the scene of such labours as these, and remove me from the converse and society of men. The period of his opportunity for doing the will of his Father, and glorifying him on earth, was at hand, and therefore he would lose no time, but be active and laborious. Thus, the consideration of our death approaching, should quicken us to a diligent improvement of all the opportunities of life, both for doing and gaining good. *The night cometh*—It will come certainly, and may come soon and suddenly: and when it comes we cannot work, because the light afforded us to work by will be extinguished, and the time allotted us to work in will then be expired. When the night comes, the labourers must be called. They must then show their work, and receive *according to the deeds done in the body*: for then the time of probation will be ended, and the time of retribution begun.

Verse 5. *As long as I am in the world*—These words show what our Lord meant by *the day* mentioned in the preceding verse, namely, the time he should be in the world. So long, says he, *I am the light of the world*—Teaching men inwardly by my Spirit, and outwardly by my preaching, what is the will of God; and showing them by my example how to perform it. “While he continued on earth he was the light of the world by his personal ministry and miracles; and he would be the same by his doctrine and his Spirit to the end of time.”—Scott. And to teach us how able and willing he is to communicate divine illumination to the souls of men, he often restored sight to such as were corporally blind; and he was about to do it now. For, as Dr. Macknight justly observes, “our Lord’s miracles were designed, not only as proofs of his mission, but to be specimens of the power which he possessed as Messiah. For example, by feeding the multitude with meat that perished, he signified that he was come to quicken and nourish mankind with the *bread of life*, that sovereign cordial and salutary nutriment of the soul. His giving sight to the blind was a lively emblem of the efficacy of his doctrine [when accompanied by his grace] to illuminate the blinded understandings of men. His healing their bodies

represented his power to heal their souls, and was a specimen of his authority to forgive sins, as it was a real, though but a partial removal of its punishment. His casting out devils was an earnest of his final victory over Satan and all his associates. His raising particular persons from the dead was the beginning of his triumph over death, and a demonstration of his ability to accomplish a general resurrection. And, to give no more examples, his curing all promiscuously, who applied to him, showed that he was come, not to condemn the world, but to save even the chief of sinners. Accordingly, at performing these miracles, or soon after, when the memory of them was fresh in the minds of his hearers, we often find him turning his discourse to spiritual things that were signified by them, as in the case before us.”

Verses 6, 7. *When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, &c.*—He did the things here mentioned, that he might exercise the faith and obedience of the patient, and show that he could command efficacy from whatever means he should please to use; could work without means, or even by such as seemed evidently calculated to produce an effect contrary to that intended. The clay, here put on the eyes of the blind man, might almost have blinded a person that had sight. But what could it do toward curing the blind? It reminds us that God is no farther from the event designed, whether he uses any means to accomplish it or not; and that all the creatures are only that which his almighty operation makes them. To try still further the faith and submission of the blind man, Jesus said unto him, *Go, wash in the pool of Siloam*—Perhaps, by giving this command, our Lord intended to make the miracle more taken notice of. For a crowd of people would naturally gather round the man, to observe the event of so strange a prescription. And it is exceeding probable that 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 those who saw him to a greater attention. *Which is by interpretation, Sent*—And so was a type of the Messiah, who was sent of God. This remark, Grotius and Dr. S. Clarke think was designed to intimate, that Christ’s command to the blind man was symbolical, teaching him that he owed his cure to the Messiah, one of whose names was *Shiloh*, the sent of God.

The waters here mentioned came from a spring that was in the rocks of mount Zion, and were gathered into two great basins, the lower called *the Pool of Fleeces*, and the upper, *Shiloah*, because the waters that filled it were sent to them by the goodness of God, from the bowels of the earth; for in Judea springs of water, being very rare, were esteemed peculiar blessings. Hence the waters of Shiloah were made by the prophet a type of David’s

A. M. 4036. 7 And said unto him, Go, wash [†] in
A. D. 32. the pool of Siloam, (which is by inter-
pretation, Sent.) [‡] He went his way there-
fore, and washed, and came seeing.

8 ¶ The neighbours therefore, and they which
before had seen him that he was blind, said,
Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is
like him: but he said, I am he.

[†] Neh. iii. 15.—[‡] 2 Kings v. 14.

descendants, and among the rest, of the Messiah, Isa. viii. 5: whose benefits are fitly represented by the image of water, for his blood purifies the soul from the foulest stains of sin, just as water cleanses the body from its defilements. Moreover, his doctrine imparts wisdom, and affords refreshment to the spirit, like that which cool draughts of water impart to one who is ready to faint away with thirst and heat. *He went, therefore, and washed, and came seeing*—He believed, and obeyed, and obtained the blessing he desired. Had he been wise in his own eyes, and reasoned like Naaman, on the impropriety of the means, he would justly have 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. This amazing miracle was, doubtless, wrought in the presence of great numbers of people, partly accompanying the man as he passed along the streets, and partly of such as he found at the pool, which was a place much frequented. All these, seeing him led thither blind, with his eyes bedaubed with clay, must have gathered about him, eager to know the cause of so strange an appearance. And “having examined and found that he was stone blind, they could not but be prodigiously struck with his relation, when, after washing in the pool, they saw the new faculty instantly imparted to him; especially if his relation was confirmed by the person who led him, as in all probability it would be. For it is reasonable to suppose, that his conductor was one of them who stood by when Jesus anointed his eyes, and ordered him to wash them in Siloam. Accordingly, when he went away, *and washed, and came seeing*, that is, walked by the assistance of his own eyes, without being led, the miracle was earnestly and accurately inquired into by all his acquaintance, and was so universally known, that it became the general topic of conversation at Jerusalem, as the evangelist informs us, verses 8, 9; nay, it was accurately examined by the literati there. For the man was brought before them; they looked at his eyes; they inquired what had been done to them; they sent for his parents, to know from them if he had been really born blind; and they excommunicated the man, because he would not join them in saying that Jesus, who had cured him, was an impostor.”

Verses 8, 9. *The neighbours, therefore*—Those

10 Therefore said they unto him, ^{A. M. 4036.}
^{A. D. 32.} How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, ^h A man that is
called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine
eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of
Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed,
and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he?
He said, I know not.

^h Verses 6, 7.

who lived in the beggar's neighbourhood, and those who had frequently passed by where he used to beg, being well acquainted with his form and visage, were astonished at the alteration which they observed in his countenance, by reason of the new faculty that was bestowed upon him. Wherefore they expressed their surprise by asking one another, if this was not the blind man to whom they used to give alms. *Some said, This is he; others, He is like him*—“The circumstance of having received his sight would give him an air of spirit and cheerfulness, which would render him something unlike what he was before, and might occasion a little doubt to those who were not well acquainted with him.”—Doddridge. *But he said, I am he*—The very man that so lately sat and begged; I am he that was blind, and was an object of the charity of men, but now see, and am a monument of the mercy and grace of God. We do not find that the neighbours appealed to him in this matter; but he, hearing the debate, interposed, and put an end to it. It is a piece of justice we owe to our neighbours, to rectify their mistakes, and to set things before them, as far as we are able, in a true light. Applying it spiritually, it teaches us that those who are savingly enlightened by the grace of God, should be ready to own what they were before that blessed change was wrought. See 1 Tim. i. 23, 24.

Verses 10, 12. *How were thine eyes opened?*—The fact being ascertained that a man, born blind, had received his sight, they are disposed to inquire how so extraordinary an event was brought about. Observe, reader, the works of the Lord, being great, ought to be sought out: and they will appear more wonderful the more we examine them, and are made acquainted with the way in which they are effected. *He answered, A man called Jesus made clay, &c.*—He seems to have been before totally ignorant of Jesus; *and I went and washed*—As he directed me; *and immediately I received sight*—And this, in a few words, is a true and exact account of this wonderful fact. Thus, those who have experienced special instances of God's power and goodness, in temporal or spiritual things, should be ready, upon all occasions, to declare what they have thus known, for the glory of God, and for the instruction and encouragement of others. *Then said they, Where is he?*—Where can we find the man that performed this miracle? Some, doubtless, asked this question

A. M. 4036. 13 ¶ They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto

¹ Verse 33; Chap. iii. 2.

out of curiosity: Where is he, that we may see him? A man that did such cures as these deserved to be seen: one would go a good way for the sight of such a person. But some, we may hope, asked it out of a good design: Where is he, that we may be acquainted with him? Where is he, that we may come to him, and share in the favours he is so free to impart? *He said, I know not*—I have never seen him, or conversed with him, otherwise than as I have now told you. As soon as Christ had sent him to the pool of Siloam, it seems he withdrew immediately, as he did chap. v. 1; and did not stay till the man returned, as if he either doubted of the effect, or waited for the man's thanks. Humble persons take more pleasure in doing good than in hearing of it again; it will be time enough to hear of it at the resurrection of the just. The man had never seen Jesus; for, by the time he had gained his sight he had lost his physician: and he, as well as the people, probably asked, *Where is he?* None of all the new and surprising objects that presented themselves to his view could be so grateful to him as one sight of Christ; but as yet he knew no more of him than that he was called, and rightly called, *Jesus*, a Saviour. Thus, in the work of grace wrought upon the soul, we see the change, but see not the hand that makes it; for the way of the Spirit is like that of the wind, of which thou hearest the sound, but canst not tell whence it comes or whither it goes.

Verses 13, 14. *They brought to the Pharisees him that was blind*—They brought him to the sanhedrim, which consisted chiefly of Pharisees, at least the Pharisees in the sanhedrim were most active against Christ. Some think they who brought this man to the Pharisees did it with a good design, to show them that this Jesus, whom they persecuted, was not the person they represented him to be, but really a great and good man, and one that gave considerable proofs of a divine mission. But it rather seems they did it with an ill design, to exasperate the Pharisees more against Christ, which certainly was not necessary, for they were bitter enough already. One would have expected that such a miracle as Christ had just wrought upon the blind man, would have settled his reputation, and silenced and shamed all opposition; but it had the contrary effect: instead of being embraced as a prophet for it, he is persecuted as a criminal. They brought him to the Pharisees that he might be examined by them, in order that if there was any fraud in the matter, they might discover and expose it. The ground which was pretended for giving this informa-

tion was, that *it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened the blind man's eyes.* And I washed, and do see. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, ¹How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And ²there was a division among them.

¹ Chap. vii. 12, 43; x. 19.

tion was, that *it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened the blind man's eyes.* That which was good was never malign'd but under the imputation of something evil. The profanation of the sabbath day is certainly a bad thing, and reflects much evil on a man's character; but the traditions of the Jews had made that to be a violation of the law of the sabbath which was far from being so. And frequently was this matter contested between Christ and the Jews, that it might be settled for the benefit of the church in all ages; and that the difference between superstition and religion in the observance of this, as well as of various others of the divine precepts, might be clearly ascertained, and it might be fully known that it is lawful to do good on the sabbath day. The hypocritical rulers, however, of the Jews, pretended to take great offence at our Lord's doing this act of mercy on that day. And Dr. Lightfoot has shown, that anointing the eyes on the sabbath day, with any kind of medicine, was forbidden to the Jews by the tradition of the elders.

Verses 15, 16. *Then again the Pharisees asked him, &c.*—They hoped to find something in the manner of the cure, which would show it to be no miracle, or, at least, which would prove Jesus to be a bad man. *He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, &c.*—He honestly and plainly told them the whole matter, as he had before declared it to the people. *Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, &c.*—“On hearing the man's account of the miracle, the Pharisees declare that the author of it was certainly an impostor, because he had violated the sabbath in performing of it. Nevertheless, others of them, more candid in their way of thinking, gave it as their opinion, that no deceiver could possibly do a miracle of that kind, because it was too great and beneficial for any evil being to have either the inclination or the power to perform.”—Macknight. *How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?*—This seems to intimate, that there were at least some miracles so glorious and so benevolent, that no evil agent would have either inclination or power to perform them; and that they reckoned this in that number. *And there was a division*—Or *schism*, Greek, *οἰσμοῦ*; among them—On this important question. The council was divided into two parties, which contended one against the other, although they continued in the same place. Thus discord, debate, and strife arose in the councils of Christ's enemies, by which their designs against him were, for the present, defeated. If Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both mem

A. M. 4036. 17 They say unto the blind man
A. D. 32. again, What sayest thou of him, that he
hath opened thine eyes? He said,¹ He is a prophet.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning
him, that he had been blind, and received his
sight, until they called the parents of him that
had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your
son, who ye say was born blind? How then
doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We
know that this is our son, and that he was born
blind:

¹ Ch. iv. 19; vi. 14.—^m Ch. vii. 13; xii. 42; xix. 39; Acts v. 13.

bers of the sanhedrim, were now present, they would naturally distinguish themselves on this occasion; and Gamaliel too, on the principles he afterward avowed, (Acts v. 38, 39,) must have been on their side.

Verses 17-23. *They say unto the blind man, What sayest thou of him*—What inference dost thou draw from what thou sayest he hath done for thee? *He said, He is a prophet*—For surely otherwise he would have been unable to perform so great a miracle. *But the Jews did not believe that he had been blind*—The Jews, hoping to make the whole turn out a cheat, would not believe that the beggar had been blind, although all his neighbours had testified the truth of it, pretending, no doubt, that it was a common trick of beggars to feign themselves blind; and that this one in particular was in a combination with Jesus to advance his reputation; (see verse 28;) a circumstance which they urged from the favourable opinion he had expressed of him. *Until they called the parents of him that had received his sight*—Having called his parents, they inquired of them, first, whether he was their son; next, if he had been born blind; and then, by what means he had obtained his sight. They answered, that most certainly he was their son, and had been born blind; but, with respect to the manner in which he had received his sight, and the person who had conferred it upon him, they could give no information; but that their son, being of age, would answer for himself. *These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews*—“As the man who had been blind knew who had opened his eyes, without doubt he had given his parents an account, both of the name of his benefactor, and of the manner in which he had conferred the great blessing upon him; besides, having repeated these particulars frequently to his neighbours and acquaintance, who were all curious to hear him relate the miracle, (verse 11,) we can conceive no reason why he should conceal them from his parents. The truth is, they lied grossly, and were ungrateful to Jesus in concealing his name on this occasion. But they were afraid to utter the least word which might seem to favour him.” *For the Jews had agreed already*—That is, it was resolved by an act of the court; that if any man did

21 But by what means he now
A. M. 4036. seeth, we know not; or who hath
A. D. 32.; opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These words spake his parents, because
^m they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he ⁿ should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, °Give God

ⁿ Verse 34; Chapter xvi. 2.—° Joshua vii. 19; 1 Sam. vi. 5.

confess that he was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue—That is, should be excommunicated. They refused, therefore, to bear testimony unto Jesus, for fear of being excommunicated. “The Jews had two sorts of excommunication: one was what they called *niddai*, which separated the person under it four cubits from the society of others, so that it hindered him from conversing familiarly with them, but left him free, at that distance, either to expound the law, or hear it expounded in the synagogue. There was another kind, called *shematta*, from *shem*, which signifies a name in general, but, by way of eminence, was appropriated to God, whose awful name denotes all possible perfection. This kind of excommunication is said to have excluded the person under it from the synagogue for ever. We have the form of it, Ezra x. 7; Neh. xiii. 25; being that which was inflicted on those Jews who refused to repudiate their strange wives. It seems to have been the censure also which the council threatened against those who should acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, and which they actually inflicted on this beggar; for the words, *εξεβαλον αυτον*, they cast him out, (verses 34, 35,) agree better to this kind than to the other. Probably, also, it was this that our Lord speaks of, when he says to his disciples, (John xvi. 2,) *αποσυναγωγης ποιησασιν υμας*, they shall put you out of the synagogues. According to Selden, the synagogue from which persons under this censure were excluded, was every assembly whatever, whether religious or civil; the excommunicated person not being allowed to converse familiarly with his brethren, although he was not excluded either from public prayers or sacrifices. But in this opinion he has not many followers. The excommunications of the primitive Christians seem to have resembled those of the Jews in several particulars, for they excluded excommunicated persons from their religious assemblies, and from all communion in sacred things; and when they restored them to the privileges of the faithful, it was with much difficulty, and after a severe and long penance.” See Buxtorf, on the word *Niddai*; and Macknight.

Verses 24-29. *Then again called they the man*—The court, finding that nothing could be learned from the man's parents, by which the miracle could be dis-

A. M. 4036. the praise: ^p we know that this man
A. D. 32. is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

^p Verse 16.—^q Chap. viii. 14.

proved, called the man himself a second time, and tried, by fair words, to extort from him a confession to the disparagement of Jesus. They said, *Give God the praise*—If the cure was really wrought in the manner thou affirmest, acknowledge the power, sovereignty, and goodness of God, in working by so unworthy an instrument; for we certainly know this man, of whom thou speakest, is a profligate sinner, and deserves public punishment rather than esteem. Thus some explain the clause; and doubtless this would be the meaning of it, if the original words did properly signify, *Give God the praise*. But the expression, *δοξ δόξαν τῷ θεῷ*, is literally, *Give glory to God*, that is, as they seem to have meant, by a free confession of the fraud, collusion, or artifice which they supposed was in this affair, and in which they believed the man to be an accomplice of Jesus. See Josh. vii. 19, where the Jewish general adjures Achan in similar terms to confess his sin. Their speech was to this effect: Thou canst not impose upon us by this incredible story. We know that the man thou speakest of, who openly profanes the sabbath, is a transgressor, and therefore can have no authority or commission from God: it will, consequently, be the wisest thing thou canst do, to profess the truth honestly, as thereby thou wilt give glory to God. "As it is greatly for the honour of the divine omniscience and providence, that persons who are guilty of crimes not fully proved against them, should freely confess them, and not presume, against the dictates of conscience, to maintain their own innocence; there is a propriety in the phrase, taken in this sense."—Doddridge. *He answered, Whether he be a sinner, I know not*—Having no personal acquaintance with him; *one thing I know*—And will stand to the truth of it; *that, whereas I was blind*—Even from my birth; *now I see*—Perfectly well, and owe my sight to the very person whom you condemn. "In this answer of the beggar there is a strong and beautiful irony, founded on good sense; and therefore it must have been felt by the doctors, though they dissembled their resentment for a little, hoping that by gentle means they might prevail with him to confess the supposed fraud of this miracle. They desired him, therefore, to tell them again how it had been performed: saying, *What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?*"—They asked him this question be-

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28 Then they reviled him, and said, ^{A. M. 4036}
^{A. D. 32.} Thou art his disciple; but we are
Moses's disciples.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, ^a we know not from whence he is.

30 The man answered and said unto them, ^r Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

^r Chap. iii. 10.

fore, (verse 15,) but they now proposed it a second time, in order that the man, repeating his account of the servile work performed at his cure, might become sensible that Jesus had violated the sabbath thereby, and was an impostor. For gladly would they have prevailed with him to join them in the judgment which they passed upon Jesus. But their resistance of the truth appeared so criminal to him, that, laying aside fear, *he answered, I have told you already, and you did not hear*—That is, believe; *wherefore would ye hear it again?*—Are ye so affected with the miracle, and do ye entertain so high an opinion of the author of it, that ye take pleasure in hearing the account of it repeated, desiring to be more and more confirmed in your veneration for him? *Will ye also*—As well as I; *be his disciples?*—Being at length convinced of his divine mission. In this answer the irony was more plain, pointed, and severe, than in the former. By this, therefore, the rulers were provoked to the highest pitch; and reviled him, saying, *Thou art his disciple*—As is plain from the partiality thou discoverest toward him; *but we are Moses's disciples*—And with great reason; for *we know God spake to Moses*—He clearly demonstrated his mission from God. *As for this fellow, &c.*—Whereas this fellow, who contradicts Moses, and breaks his laws, by his pretended cures performed on the sabbath; *we know not whence he is*—Nor by what power or authority he does these things. "Their partiality here was inexcusable; for if they believed the mission of Moses, on the evidence of miracles, credibly attested indeed, but performed two thousand years before they were born, it was much more reasonable, on their own principles, to believe the mission of Jesus, on at least equal miracles, wrought daily among them, when they might, in many instances, have been eye-witnesses to the facts; and one of which, notwithstanding all their malice, they were here compelled to own, or, at least, found themselves utterly unable to disprove."

Verses 30-34. *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 marvellous thing, that ye*—The teachers and guides of the people; *know not whence he is*—From whence he comes, and who hath sent him;

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A. M. 4036. 31 Now we know that ^a God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 ^a If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34 ¶ They answered and said unto him,

^a Job xxvii. 9; xxxv. 12; Psa. xviii. 41; xxxiv. 15; lxvi. 18; Prov. i. 28; xv. 29; xxviii. 9; Isa. i. 15; Jer. xi. 11; xiv. 12; Ezek. viii. 16; Mic. iii. 4; Zech. vii. 13.

and yet he hath opened mine eyes—Hath wrought a miracle, the like of which was never heard of before. Surely a man who could do such a thing must be from heaven, must be sent of God. It was esteemed by the Jews a peculiar sign of the Messiah, that he should open the eyes of the blind, that is, of those born blind; a miracle never known to be wrought by Moses or any of the prophets. Now we know—Even we of the populace know; God heareth not sinners—Impenitent sinners who continue in sin, so as to answer their prayers in this manner, and assist them to perform such astonishing miracles; which, without his assistance, and that communicated in a very extraordinary degree, could not possibly have been performed. But if any man be a worshipper of God, and do his will—If any man truly worship and serve him; him he heareth—Answereth his prayers, and that sometimes, probably, in a singular sense. Since the world began, &c.—That is, from the beginning of the world; it was never heard, that any man—Who was not a worshipper of God, and a doer of his will, that is, any sinner, any impostor; opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God—Were not sent of God; if he were not a prophet and messenger of God; he could do nothing—Thus the beggar, though illiterate, answered that great body of learned men with such strength of reason, that they had not a word to reply. However, the evidence of his arguments had no other effect but to put them into a passion; insomuch that they railed at him, saying, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us—Thou wicked, illiterate, impudent fellow, whose understanding continues still as blind as thy body was, and who wast born under the heaviest punishment of sin, dost thou pretend to instruct us in a matter of this kind? Us, who are the guides of the people, and eminent for our skill in the law? The reproach, Thou wast altogether born in sins, proceeded from the same general principle from which the question of the disciples arose, (verse 2,) Who did sin, this man or his parents? They inferred from his being born blind, that he was in some peculiar way born in sins. And they cast him out—That is, passed the sentence of excommunication upon him, which was the highest punishment in their power to inflict. From this account we learn, that

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^a Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they ^a cast him out.

35 ¶ Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on ^a the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and ^a it is he that talketh with thee.

^a Verse 16.—^b Verse 2.—^c Or, excommunicated him, Verse 22.—^d Matt. xiv. 33; xvi. 16; Mark i. 1; Chap. x. 36; 1 John v. 13.—^e Chap. iv. 26.

a plain man, void of the advantages of learning and education, but who has an upright disposition, is in a fairer way to understand the truth, than a whole council of learned doctors, who are under the power of prejudice, and of an earthly mind, lovers of wealth, honour, and pleasure, rather than lovers of God.

Verses 35–38. Jesus heard that they had cast him out—Had excommunicated the poor man for his sake; and when he had found him—Which it appears he did soon after; he said unto him, privately, Dost thou believe on the Son of God—The great expected Messiah? Dost thou give credit to the promises of the Messiah? Dost thou expect his coming, and art thou ready to receive and embrace him when he is manifested to thee? This was that faith of the Son of God which they lived by, who lived before his manifestation; and this faith Christ here inquires after. Observe, reader, the great thing which is now required of us, and concerning which a strict and solemn inquiry will soon be made, is, whether we believe on the Son of God; and on this point our acquittance or condemnation will depend in the day of final accounts. He answered, Who is he, Lord—Christ's question intimated that the Messiah was come, and was now among them, which the poor man noticing, asks, Who is he? As if he had said, I know that such a glorious person is expected, and if he be already come, only tell me where he is, and where I may meet with him: that, knowing him, I may believe on him—This implies that he had already some degree of faith. He was ready to receive what Jesus said. And—As the circumstances of the case were extraordinary, this being the first instance in which any one had incurred the great inconveniences attending a sentence of excommunication, out of zeal for the honour of Christ, to encourage him under what he was now suffering on his account, Jesus said to him—With a degree of freedom which was very unusual; Thou hast both seen him—Or, thou seest him; and it is he that talketh with thee—As if he had said, Thou needest not go far to seek him; he is before thine eyes, and thou hast had experience of his power and goodness. We do not find that Christ did thus expressly, and in so many words, reveal himself to any other, as he did to this man here, and to the woman of Samaria; he left others to find out by

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A. M. 4036. 38 And he said, Lord, I believe.
A. D. 32. And he worshipped him.

39 ¶ And Jesus said, ² For judgment I am come into this world; ^a that they which see not might see, and that they which see, might be made blind.

^a Chap. v. 22, 27; iii. 17; xii. 47.

arguments who he was; but to these *weak and foolish things of the world*, he chose to manifest himself so as he did not to the wise and prudent. Now this poor man was made more sensible than before, what an unspeakable mercy it was to be cured of his blindness; for, in consequence of this, he could see the Son of God, a sight which rejoiced his heart more than that of the light of this world. How contentedly might he have returned to his former blindness, in that now, like old Simeon, *his eyes had seen God's salvation*. And he said—Yielding to that convincing argument, which arose from what he had himself experienced of Christ's almighty power; *Lord, I believe*—That is, I believe thee to be the Son of God. He would not dispute any thing that the person said who had showed such mercy to him, and wrought such a miracle for him; nor doubt of the truth of a doctrine which was confirmed by such signs. Believing with the heart, he thus makes confession with his mouth. *And he worshipped him*—He not only rendered him the civil respects due to a great man, and the acknowledgments owing to a kind benefactor, but paid him divine honour, and worshipped him as the Son of God manifested in the flesh. Thus true faith will always show itself in an humble adoration of the Lord Jesus. They who believe aright in him will see all the reason in the world to worship him. 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!

Verses 39–41. *And Jesus said*—While he stood talking with the blind man who had received his sight, several people, it seems, being gathered about them; *For judgment*, as well as mercy, *I am come into this world*, that they which see not might see—That the ignorant, who are willing and desirous to be instructed, might have divine knowledge and true wisdom imparted to them; *and that they which see*—Who are confident that they see, who are conceited of, or trust in, their supposed knowledge and wisdom; *might be made blind*—Might be confirmed in their ignorance and folly, and be abandoned to a greater degree thereof. In these words he alluded to the cure of the blind man, but his meaning was spiritual; representing the consequences of his coming, which, by the just judgment of God, would be, that while the blind, both in body and soul, should receive their sight, they who boasted that they saw would be given up to still greater blindness than before. He meant to show, also, that his coming would manifest the disposition and character of every man. The humble, teachable, and upright, though they

40 And *some* of the Pharisees which ^a were with him heard these words, ^{A. M. 4036.}
^{A. D. 32.}

^b and said unto him, Are we blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, ^c If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

^a Matt. xiii. 13.—^b Rom. ii. 19.—^c Chap. xv. 22, 24.

were as much in the dark with respect to religion and the knowledge of divine things, as the blind man had been with respect to the light of the sun, should be greatly enlightened by his coming: whereas those, who in their own opinion were wise, and learned, and clear-sighted, should appear to be, what they really were, blind, that is, quite ignorant and foolish. *And some of the Pharisees which were with him*—Which were present on this occasion; *heard these words*—And apprehending that he glanced at them, and cast a reflection on their sect, which was held in great veneration among the common people, because of their supposed skill in the law; *said unto him, Are we blind also?*—Dost thou imagine that we are like the rude, ignorant vulgar? We, who are their teachers, and have taken such pains to acquire the knowledge of the Scriptures? Darest thou say that we are blind, whose judgment every one has such a veneration for, and values, and bows to? Observe, nothing fortifies men's corrupt hearts more against the convictions of the truth, or more effectually repels those convictions, than the good opinion which others have of them; as if what had gained applause with men, must needs find acceptance with God; than which nothing can be more false and deceitful, for God sees not as man sees. *Jesus said, If ye were blind*—Unavoidably ignorant, and not favoured with the means of divine and saving knowledge; *ye should have no sin*—In comparison of what you now have. *But now ye say, We see*—Are possessed of a high degree of discernment and knowledge, are more enlightened than the rest of mankind; *therefore your sin remaineth*—Without excuse, without remedy. It abides upon you with greater aggravations; and the conceit which you have of your own knowledge hinders conviction, and prevents the first entrance of instruction and true wisdom into your minds. They gloried that they were not blind, as the common people were, nor so credulous as they, but had abilities sufficient to direct their own conduct, and needed no aid in that respect from any one. Now this very thing which they gloried in, Christ here tells them was their shame and ruin: for, 1st, If they had been really ignorant, their sin would not have been so deeply aggravated, nor would they have had so much to answer for as now they had; for invincible ignorance, though it does not justify sin, excuses it in some measure, and lessens its guilt. 2d, If they had been sensible of their blindness, and had seen their need of one to guide them, they would soon have accepted Christ as their guide, and then they would have had no sin unpardoned, unconquered. They would have sub-

mitted to the righteousness of faith, and have been brought into a justified state. Those who are convinced of their disease, are in a fair way to be cured: but self-sufficiency, self-confidence, and self-righteousness, are some of the greatest hinderances of salvation. As those are most blind who will not see, so their blindness is most dangerous who fancy they do see. No patients are managed with so much difficulty as those who are in a phrensy, who say

they are well, and that nothing ails them. The sin of those that are self-confident remains; for they reject the gospel of grace, and therefore the guilt of their sin remains uncancelled; and they grieve and quench the Spirit of grace, and therefore the power of their sin remains unbroken. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? Hearest thou the Pharisee say, *We see?* There is more hope of a fool, of a publican, and a harlot, than of such.

CHAPTER X.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ, continuing his discourse, and speaking parabolically, represents himself as the door of the sheep-fold, through which men must necessarily enter, if they desire either their own salvation or that of others committed to their care, 1-10. (2.) He describes himself as the good shepherd, who would lay down his life for the sheep, 11-21. (3.) Discoursing of his union with the Father, he is charged with blasphemy; and, being assaulted by the Jews, retires beyond Jordan, 22-42.

A. M. 4036. VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He
A. D. 32. that entereth not by the door into the

sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other
way, the same is a thief and a robber.* A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32.

* Tuesday in Whitsun-week,

gospel, verse 1 to verse 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verse 1. *Verily, &c.*—The Pharisees supported themselves in their opposition to Christ with this principle, that they were pastors of the church; and that Jesus, having no commission from them, was an intruder and an impostor, and that, therefore, the people were bound in duty to adhere to them against him. In opposition to this, Christ here describes who were the false shepherds and who were the true, leaving them to infer what they were. He introduces his discourse with, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*—To show, not only the certain truth, but the deep importance of what he uttered. He speaks by way of parable or similitude, taken from the customary way of managing sheep in that country. It is supposed that he was now in the outer court of the temple, near the sheep which were there exposed to sale for sacrifice, the sight of which reminded him of the language of the ancient prophets, “who often compared the teachers of their own time to shepherds, and the people to sheep. Accordingly, in describing the characters of the scribes and Pharisees, he made use of the same metaphor, showing that there are two kinds of evil shepherds, pastors, or teachers; one, who, instead of entering in by the door to lead the flock out and feed it, enter in some other way, with an intention to kill and destroy; another, who, though they may have entered in by the door, feed their flocks with the dispositions of hirelings; for when they see the wolf coming, or any danger approaching, they desert their flocks, because they love themselves only. The Pharisees plainly showed themselves to be of the former character, by excommunicating the man that had been blind, because he would not act contrary to the dictates of his reason and conscience to please them. But though they cast him out of their

church, Christ received him into his, which is the true church, the spiritual enclosure, where the sheep go in and out and find pasture.” *He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, &c.*—“I assure you, that whosoever, in any age of the church, assumed the office of a teacher, without commission from me, and without a sincere regard to the edification and salvation of men’s souls, was a thief and a robber; and in the present age, he is no better who assumes that office without my commission, and particularly without believing on me, and without intending my honour and the good of the church.”—Macknight. Add to this, those do not enter in by Christ, and indeed can have no authority from him, nor ability to become pastors of his flock, who do not first take care to secure, by *faith working by love*, an interest in, and union with him, or, to be found in him, not having their own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; to be in him new creatures: Phil. iii. 9; 2 Cor. v. 17. *But climbeth up some other way*—Enters the sheep-fold as a pastor of Christ’s flock, without the necessary prerequisites and qualifications, without first obtaining a saving acquaintance with Christ, and genuine love to him; without being called to, and qualified for the work by him, and of consequence, without authority from him; who, influenced by unworthy motives, by a view to wealth, or honour, or ease, or a maintenance, or some secular employment or advantage, gets himself appointed a minister of Christ’s church, through the interest of rich and powerful friends and connections, or the aid of natural abilities, and mere human learning; or some endowment or accomplishment which is not connected with, and does not imply true piety, and a manifest call from the Lord Jesus; the same

A. M. 4036. 2 But he that entereth in by the
A. D. 32. door, is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

is a thief and a robber—In God's account; entering the fold "to fleece and butcher, not to feed the flock; robbing Christ of his honour, and starving the souls of his people, in order to enrich himself, and aggrandize his family."—Scott.

Verses 2-5. *He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd, &c.*—"This mode of speaking, with us, conveys the notion that the shepherd is the only person who enters by the door; yet the door-keeper, and the sheep themselves, enter also the same way. The original expression is manifestly intended to denote the constant, not the peculiar, use which the shepherd makes of the door, as opposed to the constant use of thieves and robbers, to force their entrance by breaking or climbing over the fence. The comparison is made, not to the folds used by the common people in remote parts of the country, but to those belonging to the rich in the neighbourhood of a populous city, where the walls and other fences need to be stronger, and the entrance more carefully kept, on account of the greater danger from thieves."—Campbell. *To him the porter openeth*—As the shepherd will always choose to enter in by that which is the regular appointed way, so, as soon as he approaches, the door-keeper opens the fold; that is, God in his providence, and by the influence of his Spirit, makes way for such a one to exercise his ministry among his people, and gives success to it. For as it is not unworthy of Christ to be styled *the door*, by which both the sheep and the true pastors enter, so neither is it unworthy of God the Father to be styled *the door-keeper*. See Acts xiv. 27; and xvi. 14; Col. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 8. It was supposed by Sir Isaac Newton, that as the words were spoken near the temple, where sheep were kept in folds to be sold for sacrifices, Christ here alludes to what was peculiar in those folds; that as they were kept locked, they not only excluded the thief, but the shepherd, till the door-keeper opened them. "But I cannot think," says Dr. Doddridge, "whatever occasion Christ might take from the sight of sheep to represent his people under that image, and himself as a shepherd, he would describe them like sheep shut up in a pen to be sold for sacrifice: nor does the shepherd's leading them out, &c., agree with this circumstance. In countries where there were so many savage beasts, it might be ordinarily necessary to have the folds better secured than among us; and the chief shepherd might often leave a servant to watch them while thus shut up, and come himself to lead them out to pasture in the morning." *And the sheep hear his voice*—The people of God, knowing him to be a true pastor, hearken unto him.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

All the circumstances here mentioned 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, attend to, understand, and obey the voice of a shepherd whom Christ hath sent: and he counteth them *his own*, dearer than any friend or brother; *calleth them by name*—That is, instructs, advises, directs, encourages each by name, and leadeth them out in the paths of righteousness, beside the waters of comfort. *And when he putteth forth his own sheep*—Leads them out into the pastures of the ordinances, invites them to the enjoyment of the privileges, and urges them to the practice of the duties of true Christianity; *he goeth before them*—In all these particulars, and 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 truth, 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? *And a stranger will they not follow*—One whom Christ hath not sent, who does 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. In other words, as sheep will not follow a strange shepherd, so the people of God will not hearken to false teachers, or to such as do not declare, plainly, fully, and with a divine unction, the very word of the truth of the gospel: but will avoid them, for they can easily distinguish them from the true messengers of God by their fruits, that is, by their doctrine and practice, and the inefficacy of their preaching to convert, sanctify, and save the souls of men.

Verses 6-8. *This parable spake Jesus: but they understood not, &c.*—In this symbolical way Jesus taught the Pharisees the difference between true and false teachers; but they did not understand the meaning of what he said: therefore he added, by way of explication, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*—I solemnly assure you of it, as an undoubted and most momentous truth; *I am the door of the sheep*—That is, the door by which the sheep-fold is entered. Or his meaning may be, I am not only the door by which the shepherds must enter; not only the person whose right alone it is to admit men to the office of shepherds, and who alone can qualify them for that office and dignity, but I am also the door of

A. M. 4036. 8 All that ever came before me are
A. D. 32. thieves and robbers: but the sheep
did not hear them.

9 *I am the door: by me if any man enter
in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out,
and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal,
and to kill, and to destroy: I am come

* Chap. xiv. 6; Eph. ii. 18.—* Second Sunday after Easter,
gospel, verse 11 to verse 17.

the sheep; it is by the knowledge of, and faith in
me, by an interest in my merits, and by a participa-
tion of my Spirit, and in no other way, that men
must or can enter into the truly spiritual enclosure
of my church. *All that ever came before me*—Ass-
suming the character of the Messiah, or any part
thereof, or pretending, like your elders and rabbis,
to a power over the consciences of men, attempting
to make laws in and for the church, and teaching
their own traditions as necessary to be observed, or
other methods of obtaining salvation than by me;
all those, who in former times assumed the charac-
ter of teachers of religion, without a commission
from me, and all those teachers and preachers of
God's word that enter not by the door into the
sheep-fold, but run before I send them by my Spirit,
and before they themselves are my true disciples,
subjects, and servants, or are in me new creatures;
(our Lord seems in particular to speak of those that
had undertaken this office since he began his minist-
ry;) *are thieves and robbers*—Persons influenced
by improper motives, who had and have no warrant
from above for assuming any such character, pre-
tending to any such power, or undertaking any such
office, and whatsoever their pretences have been or
are, the administration of such persons had, and
always will have, a tendency to destroy the souls
they should watch over and feed: for they are not
only thieves, stealing temporal profit to themselves,
but robbers, plundering and murdering the sheep.
But the sheep—My true people; *did not hear them*
—Did not attend upon, relish or regard their doc-
trine.

Verses 9, 10. *I am the door*—I therefore repeat it
again, as a most important truth, that I myself am
the only right door of entrance into the church of
God; *if any one*, as a sheep, *enter in*—By me,
through faith; *he shall be saved*—Now and hereaf-
ter; or rather, *he shall be safe*, like a sheep in its
fold, safe from the wolf, and from those murdering
shepherds; *and shall go in and out*—Under my
care and guidance, and that of the shepherds whom
I have sent, whose instructive voice he shall hear,
and whose holy example he shall follow; *and shall
find pasture*—Food for his soul in all circumstances:
in consequence of his regard to me, his waiting upon
me in mine ordinances, and his attendance on the
ministry of those whom I appoint to dispense to
him the word of life, he shall be fed and nourished
with true doctrine, and shall obtain substantial hap-

that they might have life, and A. M. 4036.
that they might have it more abund- A. D. 32.
antly.

11 *^b I am the good shepherd: the good shep-
herd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is a hireling, and not the
shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth
the wolf coming, and ° leaveth the sheep, and

^b Isa. xl. 11; Ezek. xxxiv. 12, 23; xxxvii. 24; Mic. v. 4; Heb. xiii.
20; 1 Pet. ii. 25; v. 4.—° Zech. xi. 16, 17.

pinness. *The thief cometh not but for to kill, &c.*—
That is, nothing else can be the consequence of a
shepherd's coming, who does not enter in by me.
Such assume the character of teachers divinely com-
missioned, for no other reason but to promote their
own interest at the expense of men's salvation; *I am
come that they might have life*—Life spiritual and
eternal; the life of grace and the life of glory.
Christ came to quicken his church in general, which
was rather like a valley filled with dry bones, than
a pasture filled with grazing flocks. He came to
vindicate divine truths, to purify divine ordinances,
to correct men's errors, to renew their hearts, to
reform their lives, to redress their grievances, to
sanctify and support them under their trials and
troubles, to seek that which was lost, bind up that
which was broken, strengthen that which was weak;
and this, to his church, was as life from the dead.
He came, that men might have life, as a criminal
has when he is pardoned; a sick man when he is
cured; a dead man when he is raised; that we
might be justified, sanctified, and at last glorified.
And that they might have it more abundantly—A life
more abundant than that which was lost and forfeited
by sin; more abundant than that which was prom-
ised by the law of Moses; more abundant than
could have been reasonably expected, or than we
are able to ask or think; that whatever measure of
spiritual life in union with God, through Christ,
of conformity to his image, or participation of his na-
ture, we may have received, we may still desire
and expect larger measures thereof; or to whatever
degrees of holiness and usefulness we may have
attained and manifested, we may still proceed to
higher degrees, preparing and qualifying us for still
higher degrees of future glory.

Verses 11–15. *I am the good shepherd*—Jesus,
having represented himself as the *door of the sheep*,
and intimated the regards which ought to be main-
tained to him as such, particularly by those that pro-
fessed to be teachers of others, now changes the
similitude, and represents himself, by way of emi-
nence, the good shepherd, namely, the person fre-
quently foretold in Scripture under that character,
(see the margin,) and the proprietor of the sheep.
The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep—
Will expose himself to any danger for their safety,
because they are his own property; *but he that is a
hireling*—Who attends the sheep merely for hire,
who is employed as a servant, and paid for his

A. M. 4036. fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them,
A. D. 32. and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and ^d know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 ^eAs the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: ^fand I lay down my life for the sheep.

^d 2 Timothy ii. 19.—^e Matthew xi. 27.—^f Chapter xv. 13.
^g Isa. lvi. 8.

pains; whose own the sheep are not—Who has neither profit nor loss by them, and proposes nothing to himself but his own gain; *seeth the wolf*—Or some other savage beast; *coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth*—Deserts them; because, instead of loving them, he loves himself, and therefore will not expose himself to any danger on their account; in consequence of which, the beast of prey, meeting with no resistance, *catcheth, and scattereth the sheep*—Seizes on some and disperses the rest; the two ways of hurting the flock of Christ. The wolf signifies an enemy who by force or fraud attacks the Christian's faith, liberty, or life. Observe, reader, 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 judge: yea, and the *Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by 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 hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling*—Because he loves the hire, not the sheep; and takes the work upon him merely for the wages he is to receive. From what our Lord here says, it plainly appears to be the duty of every minister of the gospel, intrusted with the care of a flock, to reside ordinarily among them. For, if approaching danger to himself, or them, is no excuse for his fleeing away and leaving them, far less will interest, or pleasure, or any lesser matter, be an excuse for such unfaithfulness. *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep*—With a tender regard and special care. Being the good shepherd, and the owner of the sheep, I pay such earnest and constant attention to my flock, and take such care of it, that I not only know every particular sheep, but I know every thing relating to each. I know the circumstances wherein they are placed, am well acquainted with their wants, and can judge what aids they stand in need of. Besides, I love them all with an ardent affection, and approve of their obedience to me, because, though it is imperfect, it is sincere. *And am known of mine*—With a holy confidence and affection. As I know, love, and approve my sheep, so I am known and beloved of them in return, for they

16 And ^hother sheep I have, which ^{A. M. 4036.}
are not of this fold: them also I ^{A. D. 32.}
must bring, and they shall hear my voice;
ⁱ and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, ⁱ because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

^h Ezek. xxxvii. 22; Eph. ii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 25.—ⁱ Isa. liii. 7, 8, 12;
Heb. ii. 9.

have just apprehensions of my dignity and character; in particular, they know that I am their Shepherd and Saviour, sent from God, and that I am able to feed them with knowledge, and to deliver them from the punishment of sin, and to bestow on them everlasting life. *As the Father knoweth me, &c.*—That is, *I know my sheep, and am known of mine, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father*; for so the passage ought to be rendered, and construed in connection with the foregoing verse; as if he had said, The mutual knowledge subsisting between me and my sheep, is like that which subsists between the Father and me. It is a knowledge which implies an inexpressible union. See chap. xvii. 21, 22. *And I lay down my life for the sheep*—He speaks of the present time: for his whole life was only a going unto death. I show the greatness of the love which I bear to my sheep by dying for them, which no hireling did, or ever will do.

Verses 16–18. *And other sheep have I*—Whom I foreknow as repenting and believing in me; *which are not of this fold*—Not of the Jewish Church or nation, but Gentiles. Some, indeed, understand by these the Jews living out of the land of Canaan; but certainly they could not with propriety be said not to belong to the fold of Israel. The incorporating the believing Gentiles into one church with the Jews was a grand event, worthy of such particular notice. *Them also I must bring*—Namely, into my church, the general assembly of those whose names are written in heaven. *And they shall hear my voice*—The voice of my gospel, calling them to repentance, and inviting them to believe in me as their Redeemer and Saviour. *And there shall be one fold*—Greek, *μία ποιμνῆ*, *one flock*, though in different folds, no corrupt or divided flocks remaining; *and one shepherd*—Who laid down his life for the sheep, and will leave no hireling among them. This unity, both of the flock and the Shepherd, shall be completed in its season. The shepherds shall bring all into one flock, and the whole flock shall hear the one Shepherd. *Therefore doth my Father love me*—He loves me more especially on this account, approving it as an act of eminent duty and love to him; *because I lay down my life*—That I am come into the world with this design, to give my life for the redemption of my sheep, which are dear to him, as well as to me; *that I might take it again*—And possess it for ever, to be employed for his glory and for the happiness of my people. In other words, I

A. M. 4036. 18 No man taketh it from me, but
A. D. 32. I lay it down of myself. I have
power to lay it down, and I ^have power to
take it again. ¹This commandment have I
received of my Father.

19 ¶ ^mThere was a division therefore again
among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, ⁿHe hath a devil,
and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of
him that hath a devil. ^oCan a devil ^popen the
eyes of the blind?

¹ Chap. ii. 19.—² Chap. vi. 39; xv. 10; Acts ii. 24, 32.
^m Chap. vii. 43; ix. 16.—ⁿ Chap. vii. 20; viii. 48, 52.—^o Exod.

cheerfully die to expiate the sins of mankind, to the
end I may rise again for their justification. *No man
taketh it from me*—“This,” says Dr. Campbell,
“can hardly be said with propriety, since he suffered
by the hands of others. The English verb *take*,
does not express the full import of the Greek, *αιρω*,
[here used.] In this place it is evidently our Lord’s
intention to inform his hearers, that his enemies
could not by violence take his life, if he did not vol-
untarily put himself in their power.” Hence he
translates the clause, *No one forceth it from me, but
I give it up 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. I am able to raise my-
self from the dead! nay, I can do it as easily as I
can die! Nevertheless, I do not lay down my life,
nor rise from the dead, without the appointment of
my Father. In both I act wisely, and agreeably to
the divine will. *This commandment*—Or, *this com-
mission*, as the word *εντολη* may be rendered; *have
I received of my Father*—Which I readily execute.
Our Lord’s receiving this commission as a Mediator,
is not to be considered as the ground of his power
to lay down and resume his life, for this he had in
himself, 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.

Verses 19–21. *There was a division among the
Jews*—These sayings of our Lord “affected the
minds of the Jews differently, for some of them
cried out that he was possessed and mad, and that
it was folly to hear him; others, judging more im-
partially of him and his doctrine, declared that his
discourses were not the words of a lunatic, nor his
miracles the works of a devil. Moreover, they asked
his enemies if they imagined any devil was able to
impart the faculty of sight to one that was born blind,
alluding to the astonishing cures which Jesus had
lately performed.”—Macknight.

Verses 22, 23. *And it was at Jerusalem the feast*

22 ¶ And it was at Jerusalem the A. M. 4037
feast of the dedication, and it was A. D. 33.
winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple ^rin Solo-
mon’s porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him,
and said unto him, How long dost thou ¹make
us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us
plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye
believed not: ^sthe works that I do in my Fa-
ther’s name, they bear witness of me.

iv. 11; Psa. xciv. 9; cxlvi. 8.—^r Chap. ix. 6, 7, 32, 33.—^s Acts
iii. 11.—¹ Or, *hold us in suspense*.—² Verse 39; Chap. iii. 2.

of the dedication—Or, as *εγεγερτο δε τα εγκαινια* may
be rendered, *Now the feast of dedication came on at
Jerusalem*: for it does not appear that the preceding
discourses, from chap. vii. 14, were delivered at this
feast, but at the feast of tabernacles. Dr. Campbell
reads, *Once, when they were celebrating the feast of
dedication, it being winter, as Jesus walked, &c.*
This festival, which, according to the meaning of the
Greek term, might be more properly called *the feast
of renovation*, was instituted by Judas Maccabæus,
(1 Mac. iv. 59), in memory of their pulling down the
altar of burnt-offerings, which had been profaned by
the Pagans, and building a new one, dedicated to the
true God, and of their purifying the temple from the
pollutions and idolatries of Antiochus Epiphanes.
“This restoration of the worship of God was a very
joyful event to every religious Israelite; and being
considered as a new dedication of the temple, great
regard was paid to the festival instituted in remem-
brance of it. See Joseph. *Antiq.*, xii. 11. Accord-
ingly, though it was of human institution, our Lord
did not scruple being present at it. The Jews cele-
brated this feast for eight days successively, begin-
ning on the 25th of Casleu. But the latter half of
that month falling in with the first half of our De-
cember, it was winter, and commonly bad weather
at this feast. Wherefore, to avoid the inclemency
of the season, Jesus walked 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 hun-
dred cubits high; and continued even to the time
of Albinus and Agrippa, which was several years
after the death of Christ.

Verses 24–26. *Then came the Jews round about
him, &c.*—Here the Jews came and required him
to put them out of doubt, by telling them plainly,
whether he was the Messiah or not: Jesus knowing
that it was not information they were seeking, but an
opportunity of accusing him to the Romans, as a
seditious person, who aspired to be a king, directed
them, as before, to form a judgment of him from his
actions. *Jesus answered, I told you, and ye believed
not*—What our Lord had been lately saying of him-

A. M. 4037. 26 But [†]ye believe not, because
A. D. 33. ye are not of my sheep, as I said
unto you.

27 [†]My sheep hear my voice, and I know
them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and
[†]they shall never perish, neither shall any
pluck them out of my hand.

29 [†]My Father, [†]which gave *them* me, is
greater than all; and none is able to pluck
them out of my Father's hand.

30 [†]I and *my* Father are one.

[†] Chap. viii. 47; 1 John iv. 6.—[†] Verses 4, 14.—[†] Chap.
vi. 37; xvii. 11, 12; xviii. 9.—[†] Chap. xiv. 28.

self, (see the preceding verses,) as the good shepherd, was equivalent to a declaration of his being the Messiah. Besides, he had already performed those miracles which were to characterize and distinguish the Messiah, such as cleansing the lepers, giving sight to the blind, &c.; and if they had but followed the dictates of their own rabbis, or of their own unprejudiced reason, they must have acknowledged that he had sufficiently established his claim to the title of the Messiah. *But ye believe not, 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 lovers of God. The reason why ye do not believe in me is not that the proofs of my mission are insufficient, but because ye are not of an humble and teachable disposition, free from worldly passions, and willing to receive the doctrine that comes from God. Persons of this character easily know, by the nature of my doctrine and miracles, who I am, and consequently readily believe in and follow me.

Verses 27–31. *My sheep hear my voice, &c.*—Our Lord still alludes to the discourse he had had before this festival. As if he had said, My sheep are those who, 1st, *Hear my voice* by faith; 2d, *Are known* (that is, approved) by me as loving me; and, 3d, *Follow me*, keep my commandments, with a believing, loving heart. And to those who, 1st, *Truly believe*, (observe three promises annexed to three conditions,) I give eternal life. He does not say, *I will give*, but *I give*. For *he that believeth*, hath everlasting life. Those whom, 2d, *I know* truly to love me, *shall never perish*, provided they abide in my love. 3d, 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*. *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

31 ¶ Then [†]the Jews took up A. M. 4037.
stones again to stone him. A. D. 33.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good
works have I showed you from my Father;
for which of those works do ye
stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a
good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy,
and because that thou, being a man,
[†]makest thyself God.

34 Jesus answered them, [†]Is it not written in
your law, I said, Ye are gods?

[†] Chap. xvii. 2, 6, &c.—[†] Chap. xvii. 11, 22.—[†] Chap. viii.
59.—[†] Chap. v. 18.—[†] Psa. lxxxii. 6.

of himself which could possibly be so interpreted, as this and other expressions were, by all that heard our Lord speak. Indeed, his hearers were provoked to such a degree by what he now said, that they took up stones, and were going to kill him outright, imagining that he had spoken blasphemy.

Verses 32–36. *Jesus answered, Many good works have I showed you from my Father*—That is, in confirmation of my mission from my Father I have wrought many miracles, all of a beneficent kind, and most becoming the perfections of my Father, who sent me. I have fed the hungry, I have healed the lame, I have cured the sick, I have given sight to the blind, I have cast out devils, and I have raised the dead: *for which of all these are you going to stone me? The Jews answered, For a good work we stone thee not*—We are going to punish thee with death, not for a good work, but for blasphemy; for, though thou art a man, weak and mortal as we ourselves are, thou arrogantly assumest to thyself the power and majesty of God; and by laying claim to the incommunicable attributes of the Deity, *makest thyself God*. This they took to be the plain meaning of his assertion, that he and the Father were one. *Jesus*—Not judging it proper, at that time, to bring the sublime doctrine of his Deity into further debate; *answered them, Is it not written in your law*—Or, in those sacred books which you own to be of divine original, (see Psa. lxxxii. 6,) where it is plain the persons that are spoken of are princes and magistrates; *I said, Ye are gods?*—“The Jewish magistrates were God’s deputies in an especial manner, because the people whom they governed were his peculiar people, and because, in many instances, they were expressly called by him to undertake the fatigues of government, and had an afflatus, or inspiration of the Spirit, for that end. Thus the high-priests derived their dignity from God, and were possessed of the Urim and Thummim, by which they inquired of the Lord. When Moses chose the seventy elders to assist him in the distribution of justice, God put his Spirit upon them, and they prophesied, Num. xi. 17. Joshua, who succeeded Moses by divine appointment, is said to have been a man in whom was the Spirit, Num. xxvii. 18. Many

A. M. 4037. 35 If ye called them gods, ^o unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken ;

36 Say ye of him ^f whom the Father hath sanctified, and ^g sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; ^h because I said, I am ⁱ the Son of God ?

37 ^k If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, ^l believe the works : that ye may know and believe

^o Rom. xiii. 1.—^f Chap. vi. 27.—^g Chap. iii. 17 ; v. 36, 37 ; viii. 42.—^h Chap. v. 17, 18 ; Verse 30.—ⁱ Luke i. 35 ; Chap. ix. 35, 37.—^k Chap. xv. 24.

of the judges were raised up by God, and had his Spirit. When Saul was anointed, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied, 1 Sam. x. 6, 10."—Macknight. *If he (God) called them gods, to whom the word of God came*—That is, to whom God was then speaking ; *and the Scripture cannot be broken*—That is, nothing that is written therein can be censured or rejected. Dr. Campbell translates this clause, *And if the language of Scripture is unexceptionable* ; observing, "Our Lord defends what he had said from the charge of blasphemy, by showing its conformity to the style of Scripture in less urgent cases ; insomuch, that if the propriety of Scripture language were admitted, the propriety of his must be admitted also." "This," adds he, "is one of those instances wherein, though it is very easy for the translator to discover the meaning, it is very difficult to express it in words which shall appear to correspond to those of his author." *Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified*—Hath set apart for the great work of redeeming and saving the human race ; *and sent into the world*—For that purpose ; *Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?*—If the Scripture, which cannot err, gives the title of gods to mortal and sinful men, why should you reckon guilty of blasphemy, me, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world on so grand a design, because I assume to myself a title which so justly belongs to me, namely, that of *the Son of God?* Some set the argument in another light, thus : If they, to whom the word of God, and the revelation of his will came, are called gods in Scripture, how dare you say to the Word of God himself, by whom all the various revelations of the divine will have been made to men ; how dare you say to such a person, on such an occasion, *Thou blasphemest!* Jesus, it must be observed, was charged here by the Jews with ascribing divinity to his human nature ; and in reply to this he shows, that, calling himself *the Son of God*, did not imply that, and that his works proved such a union of the human nature with the divine as he had before asserted, than which no answer could have been more wise and pertinent.

Verses 37-39. *If I do not the works of my Father, &c.*—When I claim the character of *the Son of God*,

^m that the Father *is* in me, and I in ⁿ him. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

39 ¶ ⁿ Therefore they sought again to take him ; but he escaped out of their hand,

40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place ^o where John at first baptized ; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle ; ^p but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42 ^q And many believed on him there.

^o Chap. v. 36 ; xiv. 10, 11.—^p Chap. xiv. 10, 11 ; xvii. 21. ^q Chap. vii. 30, 44 ; viii. 59.—^r Chap. i. 28.—^s Chap. iii. 30. ^t Chap. viii. 30 ; xi. 45.

I do not expect to be credited merely on my own affirmation : if I do not such glorious works as could not be performed by any but a divine agent, *believe me not : but if I do*—If it be apparent that I do such works, though you believe not me, and are regardless of my own testimony in the case, yet, at least, believe the works ; and let their evidence remove the prejudices you have entertained ; *that ye may know, &c., that the Father is in me, and I in him*—Namely, by such a union as abundantly justifies the expression which seems to give you such peculiar offence. In other words, Though ye do not believe what I say concerning my personal dignity, on my own authority, you ought to believe it on account of my miracles, which are plainly of such a kind, that it is impossible for any deceiver to perform them ; they are the works of God himself, and therefore you ought to consider them as such. *Therefore they sought again to take him*—For this defence was so far from pacifying them, that they were rather the more enraged at him through it. *But he escaped out of their hand*—Withdrew himself, as he had done before, in an extraordinary manner. See chap. viii. 59 ; Luke iv. 30.

Verses 40-42. *And, presently departing from Jerusalem, he went again beyond Jordan*—Into Perea, a country for the most part desert and rocky ; *the place where John at first baptized*—Called Bethabara, chap. i. 28 ; *and there he abode*—Probably till he came into Judea, to raise Lazarus from the dead, that being the next particular mentioned by this evangelist. If so, the time of his abode in these parts must have been considerable : and, as appears from what follows, was not spent there in vain. For *many* of the inhabitants of that place, who had been formerly acquainted with John the Baptist, and remembered the strong and repeated testimonies which he had borne to Jesus, *resorted unto him*—To attend his ministry ; *and said, John did no miracle*—For it seems John was not endued with the power of working miracles, that the authority of Jesus might be more conspicuous and unquestionable ; *but all things that John spake of this man were true*—The character which John gave of one that was to come after him, is completely verified by the doctrine and miracles of this person.

And many believed on him there—Believed him to be the Messiah, the Son of God. And thus they happily improved this season of Christ's recess among them, as the means of their instruction, and establishment in piety. Thus we see the testimony of John the Baptist was recollected to

excellent purposes, while he himself was mouldering in his tomb. And what can a faithful minister account a greater happiness, or more earnestly desire, than that, even while he is dead, he may yet speak for the honour of Christ, and the salvation of souls?

CHAPTER XI.

- (1.) Christ is informed of the sickness of his friend Lazarus, of Bethany, but delays going thither till he was dead, 1-16.
- (2.) Some days after his death, he determines to go again into Judea, though against the persuasion of his disciples, and visits and confers with Lazarus's sisters, 17-32.
- (3.) After weeping, and the removal of the grave-stone, and after solemn thanksgiving to his Father, he raises Lazarus from the dead, though he had been buried four days, 33-46.
- (4.) The chief priests and rulers, being informed of the resurrection of Lazarus, by the advice of Caiaphas, agree that it was necessary he should be put to death, and from that time consult to carry their design into execution, 47-53.
- (5.) Jesus retires to Ephraim, a city near the wilderness, and the priests and Pharisees issue an order for apprehending him, 54-57.

A. M. 4037. **N**OW a certain man was sick, A. D. 33. named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of ^a Mary and her sister Martha.

2 ^b It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying,

Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is A. M. 4037. sick. A. D. 33.

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, ^c but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

^a Luke x. 38, 39.—^b Matt. xxvi. 7; Mark xiv. 3; Chap. xii. 3.

^c Chap. ix. 3; Verse 40.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verses 1, 2. *Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus*—While Jesus was on the other side of Jordan, whither he had retired when he left Jerusalem, a particular friend of his, called Lazarus, fell sick of a very dangerous disorder, at the village of Bethany, near Jerusalem. *The town of Mary, and Martha, Lazarus's sisters*—It is probable Lazarus was younger than his sisters, Bethany being named their town, and Lazarus being mentioned after them, verse 5. Ecclesiastical history informs us, that Lazarus was now thirty years old, and that he lived thirty years after Christ's ascension. *It was that Mary who afterward anointed the Lord with ointment*—See chap. xii. 3; and Matt. xxvi. 7. Some commentators have supposed that this refers to the story related by Luke, chap. vii. 37, &c.; and have argued from thence, that Mary Magdalene, whom they think to be the person there described, as a woman that was a sinner, was the same with this Mary, the sister of Lazarus. But it seems much more probable that John himself should mention the fact that he has here referred to, which, if he has done at all, it must be that which he relates chap. xii. 3, &c., where there can be no doubt that the person who performed this instance of respect to Christ was Mary the sister of Lazarus, who was of Bethany, and therefore must be different from Mary Magdalene, who was of Magdala, a town of Galilee, at a considerable distance. Nor is there any ground from Scripture to conclude, that Mary Magdalene

was the person who anointed Christ in Luke, which appears rather to be there described as the action of a woman of Nain, where Christ restored the widow's son to life. See note on Luke vii. 37, and viii. 2.

Verses 3-6. *Therefore his sisters*—Observing his sickness was of a dangerous kind, and therefore being full of concern for him, knowing where Jesus was, thought proper to send him word of it; for they firmly expected that he, who had cured so many strangers, would willingly come and give health to one whom he so tenderly loved. *When Jesus heard this he said, This sickness is not unto 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, and a confirmation of the doctrine and mission of his Son. Dr. Campbell renders the clause, *will not prove fatal*, observing that this reading gives the full import of the Greek expression, *οκ εστι προς θανατον*, and at the same time preserves the ambiguity intended. *Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister, &c.*—That is, he loved them with a peculiar affection, on account of their unfeigned piety toward God, their friendship and affection toward one another, and their faith in him as the Messiah, and had often visited them, and lodged at their house. And, in consequence of his peculiar love to them, he was determined to conduct himself toward them, in their present trying circumstances, in such a manner as he knew would be most for

A. M. 4037. 6 When he had heard therefore
A. D. 33. that he was sick, ^d he abode two
days still in the same place where he
was.

7 Then after that saith he to *his* disciples,
Let us go into Judea again.

8 *His* disciples say unto him, Master, ^e the

^d Chap. x. 40.—^e Chap. x. 31.

their final advantage, though it might, for a while, be an occasion of greater affliction to them. *When he heard therefore that he was sick*—Instead of making all possible haste to go to him, and without declaring he had any thoughts of going; *he abode two days still*—On the other side of Jordan; and *in the same place where he was before*—This he did not only though he loved them, but *because* he loved them. He loved them, and therefore he designed to do something great and extraordinary for them; to work such a miracle for their relief, as he had not wrought for any of his friends. If he had gone immediately, and had arrived at Bethany while Lazarus was still alive, and had cured his sickness, he would have done no more for him than he had done for many; if he had come to him, and raised him when he was but just dead, he would have done no more than he had done for some; but deferring his relief so long, he had an opportunity of doing more for him than he had done, or ever should do, for any other. Observe, reader, God hath gracious intentions even in his apparent delays. See Isa. liv. 7, 8. Christ's friends at Bethany were not out of his thoughts, nor was his affection to them lessened, though when he heard of their distress he made no haste to give them relief. "His lingering so long after their message came, did not proceed from want of concern for his friends, but happened according to the counsels of his own wisdom. For the length of time that Lazarus lay in the grave put his death beyond all possibility of doubt, and removed every suspicion of a fraud, and so afforded Jesus a fit opportunity of displaying the love he bare to Lazarus, as well as his own almighty power, in his unquestionable resurrection from the dead. It is true, the sisters were thus kept a while in painful anxiety, on account of their brother's life, and in the conclusion were pierced with the sorrow of seeing him die. Yet they would think themselves abundantly recompensed by the evidence accruing to the gospel from this astonishing miracle, as well as by the inexpressible surprise of joy which they felt, when they received their brother again from the dead."

Verses 7-10. *Then after that*—Namely, on the third day; *he saith, Let us go into Judea again*—When the proper time for setting out for Bethany was come, Jesus desired his disciples to accompany him into Judea. But they expressed some unwillingness to undertake the journey; not imagining that it was proposed on Lazarus's account, whom they supposed out of danger, because Jesus had said of his sickness, that it was not unto death. *His disciples say, The Jews of late sought to stone*

Jews of late sought to stone thee; A. M. 4037.
and goest thou thither again? A. D. 33.

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? ^f If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But ^g if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

^f Chap. ix. 4.—^g Chap. xii. 35.

thee, &c.—It seems the attempts which the inhabitants of Jerusalem lately made upon their Master's life had frightened them exceedingly. *Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day?*—The Jews always divided the space from sunrise to sunset, whether the days were 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 the hours of the day are appointed for the various works necessary for human life, and as he who travels in the day-time needs not be afraid of stumbling, because he has the sun, the light of this world, to show him his way; even so the man who has a season allotted him for performing God's work, and at the same time the light of God's word showing him what it is, and the divine call requiring him to engage in it, needs not be afraid of any danger he exposes himself to in performing it, God, whom he serves, being always able to preserve him. Jesus, however, intended this to be applied to himself, as if he had said, So there is such a space, a determinate time, which God has allotted me: during that time I stumble not, how many snares soever may be laid for me. *But if a man walk in the night*—If a man undertake God's work at an improper season, without a divine call requiring him to undertake it, or without understanding the will of God and his duty: if he has not light from God, through his word and Spirit; and if Divine Providence does no longer protect him; *he stumbleth*—He may be justly afraid of the danger to which he exposes himself: he will fall into error, sin, and misery. *Because there is no light in him*—Or rather, *in it*, as *εν αυτω*, should be translated, referring to the noun, *κοσμος*, world, in the end of the preceding verse. For his stumbling in the night is occasioned by the want of that which prevents his stumbling in the day, namely, light, the sun not being above the horizon. Dr. Campbell, however, thinks that, *in it*, or, *in him*, is better omitted in English, where it would encumber rather than enlighten the expression. He therefore reads, *He stumbleth because there is no light*. "By these words," says Cocceius, "our Lord reminds his disciples that he was the light of the world, and that as long as he was in the world he must necessarily shine; and that there was no danger if they walked with him; he also hints hereby the stated time fixed for him to be in the world, and the consequent darkness of those who should reject his light, and not walk in it, which they should enjoy always, who obeyed his word and followed his example."

A. M. 4037. 11 These things said he: and after
A. D. 33. that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus ^hsleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was

^h Deut. xxxi. 16; Dan. xii. 2; Matt. ix. 24; Acts vii. 60;

Verses 11-13. *These things said he*—To silence their objections, and prepare their minds for what he yet concealed; and after that, as he perfectly knew what had passed at Bethany, though so many miles distant from it, *he saith, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*—This, it is probable, he spoke just when he died. *Sleepeth*—Thus our Lord speaks, partly out of tenderness to his apostles, as being least shocking when he spoke of so dear a friend; and partly because the death of good men is only *sleep*, in the language of heaven. But the disciples did not yet understand this language. And the slowness of our understanding in divine things causes the Scripture often to descend to our barbarous manner of speaking. *But I go that I may awake him out of sleep*—Referring to that raising him from the dead, which he intended quickly to effect. Mr. Blackwall, in his *Sacred Classics*, (vol. i. page 297,) mentions the manner of speaking used here by our Lord, as an instance of his great modesty, as he does not immediately say, “He is dead, and I go by my almighty power to burst the bonds of the sepulchre, and to command him back to life again;” but, avoiding all parade and ostentation, he chooses the most simple and humble expression that can be thought of. *Then said his disciples*—Not apprehending his meaning; *Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well*—Understanding his words in a literal sense, they replied that they took his sleeping as a symptom of his speedy recovery; and by so saying intimated that there was no need of their going into Judea on Lazarus’s account. *Howbeit Jesus spake of his death*—But the real meaning of what Jesus said was, that Lazarus was dead, though his words were such that the disciples understood him as speaking of natural sleep.

Verses 14-16. *Then said Jesus plainly*—That he might not hold them any longer in suspense, or permit them to remain under a mistake; *Lazarus is indeed dead: and*—As I could not have permitted this to have happened in my presence, *I am glad for your sakes*—That your faith may be more fully confirmed, by a further remarkable display of my divine power; *that I was not there*—That I was not in Judea before he died; for had I been there, and

not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

18 (Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, ¹about fifteen furlongs off:)

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

1 Corinthians xv. 18, 51.—¹ That is, about two miles.

recovered him, your faith in me, as the Messiah, must have wanted that great confirmation which it shall soon receive. *Nevertheless*—Although he be dead, or, *therefore*, as the particle *αλλα* is used, Acts x. 20; and xxvi. 16; *let us go unto him*—To Bethany, where he lies dead. *Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus*—Thomas in Hebrew, as Didymus in Greek, signifies a twin; *Let us also go, that we may die with him*—With Jesus, whom he supposed the Jews would kill. It seems to be the language of despair. “Thus,” as Dr. Lardner has remarked, “Jesus, who could have raised Lazarus from the dead without opening his lips, or rising from his seat, leaves the place of his retirement beyond Jordan, and takes a long journey into Judea, where the Jews lately attempted to kill him. The reason was, his being present in person, and raising Lazarus to life again, before so many witnesses at Bethany, where he died, and was well known, would be the means of bringing the men of that and future ages to believe in him and his doctrine, which is so well fitted to prepare mankind for a resurrection to eternal life, an admirable proof and emblem of which he gave them in this great miracle.”

Verses 17-19. *When Jesus came, he found*—When Jesus and his disciples were come nigh to Bethany, they were told by some of the inhabitants, whom, it seems, they met accidentally, that Lazarus had been buried four days. Therefore, as a day or two must have been spent in making preparation for the burial, he could not well be less than five days dead when Jesus arrived. *Now Bethany*—The place where Lazarus had lived; *was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off*—Or somewhat less than two miles: so that he was well known in the city, had many friends there; *and many of the Jews, who dwelt there, came to Martha and Mary*—When the funeral was over; that they might *comfort them*—In their trouble for the loss of their brother. “The evangelist mentions the vicinity of Bethany to Jerusalem, and speaks of the company of friends that were with the two sisters, to show that by the direction of Providence this great miracle had many witnesses, some of whom were persons of note, and inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

A. M. 4037. 20 Then Martha, as soon as she
A. D. 33. heard that Jesus was coming, went
and met him : but Mary sat *still* in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if
thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know that even now, ¹ whatsoever

¹ Chap. ix. 31.

Verses 20-22. *Then Martha, &c.*—Jesus was no sooner come into the neighbourhood, but presently the news of his approach was brought to the afflicted family, that had so long impatiently desired to see him. Martha, therefore, immediately went out; and, being told what way he was coming, soon met him: but Mary sat still in the house—Probably not hearing of his coming: for Martha, overjoyed at the news of his approach, did not take time to tell her sister of it, but went out in all haste. Her intention, no doubt, was to welcome him; but being in an excess of grief, the first thing she uttered was a complaint that he had not come sooner, saying, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died*—In which words she shows both the strength and weakness of her faith. 1st, The strength of it, in that she believed Christ's power was such, that though her brother's sickness was very grievous, yet he could have cured it, and so have prevented his death; and that his goodness was such, that if he had been present, and seen Lazarus in his extreme illness, and his dear relations all in tears about him, he would have had compassion, and have prevented so sad a breach upon the peace and comfort of the family. 2d, Her words show also the weakness of her faith; for she limits the power of Christ in saying, *If thou hadst been here*; whereas she ought to have known that Christ could cure at a distance, and that his gracious operations were not confined to his bodily presence. She reflects likewise on the wisdom and kindness of Christ, because he had not hastened to them when they sent for him, intimating that by delaying to come, she thought he had neglected to save her brother's life. She, however, corrects and comforts herself with the consideration of the prevailing interest which Christ had in heaven, adding, *But I know that even now*—Though he be dead; *whatsoever thou wilt ask of God*—Whatsoever thou shalt think proper to ask; *God will give it thee*—Will assuredly grant thy request, how great soever the favour may be which thou askest: thus intimating, that she believed his prayer might yet restore her brother to life. She has not courage, however, to ask Jesus that he would pray to his Father for such an extraordinary exertion of divine power to be displayed on their behalf, there having yet been no precedent of any one being raised who had been so long dead: but, like a modest petitioner, she humbly recommends their case to the wise and compassionate consideration of Jesus. Thus when we know not what in particular to ask, or expect, let us, in general, refer ourselves to God; let him

thou wilt ask of God, God will give ^{A. M. 4037}
^{A. D. 33.} it thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall
rise again.

24 Martha saith unto him, ¹ I know that he
shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

¹ Luke xiv. 14; Chap. v. 29.

do as seemeth him good. And let it comfort us to be assured, when we are in doubt what to pray for, that our great Intercessor knows what to ask for us, and is always heard. But we have in this latter sentence, uttered by Martha on this occasion, a further proof, as of the strength, so also of the weakness of her faith: she believed Jesus could obtain of God by prayer whatever he should think fit to ask, even the restoration of her brother to life, though he had been so many days dead, but she did not believe that he himself could raise him; forgetting, or not considering, that he had life in himself, yea, was the Prince of life and Conqueror of death. She founded her hopes of her brother's resurrection, so far as she entertained any hopes of so wonderful an event, not on Christ's own power, but on the power of God, to be exerted at his intercession.

Verses 23, 24. *Jesus*—Beholding her distress with a compassionate concern; *saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again*—Martha, in her complaint, looked back, reflecting with regret that Christ had not come before her brother's death, and thinking, if he had, her brother would have been now alive. And we are very apt, in such cases, like her, to add to our trouble, by fancying what might have been, if we had taken other measures or used other means, had employed certain physicians, or administered some particular medicines. But, alas! what use is there in such reflections, when God's will is done, and our duty is to submit to it? Christ directs Martha, and us in her, to look forward, and to think what shall be, for that yields sure comfort: *Thy brother shall rise again*. Here observe, 1st, This was true of Lazarus in a sense peculiar to him; he was now immediately to be raised. Christ, however, does not say this in express words, much less that he himself should effect his resurrection, (for humility was a distinguishing trait in his character,) but, for the further trial of her faith and patience, he speaks ambiguously, and leaves her in uncertainty whether he should be raised presently, or not till the last day. 2d, It is applicable to all the saints, and the future resurrection. And it is surely matter of comfort to us, when we have buried our godly friends and relations, to believe and consider that they *shall rise again*; and that, as the soul at death is not lost, but gone before, so the body is not lost, but laid up. Let us think we hear Christ saying, Thy father, thy mother, thy wife, thy husband, thy child, shall rise again; *these dry bones shall live!* *Martha*—Not daring to understand him in a sense that favoured her wishes, namely, that he should be raised immediately; *said, I know that he*

A. M. 4037. 25 Jesus said unto her, I am ¹the resur-
A. D. 33. rection, and ^mthe life: ⁿhe that believeth
in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever liveth, and be- A. M. 4037.
lieveth in me, shall never die. Be- A. D. 33.
lievest thou this?

¹ Ch. v. 21; vi. 39, 40, 44.—^m Ch. i. 4; vi. 35; xiv. 6; Col. iii.

4; 1 John i. 1, 2; v. 11.—ⁿ Chap. iii. 36; 1 John v. 10, &c.

shall rise again at the last day—Though the doctrine of a general resurrection was to have its full proof from Christ's resurrection, yet, as it had been revealed in the Old Testament, she firmly believed it, as the pious Jews in general did, Acts xxiv. 15; yet she seems to think this doctrine not so important, or calculated to comfort mourners on the death of their relatives, as it really was. For her words seem to imply, Though I know he shall rise again at the last day, yet that affords us but little support now, in the distressing bereavement that we have experienced: as if the blessing of a resurrection to eternal life were not of much greater importance, and much more replete with comfort to a truly pious person, than any recovery from sickness, or restoration to temporal health or life, in this present world of trial and trouble. Alas! that we should be so weak and foolish, as to suffer present, sensible things, to make a deeper impression upon us, both of grief and joy, than those spiritual and eternal things which are the great objects of faith and hope! *I know that he shall rise again at the last day*—And is not that sufficient? She seems not to think it is. Thus, by our discontent under our present trials, we greatly undervalue our future expectations, and put a slight upon them, as if they were not worth regarding.

Verse 25. *Jesus said, I am the resurrection*—The author and cause of the resurrection of the dead; *and the life*—The source of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; of the living, both in the present world and in the world to come. Martha believed that in answer to his prayer God would give any thing; but he would have her to know that by his power he could effect any thing. Martha believed a resurrection to take place at the last day; but Christ tells her he had now the power whereby it should be effected lodged in his hands: from whence it was easy to infer, that he who could raise the world of men that had been dead many ages, could, doubtless, raise one man that had been dead only a few days. Observe, reader, it ought to be a source of unspeakable comfort to us, that Christ is *the resurrection and the life*, and that he will be such to us, if we be his true disciples. A resurrection is a return to life, and Christ is the author of that return. We profess, in the Creed, to look for *the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come*. Let us remember, then, that Christ is the author and principle of both; and that our hope of both must be built on him. Jesus proceeds: *He that believeth in me*—With a faith overcoming the world, (1 John v. 4, 5,) and purifying the heart; (Acts xv. 9;) *though he were dead*—Or, *though he should die*, as *καὶ ἀποθάνῃ* is properly rendered; *yet shall he live*—Not only shall his soul survive the death of his body, and continue immortal,

but, ere long, his reanimated body shall be again united to that soul; and even at present I can loose the bonds of death, and though thy brother now is holden by them, I can recall him when I please. Observe well, reader, to whom this promise is made; namely, to them that believe in Christ Jesus, to them that consent to, and confide in him, as the only Mediator of reconciliation and of intercourse between God and man; that receive the record God has given in his word concerning his Son; who sincerely comply with it, and answer all the great and gracious intentions of it. Both the promise and the conditions are further explained in the next verse.

Verse 26. *And whosoever liveth*—That is, 1st, A natural life; whosoever lives in this world, whether he be Jew or Gentile, and wherever, in whatever country or age he lives; *and believeth*—That is, believeth while he liveth in this world, while he is here, in this state of probation; for, after death, it will be too late to believe. Or, 2d, Whosoever believeth, and liveth a spiritual life, and continues to believe, that he may continue so to live. For he that lives and believes, is he that lives by faith, a faith that influences his conversation: he that, by faith, is born again to a heavenly, holy, and divine life; to whom, *to live is Christ*, and whose life is continually derived from Christ. Such a one shall *never die*—A promise this which ensures a blessed immortality, 1st, To the soul: he who, being united to Christ by faith, lives a spiritual life by virtue of that union, shall never die; his spiritual life shall never be extinguished, but perfected in eternal life. For, as the soul, being in its nature spiritual, is therefore immortal; so, if by faith it live here a spiritual life, consonant to its nature, its felicity shall be immortal too. And there shall be no interruption of its life, as there is of the life of the body. The body indeed dies, or sleeps rather, but *not for ever*, as the original expression here used, *ὀ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, applied to it, is rendered by some. For, 2d, This promise ensures future life and happiness to it also. All the difficulties that attend the state of the dead are here overlooked by our Lord, and made nothing of, while he speaks of himself as *the resurrection and the life*. Though the body be *dead because of sin*; though the sentence of death passed upon it be just; though the effects of death be dismal; though the bands of death be strong; though the body be not only dead, but putrefied; though the scattered dust be so mixed with common dust, that no art of man can distinguish, much less separate them; yet we are sure it shall live again. Christ asks Martha, *Believest thou this?*—Canst thou take my word for it, and rely firmly on its accomplishment? Reader, when we hear the word of Christ concerning the great things

A. M. 4037. 27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord :
A. D. 33. ° I believe that thou art the Christ,
the Son of God, which should come into the
world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her
way, and called Mary her sister secretly, say-
ing, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quick-
ly, and came unto him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town,
but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 ¶ The Jews then which were with her in

° Matt. xvi. 16; Chap. iv. 42; vi. 14, 69.

of the other world, we should seriously ask our-
selves, *Do we believe this?* This truth in particu-
lar; *this*, which is attended with so many difficul-
ties; *this*, which is suited to my case? Doth my
belief of it realize it to me, and give my soul an as-
surance of it? so that I can say, not only *this* I be-
lieve, but *thus* I believe. Martha's mind was occu-
pied with the idea of her brother's being raised to
life in this world; before Christ gave her hopes of
that, he directed her thoughts to another life, and
another world. As if he had said, That is of compar-
atively little importance, but believest thou this
that I tell thee concerning a future state? The
crosses and comforts of this present time would not
make half that impression upon us which they do,
if we did but believe the things of eternity as we
ought.

Verse 27. *She saith, Yea, Lord*—I am fully per-
suaded of the truth of thy declaration; for *I believe
that thou art the Christ, &c.*—Here we have Mar-
tha's good confession, the same with that for which
Peter was commended, Matt. xvi. 16, 17, where see
the notes. Dr. Campbell reads, *I believe that thou
art the Messiah, the Son of God, he who cometh into
the world*; observing that the passage contains three
titles, which should be distinctly marked as three
different denominations, or descriptions, by which
the same great personage was distinguished; and
that the last two of them are improperly compound-
ed into one in our translation. He observes, also,
that the last-mentioned title is not properly, *he who
should come*, but, *he who cometh*. By replying, that
she believed him to be the promised Messiah, Mar-
tha intimated that she confided implicitly in every
thing he said, and that there was no instance of
power whatsoever, which he was pleased to claim,
that exceeded her belief. Probably she began to
entertain some confused expectation of her brother's
immediate resurrection; although afterward, when
she considered the greatness of the thing more de-
liberately, many doubts arose in her mind concern-
ing it, verse 39.

Verses 28–35. *When she had so said*—When she
had testified her faith, as in the preceding verse; *she
went and called Mary*—Jesus having inquired for
her, as is implied in the next words, designing that

the house, and comforted her, when A. M. 4037.
they saw Mary, that she rose up hasti- A. D. 33.
ly, and went out, followed her, saying, She go-
eth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus
was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet,
saying unto him, ° Lord, if thou hadst been
here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping,
and the Jews also weeping which came with
her, he groaned in the spirit, and ² was troubled,

34 And said, Where have ye laid him?

¶ Verse 19.—¹ Verse 21.—² Gr. *he troubled himself*.

she and her companions should likewise have the
honour and comfort of being present at the stupen-
dous miracle which he was about to perform. *As
soon as she (Mary) heard that, she arose quickly,
and came unto him*—Without speaking a word to
the company of friends, who, because she was of a
softer disposition than her sister, paid a special at-
tention to her grief; remaining with her in the house
after Martha was gone out, and when she went out
following her, lest she should be going to the grave
to weep there. In consequence of this, they were
naturally led to be eye-witnesses of all that followed.
When Mary came to Jesus, being greatly affected at
the sight of him in the present circumstances of their
distress, *she fell down at his feet*—As one over-
whelmed with sorrow, and with many tears, (as ap-
pears, verse 33,) expressed herself as Martha had
done before; *Lord, if thou hadst been here, &c.*—
For they had often said this to one another. She
was so overcome with grief that she could utter no
more. She had sat at Christ's feet to hear his word:
but now she is at his feet on a different errand. Such
are the changes in human life! Observe, reader,
those that in a day of peace place themselves at
Christ's feet, to receive instruction from him, may
with confidence and comfort cast themselves at his
feet in a day of trouble, with hope of finding favour
with him. *When Jesus saw her weeping, &c.*—
When he beheld Martha and Mary, and their com-
panions around him, all in tears, the tender feelings
of love, and pity, and friendship moved him in a
high degree; for his compassionate heart could not
contemplate the distress of the two affectionate sis-
ters, and that of their friends, without having a deep
share in it. *He therefore groaned in spirit, and
was troubled*—Greek, *εταρασεν εαυτον, he troubled
himself*: an expression, both elegant and full of the
highest propriety. For (as Bengelius observes) 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 vol-
untarily sustained, was full of the highest order and
reason. *And*—That he might keep them in sus-
pense no longer, but, going to the grave, might give
them immediate relief, by bringing him to life again;
he asks, *Where have ye laid him?*—He knew where

A. M. 4037. They say unto him, Lord, come and
A. D. 33. see.

35 ^r Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused

^r Luke xix. 11.

he was laid, and yet asks, because, 1st, He would thus express himself as a man, even then, when he was going to exert the power of God; non nescit sed quasi nescit, saith Austin here, *he was not ignorant* where he was laid, but he speaks *as if he were ignorant*. 2d, He would thus divert the grief of his mourning friends, by raising their expectation of his doing something great. *They say, Lord, come and see*—Perhaps indulging some uncertain hope of what was afterward done. *Jesus wept*—In remembrance of the dead, and out of sympathy with the living, as well as from a deep sense of the misery which sin had brought upon human nature. “In this grief of the Son of God,” says Macknight, “there was a greatness and generosity, not to say an amiableness of disposition, infinitely nobler than that which the Stoic philosophers aimed at, in their so much boasted apathy.”

Verses 36, 37. *Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him*—They seem to wonder he should have so strong an affection for one to whom he was not related, and with whom he had not had a long acquaintance, having spent most of his time in Galilee, at a great distance from Bethany. It becomes us, according to this example of Christ, to show our love to our friends, both living and dying. We must sorrow for our brethren that sleep in Jesus, as those that are full of love, though not void of hope; for though our tears profit not the dead, they embalm their memory. Christ’s tears, at the grave of Lazarus, were indications of his particular love to him; but he has given proofs, no less evident, of his love to all the saints, in that he died for them. Did these Jews, when they saw him shedding tears over the dead body of Lazarus, say, *See how he loved him? How much more reason have we for whom he laid down his life, to say, See how he loved us! And some said, Could not this man, &c.*—“Some of them, however, interpreted this circumstance to his disadvantage; for, according to their mean way of judging, they fancied that he had suffered him to fall under the stroke of death for no other reason but want of power to rescue him. And, thinking the miracle, said to have been wrought on the blind man during the feast of tabernacles, at least as difficult as the curing of an acute distemper, they called the former in question, because the latter had been neglected. If, said they, he has really opened the eyes of the blind, might he not have preserved this man from death?” Thus, when he was dying, because he did not save himself and come down from the cross, they concluded he could not; not considering that

that even this man should not have
A. M. 4037. died? A. D. 33.

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead,

^r Chap. ix. 6.

divine power is always directed in its operations by divine wisdom, not merely according to his will, but according to the counsel of his will, wherein it becomes us to acquiesce. If Christ’s friends, whom he loves, die; if his church, which he loves, be persecuted and afflicted, we must not impute these things to any defect, either in his power or love, but conclude that he permits them to happen, because he sees it to be for the best that they should. Jesus soon showed these whisperers, by raising Lazarus from the dead, that he could have prevented his death, but therefore did not, because he would glorify himself the more by doing a greater work than curing his disorder. So hard, however, were the hearts of many of these Jews, that, notwithstanding the great miracle which they were now about to see Jesus perform, they would persist in their infidelity still. And Jesus, who knew the discourses which they now held among themselves in private concerning him, being likewise fully acquainted with their obstinacy, and foreseeing the miseries in which their unbelief would involve them, was still more afflicted, and *groaned again in himself* as he went to the grave.

Verses 38–40. *It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it*—Or, as Dr. Campbell reads, *shut up with a stone*. The graves of the common people probably were digged like ours, but persons of distinction were, as with us, interred in vaults. So Lazarus was; and such was the sepulchre in which Christ was buried. See note on Matt. xxvii. 60. Probably this custom was kept up among the Jews in imitation of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their wives, except Rachel, being 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. *Jesus said, Take ye away the stone*—Our Lord, says Bishop Hall, “could with infinite ease have commanded the stone to roll away of itself, without employing any to remove it; but he judiciously avoided all unnecessary pomp and parade, and mingled all the majesty of this astonishing miracle with the most amiable modesty and simplicity.” Besides, he thus removed the minutest suspicion of fraud, for they who removed the stone would, from the putrefied state of the body, have sufficient evidence that it was there, dead; while all who were present might, and no doubt did, see it lying in the sepulchre when the stone was removed, before Jesus

A. M. 4037. saith unto him, Lord, by this time
A. D. 33. he stinketh: for he hath been *dead*
four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest 'see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his eyes*, and said, Father,

^t Verses 4, 23.

gave the commanding word, *Come forth*. *Martha said, Lord, by this time he stinketh*—Thus did reason and faith struggle together; *for he hath been dead four days*—The word *dead* is not in the original, which is only, *τετραημερος γαρ εστι*, *for he hath been four days*, namely, in the grave, and not four days dead only. That this was Martha's meaning is evident from verse 17, where it is said, that *when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had laid in the grave four days already*; and therefore he must have been dead at least five or six, for a day or two must have been spent in making preparation for the burial. "Providence directed Martha to mention this circumstance before Lazarus was raised, that the greatness of the miracle might be manifest to all who were present. It is beautiful to observe the gradation that was in the resurrections of the dead effected by our Lord. The first person whom he raised, namely, Jairus's daughter, had been in the state of the dead only a few hours; the second, the widow of Nain's son, was raised as his friends were carrying him out to burial. But when Jesus recalled Lazarus to life, he had been in the grave no less than four days; and therefore, according to our way of apprehending things, his resurrection was the greatest miracle of the three. As Peter Chrysologus observes, 'the whole power of death was accomplished upon him; the whole power of the resurrection showed forth in him.'"—Macknight. *Jesus saith, Said I not unto thee*—It appears by this that Christ had said more to Martha than is before recorded; *if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God*—Remarkably displayed in a work of signal mercy and power.

Verses 41–43. *Then they took away the stone*—As Jesus had directed; *from the place where the dead was laid*—From the mouth of the tomb. *And Jesus lifted up his eyes, &c.*—To show them who stood by, and viewed him as a mere man, from whence he derived his power; and that he did not do his miracles by any ability in his mere human nature. Thus he says, Matt. xii. 28, that he *cast out devils by the Spirit of God*; and, Luke xii. 20, *by the finger, or power, of God*; and, John xiv. 10, that the Father, *who dwelt in him*, namely, the eternal Word and Spirit of the Father, *did the works*. *And said, Father, I thank thee*—"On many occasions Jesus had publicly appealed to his own miracles, as the proofs of his mission; but he did not ordinarily make a formal address to his Father before he

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I thank thee that thou hast heard A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. me:

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but ^a because of the people which stand by, I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound

^a Chap. xii. 30.

wrought them; though to have done so, would have showed from whence he derived his authority. Nevertheless, being about to raise Lazarus from the dead, he prayed for his resurrection, to make the persons present sensible that in working his miracles, he [as man] acted by the assistance, not of devils, as his enemies maliciously affirmed, but of God; and that this miracle, in particular, could not be effected without an immediate interposition of the divine power. The evangelist, it is true, does not say directly, either that Jesus prayed, or that he prayed for this end. But the thanksgiving, which he tells us he offered up, implies both."—Macknight. *I know that thou hearest me always*—And art most ready to answer all my petitions. Jesus had access to his Father on every occasion, and success with him in every errand. And we may be sure his interest with God is not the less for his going to heaven; which may encourage us to depend on his intercession for us, and to put all our petitions into his hand, for we are sure that the Father hears him always. *Because of the people which stand by I said it, &c.*—I did not pray for my own sake, as if I had entertained any doubt of having power to do this miracle; (see chap. v. 10–26;) but I prayed for the people's sake, to make them sensible that thou lovest me, hast sent me, and art continually with me; and that I do all in union with thee, and nothing of myself, without, or separate from thee. *And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice*—Suitable to the majestic part which he was now acting, and the dominion he had, even in the empire of death itself, as well as that it might appear to all present, that even the dead were subject to his voice; *Lazarus, come forth*—He could have raised Lazarus by a silent exertion of his will and power, and the undiscernible operation of the Spirit of life; but he did it by a call, a loud call, to signify the power then put forth for the raising of Lazarus, and the greatness of the work.

Verse 44. *And he that was dead*—Greek, *ο τεθνηκως*, *he that had been dead*; *came forth*—"The dead man heard the voice of the Son of God, and came forth immediately. For he did not revive slowly, and by degrees, as the dead child did which was raised by the Prophet Elisha; but the effect instantly following the command, plainly showed whose the power was that reanimated the breathless clay." As the people present were not so much as thinking of a resurrection, they must have been greatly "sur-

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A. M. 4037. hand and foot with grave-clothes: and
A. D. 33. * his face was bound about with a nap-
kin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let
him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to
Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus
did, believed on him.

* Ch. xx. 7.—† Ch. ii. 23; x. 42; xii. 11, 18.—‡ Psa. ii. 2; Mat.

prised when they heard our Lord pray for it. The cry, *Lazarus, come forth*, must have astonished them still more, and raised their curiosity to a prodigious pitch. But when they saw him spring out alive and in perfect health, that had been rotting in the grave four days, they could not but be agitated with many different passions, and overwhelmed with inexpressible amazement." *Bound hand and foot with grave-clothes*—Which were wrapped round each hand and each foot. *And his face was bound 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. "It would have been the least part of the miracle, had Jesus made the rollers, wherewith Lazarus was bound, unloose themselves from around his body before he came forth. But he brought him out just as he was lying, and ordered the spectators to loose him, that they might be the better convinced of the miracle." Accordingly, in taking off the grave-clothes, they had the fullest evidence, both of his death and resurrection. For, on the one hand, in stripping him, the linen would offer both to their eyes and smell abundant proofs of his putrefaction, (verse 39,) and by that means convince them that he had not been in a deliquium, but was really departed: and on the other, by his lively countenance appearing when the napkin was removed, his fresh colour, his active vigour, and his brisk walking, they who came near him and handled him, were made sensible that he was in perfect health, and had an opportunity to try the truth of the miracle, by the closest examination.

"Every reader must be sensible, that there is something incomparably beautiful in the whole of our Lord's behaviour on this occasion. After having given such an astonishing instance of his power, he did not speak one word in his own praise, either directly or indirectly. He did not chide the disciples for their unwillingness to accompany him into Judea. He did not rebuke the Jews for having, in former instances, maliciously detracted from the lustre of his miracles, every one of which derived additional credit from this incontestable wonder. He did not say how much they were to blame for persisting in their infidelity, though he well knew what they would do. He did not intimate, even in the most distant manner, the obligations which Lazarus and his sisters were laid under by this signal favour. He did not upbraid Martha and Mary with the discontent they had expressed, at his having delayed to come to the relief of their brother. Nay,

46 But some of them went their
ways to the Pharisees, and told them
what things Jesus had done.

47 ¶ * Then gathered the chief priests
and the Pharisees a council, and said,
* What do we? for this man doeth many
miracles.

xxvi. 3; Mark xiv. 1; Luke xxii. 2.—† Ch. xii. 19; Acts iv. 16.

he did not so much as put them in mind of the mean notion they had entertained of his power; but, always consistent with himself, he was on this, as on every other occasion, a pattern of perfect humility and absolute self-denial."—Macknight.

Verses 45, 46. *Then many of the Jews, which came with Mary*—And were eye-witnesses of this illustrious miracle; *believed on him*—As the Messiah. Indeed, so incontestable a proof of his power and authority left them no room to doubt of his character. They knew that no impostor could perform any miracle; and so great a one as the resurrection of a person who had been in the grave four days was a miracle worthy of the Messiah himself. Willing, therefore, to know the truth, they yielded to the force of this evidence, and it is marvellous that all present did not yield to it; for, considering the nature and circumstances of this wonderful display of divine power, it surely ought to have silenced the peevishness of cavilling, overcome the obstinacy of prejudice, and put to shame the impudence of malice in every one that was a witness of it. And we may well be astonished to find that the cry, *Lazarus, come forth*, did not produce on all present an effect somewhat similar to that which it had on Lazarus. It raised him from the natural death, and one would suppose might have raised the most stupid of the spectators from the spiritual, by working in them the living principle of saving faith. But, alas! this was not the case. For, *some of them*—Blinded by prejudice, and that *spirit of the world* which is enmity against God, departed from this astonishing spectacle as firmly resolved to oppose Jesus as ever; they *went their ways to the Pharisees*—Namely, the chiefs of the sect who lived in the city; and *told them what things Jesus had done*—In order, as is evident, to induce them to take such measures as might crush Christ's growing reputation. 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!*

Verses 47, 48. *Then gathered the chief priests, &c.*—"The account which these men gave of Lazarus's resurrection, raised the indignation of the rulers to the highest pitch. They called a council forthwith, and after consultation blamed one another for having suffered Jesus to go so long unpunished. But this miracle being too evident to be denied, as all his miracles indeed were, they did not, even in their most private conferences, say or intimate to one another, that their displeasure and opposition

A. M. 4037. 48 If we let him thus alone, all men
A. D. 33. will believe on him : and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them, named ^b Caiaphas, be-

^b Luke iii. 2; Chap. xviii. 14; Acts iv. 6.

proceeded from his passing false miracles upon the ignorant vulgar. They rather condemned him upon the truth and notoriety of his miracles; pretending that they were designed to establish a new sect in religion, which might endanger, not their church only, but their state." They said, *What do we?—What, indeed? Why, you resist the truth, confirmed by the most astonishing and convincing miracles ever wrought: you show that death itself yields to the power of Christ sooner than infidelity. For this man doeth many miracles—Thus, though they were his sworn enemies, they could not help giving him an ample testimony, even in full court. If we let him thus alone—If we suffer him to go on thus uncontrolled. But how can you prevent his going on? How can you control one who walks on the water, calms the winds and waves with a word, and with a word cleanses the lepers, heals the sick, and raises the dead? All men will believe on him—And ought they not? Will they not be justified if they do, nay, and inexcusable if they do not? And are not you inexcusable in not believing on him? Surely for this very reason, that he does so many miracles, all salutary and tending to the good of mankind, and with such evidence of a divine power as you yourselves think is likely to draw all men to believe in him, you should acknowledge him to be the true Messiah, and profess yourselves his disciples, subjects, and servants. But the Romans will come—If we suffer this man to proceed thus, and continually to increase the number of his followers, it will give such umbrage to the Romans, that, on pretence of an insurrection being raised in the country, they will send a powerful army and destroy both our place, our temple, and nation—Both our church and state. Will overturn both our religious and civil constitution. Were they really afraid of this? or was it a mere pretence, a fair colour only for their conduct? Certainly it was no more. For they could not but know, that he who raised the dead was able to conquer the Romans. They entered, however, at this time, immediately after this most astonishing of all Christ's miracles, this most convincing of all the evidences he had given of his being the Messiah, into a resolution of putting him to death at all hazards. "But those politicians were taken in their own craftiness; for while they proposed, by killing Jesus, to avoid the destruction of their temple and city, the sin which they committed in killing him was so great, that God, in his just indignation, made the very people, whose resentment they proposed to avoid by this wicked measure, the instruments of his vengeance. He brought the Roman armies against them, who destroyed those murder-*

ing the high-priest that same year, said A. M. 4037.
unto them, *Ye know nothing at all,* A. D. 33.

50 ^c Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

^c Chap. xviii. 14.

ers, and burned up their city; leaving, in that dreadful catastrophe, an awful warning to all statesmen, to beware of prosecuting unjust measures, on pretence of consulting the good of the nation, whose affairs they direct."—Macknight.

Verses 49–52. *One of them, named Caiaphas, &c.*—While some of the council seemed apprehensive of the danger of attempting any thing against Jesus, and, as is probable from chap. xii. 42, urged the unlawfulness of what was proposed to be done, from the consideration of Christ's innocence and miracles, Caiaphas, who, among the many sudden revolutions which happened in the government about that time, was *high-priest that year*—That memorable year in which Christ was to die; *said unto them, Ye know nothing at all*—Of what the present urgency of affairs requires. He reproves their slow deliberation in so clear a case; and treats them as persons unacquainted with the nature of government, which, he signified, required that certain acts of injustice should not be scrupled at, when they were expedient for the safety of the state: and that they might easily find out a remedy for their present perplexity in the death of this Jesus, who occasioned such an alarm. It is justly observed by Dr. Campbell, that it was not with ignorance of the subject about which they were deliberating, the doctrine and miracles of our Lord, nor with ignorance of the law, for the punishment of offenders of all denominations, that Caiaphas here upbraids them, but with the want of political wisdom. They were in perplexity; he signified, they knew not what to resolve upon, or what measure to adopt in a case which was extremely clear: namely, "that though their putting Jesus to death could not be vindicated by strict law or justice, it might be vindicated from expediency and reasons of state; or, rather, from the great law of necessity, the danger being no less than the destruction of their country, and so imminent, that even the murder of an innocent man (admitting Jesus to be innocent) was not to be considered as an evil, but rather as a sacrifice every way proper for the safety of the nation. May we not reasonably conjecture, that such a manner of arguing must have arisen from objections made by Nicodemus, who, as we learn from chap. vii. 50, &c., was not afraid to object to them the illegality of their proceedings? or, by Joseph of Arimathea, who was also one of them, and concerning whom we have this honourable testimony, (Luke xxii. 50, 51,) that he did not concur in their resolutions?" *It is expedient that one man should die for the people*—Doubtless, Caiaphas said this from a principle of human policy; nevertheless, the evangelist assures us, that his tongue

A. M. 4037. 51 And this spake he not of himself: A. D. 33. but being high-priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52 ^d And not for that nation only, ^o but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

54 Jesus ^f therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called

^d Isa. xlix. 6; 1 John ii. 2.—^e Chap. x. 16; Eph. ii. 14–17.
^f Chap. iv. 1, 3; vii. 1.

was overruled by God to speak these words, and that, in uttering them, *he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation*—The nation of the Jews; *and that he should gather together in one*—Namely, in one church; *the children of God that were scattered abroad*—Through all nations and ages. That is, as God was wont anciently to communicate his oracles to the high-priest, clothed with the pontifical garments; so he inspired these words into Caiaphas, who now bore that office, though he was not sensible himself of the inspiration, and meant what he said in a different sense from what God intended should be signified by it. And thus Caiaphas gave, unawares, as clear a testimony to the priestly, as Pilate did to the kingly, office of Christ.

Verses 53, 54. *Then, from that day, they took counsel, &c.*—The majority of the council having resolved to put Jesus to death at all hazards, they consulted no longer upon that point, but from henceforth deliberated only concerning the best method of effecting it. *Jesus therefore walked no more openly, &c.*—Hence, though he was within two miles of Jerusalem, he did not go up thither at this time, but returned to Ephraim, a city upon the borders of the wilderness, where he abode with his disciples, being unwilling to go far away, because the passover, at which he was to suffer, approached.

Verses 55–57. *And*—Soon after this; *the Jews' passover was nigh*—The last passover that Christ attended; *and many*—From all parts of the country; *went up to Jerusalem*—Some little time before the commencement of the feast; *to purify themselves*—By certain preparatory sacrifices and ceremonies, that they might be ready to eat the passover. Those who were under any legal incapacity of celebrating the great solemnities of the Jewish religion, usually went up to Jerusalem before the feast to cleanse themselves, by offering the appointed oblations for their purification. For they who had committed sins which were to be expiated by sacrifices, were not obliged to travel instantly to Jerusalem to offer them, but might defer the doing it till the next

Ephraim, and there continued with A. M. 4037 his disciples. A. D. 33.

55 ¶ ^h And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

56 ⁱ Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should show it, that they might take him.

^h 2 Chron. xiii. 19.—ⁱ Chap. ii. 13; v. 1; vi. 4.—^j Chap. xi. 7.

feast, at which they were obliged to be present. Moreover, those who were under vows of Naziritism, usually ordered matters so, that those vows were concluded at one of the great feasts. These things occasioned a great concourse of people at Jerusalem before the feasts, and especially before the passover. And, as the time necessary for many purifications was seven days, when Jesus came to the city at this season, six days before the passover, (chap. xii. 1, 9, 12,) he found great multitudes there. *Then sought they for Jesus*—Some of them being desirous to see and hear him, and others, perhaps, wanting to discover him to his avowed enemies, the Pharisees: and, as it could not but be generally known, that the surprising miracles which he had lately wrought had very much inflamed the rage and envy of his persecutors, many of the people were in doubt whether he would venture to appear in public; *and spake among themselves as they stood in the temple*—Where they were performing the rites of their worship; *What think ye*—Respecting his coming to the passover? Do you suppose that, after this alarm, he will not have courage to come? *Now both the chief priests and Pharisees*—Concluding that he would not fail to come according to his usual custom, no longer dissembling their malice; *had given a commandment*—Or issued a proclamation; *that if any man knew where he was, he should*—Immediately; *show it, that they might take him*—Might apprehend, and bring him to his trial, as a disturber of the public peace, and a person dangerous to the state. Thus did these wicked rulers, through the restless, causeless, and incorrigible malice that was in their hearts against the Son of God, labour to involve others with themselves in the guilt of murdering him: and if they could find any man capable of betraying him, they wished to persuade him that it was his duty to do it! But notwithstanding their proclamation, though doubtless many knew where he was, yet such was his interest in the affections of some, and such God's hold on the consciences of others, that he continued undiscovered.

CHAPTER XII.

Here, (1,) Mary, the sister of Lazarus, to the great vexation of Judas, anoints Jesus's feet, 1-8. (2,) The chief priests plot to murder both Christ and Lazarus, whom the people flocked to see, 9-11. (3,) Jesus enters Jerusalem in triumph, riding on an ass, 12-19. (4,) Upon occasion of some Greeks desiring to see him, he foretells his death; and its happy effects, in the conversion and salvation of multitudes, 20-33. (5,) He warns the Jews to improve his presence and gospel, during the short time they should enjoy it, 34-36. (6,) The Jews generally persist in their unbelief; many of the rulers, however, believing, but for fear of their brethren not owning him, 37-43. (7,) Christ asserts his divine mission, 44-50.

A. M. 4037. **THEN** Jesus, six days before the
A. D. 33. passover, came to Bethany,

^a where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 ^b There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took ^c Mary a pound of ointment of

^a Chap. xi. 1, 43.—^b Matt. xxvi. 6; Mark xiv. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verses 1, 2. *Six days before the passover*—Name-ly, 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, whither he had retired with his disciples, to preserve his life for a time from the murderous designs of the Jewish rulers; *to Bethany*—The village where he had lately (Calmet thinks, about two months before) raised Lazarus from the dead. *There they made him a supper*—In testimony of their high esteem and great affection for him. It is not said that this supper was made at Lazarus's house. For if, as is probable, this be the same story that is recorded Matt. xxvi. 6, and Mark xiv. 3, the supper was made at the house of Simon who had been a leper. "Few passages," says Dr. Doddridge, "in the harmony [of the gospels] have perplexed me more than this. I was long of opinion, with Origen and Theophylact, defended by Le Clerc and Dr. Whitby, and especially by Dr. Lightfoot and Mr. Whiston, that the story recorded by Matthew and Mark is different from this in John: but on maturer consideration, it appears to me more probable that Matthew and Mark should have introduced this story a little out of its place; that Lazarus, if he made this entertainment, (which is not expressly said by John,) should have made use of Simon's house, as more convenient for it; and that Mary should have poured this ointment on Christ's head and body, as well as on his feet; than that, within the compass of four days, Christ should have been twice anointed with so costly a perfume; and that the same fault should be found with the action, and the same value set on the ointment, and the same words used in defence of the woman; and all this in the presence of many of the same persons: all which improbable particulars must be admitted, if the stories be considered as different. But, after all, I can assert nothing confidently; for there is no impossibility in the thing, taken either way." Dr. Macknight, however, who supposes this story is not

spikenard, very costly, and anointed A. M. 4037.
the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet A. D. 33.

with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

^c Luke x. 38, 39; Chap. xi. 2.

the same with that recorded by Matthew and Mark, thinks "It evidently appears that our Lord was anointed with spikenard three different times in the course of his ministry; once in the house of Simon the Pharisee, (Luke vii. 37, &c.,) once in the house of Lazarus, and once in the house of Simon the leper. That this honour should have been done him so often," adds he, "needs not be thought strange, for, in those countries, it was common at entertainments to pour fragrant oil on the heads of such guests as they designed to distinguish with marks of extraordinary respect; a custom alluded to Psa. xlv. 7: *God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*" *And Martha served*—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, on which he now entered. *But Lazarus was one that sat at the table*—Lazarus's sitting at the table showed still more the reality of the miracle wrought at his tomb; that it was not a spectre or illusion which then presented itself to the sight; and that Lazarus was not only restored to life, but likewise to perfect health.

Verses 3-8. *Then took Mary a pound of ointment, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xxvi. 6-13; Mark xiv. 1-9. She did what is here related in token of the warm sense she had of the many favours Christ had conferred on her and her relations, but especially for the wonderful kindness he had lately shown to her brother Lazarus. *Then saith Judas, Why was not this ointment sold, &c.*—Judas was angry because his Master had not taken the ointment with a view to sell it, pretending that the price received for it might have been bestowed on the poor. Nevertheless, his real motive was covetousness; for as he carried the bag, he thought if his Master had sold the ointment, he would have gotten the money to

A. M. 4037. 6 This he said, not that he cared for the
A. D. 33.

poor; but because he was a thief, and
d had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against
the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For ° the poor always ye have with you;
but me ye have not always.

9 ¶ Much people of the Jews therefore knew
that he was there: and they came, not for
Jesus's sake only, but that they might see Lazarus
also, f whom he had raised from the dead.

10 s But the chief priests consulted that they
might put Lazarus also to death;

11 h Because that by reason of him many

^d Chapter xiii. 29.—[°] Matthew xxvi. 11; Mark xiv. 7.
^f Chapter xi. 43, 44.—^s Luke xvi. 31.—^h Chapter xi. 45;
Verse 18.

keep, and so might have applied part of it to his own private use. But it is no new thing for the basest men to cover their blackest crimes with the fair pretence of zeal for the honour of God and the interests of religion. For three hundred pence—These were Roman pence, and consequently amounted to nine pounds seven shillings and six-pence. The expression only intimates a general guess at the value by a round sum, as we speak, for such three hundred denarii were, though the correspondent value with us is not so. Against the day of my burying, which now draws nigh, hath she kept this—Mr. Whiston thinks this is as if our Lord had said, "She has spent but a little of this ointment, but has reserved the main part of it to pour on my head some days hence, which shall be so near my death, that it may be considered as a kind of embalming." But it is unnatural to suppose that, in the transport of her love and gratitude, she would use this little management of keeping back most that was in the vessel; or that, if she had, John would have mentioned the quantity she took, which was no way to his purpose, or have taken notice of the room being filled with the odour of it.

Verses 9-11. Much people knew he was there, and came—Bethany being within two miles of Jerusalem, the news of his arrival soon reached the city, and drew out great numbers of the people; for they wished to see the man that had been raised from the dead, and the still more wonderful man that had raised him. And when they came, and saw Lazarus, many of them believed—That is, were convinced, both of Lazarus's resurrection, and of the divinity of Christ's mission. But the news of their believing, together with the reason of it, being currently reported in Jerusalem, came to the chief priests' ears, and incensed them to such a degree, that they resolved to kill, not Jesus only, but, if possible, Lazarus also; that is, to kill a person, who, after being dead five or six days, and buried four, had, by a most wonderful display of divine power, been raised

of the Jews went away, and believed A. M. 4037.
ou Jesus. A. D. 33.

12 ¶ On the next day, much people that
were come to the feast, when they heard that
Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went
forth to meet him, and cried, ^k Hosanna; Bless-
ed is the King of Israel that cometh in the
name of the Lord.

14 ^l And Jesus, when he had found a young
ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 ^m Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy
King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

16 These things ⁿ understood not his disci-

^k Matt. xxi. 8; Mark xi. 8; Luke xix. 35, 36, &c.—^l Psa.
cxviii. 25, 26.—^m Matt. xxi. 7.—ⁿ Zech. ix. 9.—^o Luke
xviii. 34.

ed from the dead! Such was their unparalleled wickedness! Here we have the plain reason why the other evangelists, who wrote while Lazarus was living, did not relate this story. Many of the Jews went away—That is, say most commentators, went to Bethany; and after seeing Lazarus, believed on Jesus—Namely, as their long-expected Messiah. But the word *ἠἤρον*, here rendered, they went away, "bears," Dr. Campbell thinks, "a very important sense, and denotes their ceasing to pay that regard to the teaching of the scribes which they had formerly done."

Verses 12-16. On the next day—On Sunday; much people that were come to the feast—From different parts of the country, particularly from Galilee; took branches of palm-trees, &c.—So that this multitude consisted chiefly, not of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but of persons from other places. See this story explained at large, Matt. xxi. 1-16; Mark xi. 1-10; Luke xix. 29-40. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass—Called by the other evangelists, a colt. But the Greek here, *εἶπεν δε ο ἵππος οναριον*, may be better translated, Now Jesus, having found a young ass; sat thereon, &c.—For the evangelist does not mean that Jesus was saluted by the multitude before he mounted, but his meaning is, that Jesus was riding when they saluted him. As it is written—Namely, Zech. ix. 9; Fear not, daughter of Sion—For his meekness, as well as the end of his coming, forbids fear; behold thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's colt—We shall easily see the propriety of applying Zechariah's prophecy to this transaction, if we remember that, in the East, riding on horses was anciently reckoned the greatest ostentation of magnificence. It was, therefore, becoming the meekness of the lowly Jesus, that in his most public entry into the capital city, he chose to ride on an ass. At the same time, there was nothing mean or ridiculous in it, asses being the beasts which the eastern people commonly made use of in riding. These things understood not his disciples, &c.—They did not at that time know what their

A. M. 4037. ples at the first: ° but when Jesus
A. D. 33. was glorified, ° then remembered they
that these things were written of him, and *that*
they had done these things unto him.

17 The people therefore that was with him
when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and
raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 ° For this cause the people also met him,
for that they heard that he had done this
miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among them-
selves, ° Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing?
behold, the world is gone after him.

° Chap. vii. 39.—° Chap. xiv. 26.—° Verse 11.—° Chap.
xi. 47, 48.—° Acts xvii. 4.

Master designed by this entry, or by any of the cir-
cumstances of it. Probably they considered it as
the first step of his exaltation to the throne. *But*
when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they,
&c.—After his ascension, recollecting the prophe-
cies concerning the Messiah, they remembered how
exactly they had been fulfilled in him, and found
their faith greatly strengthened thereby. In like
manner, the design of God's providential dispensa-
tions 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 *know not now*, but *shall know hereafter*.

Verses 17-19. *The people, therefore*—“Because
the forwardness which the multitude now showed
to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah was altogether
extraordinary, the evangelist assigns the cause
thereof. The witnesses of the resurrection of La-
zarus had published the miracle far and near. As
they were many in number, and persons of reputa-
tion, their report gained general credit; and this
drew out a great multitude of people to meet Jesus.
In saying, *he called Lazarus out of the grave*, the
evangelist admirably expresses, as well the great-
ness 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. *For this cause the*
people also met him—Because they heard from
those who had been eye-witnesses thereof, that he
had performed that extraordinary miracle; there-
fore they went out to meet him, and the multitude
coming with him; so that, in a little time, both joined
together, partly to go before and partly to follow
after. *The Pharisees therefore said, Perceive ye*
how ye prevail nothing?—In the mean time, the Pha-
risees and the great men were exceedingly enraged
because every measure they had taken to hinder
the people from following Jesus had proved inef-
fectual.

Verses 20-22. *And there were certain Greeks*—
A prelude of the Gentile Church. The phrase,
τινες Ἕλληνες, here used, signifies properly, as trans-
lators have rendered it, *certain Greeks*. But all the

20 ¶ And there ° were certain A. M. 4037.
Greeks among them, ° that came A. D. 33.
up to worship at the feast.

21 The same came therefore to Philip,
° which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and
desired him, saying, Sir, we would see
Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and
again, Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 ¶ And Jesus answered them, saying,
° The hour is come, that the Son of man
should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ° Except a

° 1 Kings viii. 41, 42; Acts viii. 27.—° Chap. i. 44.—° Chap.
xiii. 32; xvii. 1.—° 1 Cor. xv. 36.

Gentiles being thus named by the Jews, it was in-
tended to denote their religion, rather than their
country: they had been brought up heathen: they
were not, however, now idolatrous Gentiles, but
proselytes to the Jewish religion, and worshippers
of the true God, persons who had come to Jerusa-
lem, it seems, on purpose to worship him; but that
they had been circumcised is not certain. It is like-
ly, however, that they had heard of the Messiah,
and cherished expectations of his coming: but, be-
ing foreigners, they had never seen Jesus. *The*
same came, therefore, to Philip, which was of Beth-
saida—This circumstance is mentioned to show
how these men came to apply themselves to Philip.
Probably they were Syro-Phœnicians, dwelling
about Tyre and Sidon, and who, having commerce
with Galilee, might be acquainted with Philip. *And*
desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus—Our
Lord's fame, and the general opinion which now
prevailed, concurred to persuade these proselytes
that he might be the Messiah; for which reason
they desired an interview with him. *Philip cometh*
and telleth Andrew, &c.—From Philip's not ventur-
ing to introduce the men himself, it seems that there
was some difficulty in the case. Perhaps they were
only proselytes of the gate, who, according to cus-
tom, could not be admitted into the company of
Jews, Acts x. 28.

Verses 23-26. *Jesus answered, saying*—This
phraseology intimates the suitableness of the fol-
lowing discourse to this particular occasion; by
attending to which, many of the beauties of it will
be discovered. Our Lord might, perhaps, enlarge
on some of these hints; and if his hearers took a
due notice of them, and made a proper report on
their return home, it might prepare the way for the
apostles, when they came, by their preaching, more
fully to unfold and illustrate these important doc-
trines. *The hour is come that the Son of man*
should be glorified—Meaning, that he should soon be
honoured by the conversion of many of the Gentiles.
At the same time he told them, that he was to suffer
death before he arrived at this glory; and illus-
trated the necessity of his dying, by the similitude
of grain cast into the earth. *Verily, Except a*

A. M. 4037. corn of wheat fall into the ground
A. D. 33. and die, it abideth alone: but if it
die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 ^a He that loveth his life shall lose it; and
he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep
it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me;

^a Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35; Luke ix. 24; xvii. 33.
^a Chap. xiv. 3; xvii. 24; 1 Thess. iv. 17.

corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, &c.—As if he had said, As the only way to make grain produce fruit is to bury it in the ground; so, the most proper method of bringing about the conversion and salvation of the world is, that I die and be buried. To omit other things, our Lord's resurrection, the grand miracle on which the truth of Christianity is founded, and by which the conversion of the world was effected, happened in consequence of his death. The late resurrection of Lazarus gave our Lord a natural occasion of speaking on the 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*."—Wesley. *He that loveth his life*—More than the will of God; *shall lose it eternally*. He further told them, that as he, their Master, was to suffer before his exaltation, so were all they, his disciples; for which reason they were to expect persecution, firmly resolving to lose even life itself, after his example, when called to do it; and in that case he promised them a share in his crown and glory: saying, *He that hateth his life*—In comparison of the will of God, and therefore exposes it to great dangers in the cause of the gospel; *shall keep it unto life eternal*—And secure a state of immortal glory and happiness. *If any man serve me*—If any one would become a faithful servant of mine, would do my will, (for his servants we are whom we obey, Rom. vi. 16,) and would serve the cause in which I am engaged; *let him follow me*—Let him attach himself to me as one of my disciples, even although his doing so should expose him to the loss of his life; and let him drink into my Spirit, and imitate my example. *And where I am*—Where I shall shortly take up mine abode, even in the eternal kingdom of my Father; *there shall also my servant be*—In the same felicity and glory. *Yea, if any man serve me*—And live no longer to himself, but unto me, of whatever nation he may be, or whatever his religious profession may before have been; *him will my Father honour*—Unspeakably and for ever. Perhaps, in speaking thus, Jesus intended tacitly to intimate, that the strangers who wished to be introduced to him, would be greatly disappointed, if their desire of conversing with him proceeded from a hope of recommending themselves to earthly preferments through his favour.

and ^a where I am, there shall also A. M. 4037.
my servant be: if any man serve A. D. 33.
me, him will *my* Father honour.

27 ^b Now is my soul troubled; and what shall
I say? Father, save me from this hour: ^c but
for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. ^d Then came

^b Matt. xxvi. 38, 39; Luke xii. 50; Chap. xiii. 21.—^c Luke
xxiii. 53; Chap. xviii. 37.—^d Matt. iii. 17.

Verse 27. *Now is my soul troubled*—Our Lord, having uttered what is above recorded, seems to have paused for a while, and entered on a deep contemplation of the very different scene which lay before him; the prospect of which moved him to such a degree, that he uttered his grief in these and the following doleful words. For he had various foretastes of his passion before he fully entered into it. *And what shall I say?*—Not, What shall I choose? for his heart was fixed in choosing the will of his Father: but, What shall I say in prayer to my heavenly Father? What petition shall I offer to him on this occasion? *Father, save me from this hour*—Dr. Campbell reads, *What shall I say? [shall I say,] Father, save me from this hour? But I came on purpose for this hour*; considering the words as containing two questions: the distress of Christ's soul first suggesting a petition for deliverance, in which, however, he is instantly checked by the reflection on the end and design of his coming. The passage is understood by Dr. Doddridge in the same sense, who says, "I suppose few need be told, that the pointing of the New Testament is far less ancient than the text. It is agreeable to observe, how many difficulties may be removed by varying it, and departing from the common punctuation: of which I take this to be one of the most remarkable instances. For as the text does not oblige us to it, it does not seem natural to suppose that our Lord actually offered this petition, and then immediately retracted it." *But for this cause came I unto this hour*—For this cause was I born into the world, and came even to this present hour, that I might bear the sufferings on which I am entering, and might redeem my people by them; and far be it from me to draw back from such engagements and undertakings. By praying on this occasion, our Lord shows us what is the best method of obtaining support and comfort in deep distress. At the same time, as in his prayer he expressed an entire resignation to the will of his Father, he has taught us, that although the weakness of human nature may shrink at the first thoughts of suffering, his disciples ought not to yield, but to fortify themselves by just reflections on, and a firm faith in, the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, and the happy end he proposes to be answered by their afflictions.

Ver. 28-30. *Father, glorify thy name*—Whatever I suffer. For this may be considered as a further expression of his resignation, importing that he was willing to submit to whatever the Father should judge necessary for the manifestation of his perfec-

A. M. 4037. there a voice from heaven, saying, A. D. 33. I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered. Others said, An angel spake to him.

30 Jesus answered and said, * This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall ^f the prince of this world be cast out.

* Ch. xi. 42.—^f Matt. xii. 29; Luke x. 18; Ch. xiv. 30; xvi. 11; Acts xxvi. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. ii. 2; vi. 12.—^g Ch. iii. 14; viii. 28.—^h Rom. v. 18; Heb. ii. 9.—ⁱ Ch. xviii. 32.

tions: as if he had said, Dispose of me and all my concerns in such a way as may most effectually promote thy glory. The answer, however, that was now given to this part of Christ's prayer, rather suggests another meaning, namely, that he entreated God to demonstrate, perhaps by an immediate interposition, the truth of his mission, a full proof thereof being altogether necessary for vindicating the honour of God. Accordingly, the words were no sooner spoken, than a voice from heaven was heard, answering distinctly to this sense of them: saying, *I have glorified it, and will glorify it again*—I have glorified it by the miracles which thou hast already performed, and will continue to glorify it by other miracles yet to be performed. Accordingly, by the miraculous circumstances which accompanied our Lord's crucifixion, but especially by his resurrection from the dead, by his ascension into heaven, and by the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon his apostles, the truth of Christ's mission was demonstrated, and the glory of God greatly advanced. *The people, therefore, that stood by, and heard it*—That is, heard a sound, but not the distinct words; *said it thundered*—The voice being probably strong and loud as thunder, and evidently preternatural. *Others said, An angel spake to him*—By this it appears, that it was an articulate voice: none of them, however, took it for a human voice, it being entirely different from any thing they had ever heard. *Jesus answered, This voice came not because of me*—Nor did I pray for it on my own account; *but for your sakes*—Not to assure me of the love of my Father, but to confirm you in the belief of my mission, that you may not be offended at the treatment I shall meet with, or quit your hope in me on account of the sufferings which are coming upon me.

Verses 31-33. *Now is the judgment of this world*—Which I am going to conquer and condemn, that by my death my followers may both be taught and enabled to triumph over it, and those may be convinced of sin that believe not in me. Some interpreters render the clause, *Now is this world come to its crisis*: and others explain it of the redemption of the world, or its vindication from the bondage of Satan. "But this," says Dr. Doddridge, "is so unusual a sense of the word, [*κρισις, judgment,*] that I choose, with Dr. Whitby, to understand it of the condemnation of the world, or of the judgment

32 And I, ^g if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw ^h all men unto me. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

33 (ⁱ This he said, signifying what death he should die.)

34 The people answered him, ^k We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while ^l is the light with you. ^m Walk while

^k Psa. lxxxix. 36, 37; ex. 4; Isa. ix. 7; liii. 8; Ezek. xxxvii. 25; Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14, 27; Mic. iv. 7.—^l Chap. i. 9; viii. 12; ix. 5; Verse 46.—^m Jer. xiii. 16; Eph. v. 8.

passed upon its wicked principles and practices, and of the victory which Christians were to gain over it, in consequence of the death of Christ. See chap. iii. 18, 19; and xvi. 8, 11. *Now shall the prince of this world*—Satan, who has 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. In other words, The devil, who has so long reigned in the hearts of the children of disobedience, is about to be dethroned. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth*—This expression seems to be a Hebraism that signifies *dying*. Death in general is all that it usually imported. But our Lord made use of it, rather than others that were equivalent, because it so well suited the particular manner of his death. As our Lord cannot be supposed, in this passage, to speak of his own death as a thing uncertain, the Greek expression, *εαν υψωθω*, should be translated, not, *if I be lifted up*, but, *when I am lifted up; I will draw all men unto me*—Multitudes of Gentiles, as well as Jews; and those who follow my drawings, Satan shall not be able to retain in his power. In other words, I shall lay a foundation for conquering the most stubborn hearts by so rich a display of my love, and shall, by a secret but powerful influence on their minds, persuade multitudes of all ranks and all nations to enlist themselves under the banner I raise. *Signifying what death he should die*—Even by crucifixion, in which the person suffering was lifted up on high, and hung as it were between heaven and earth.

Ver. 34-36. *The people answered*—Understanding the phrase as implying some violent death shortly to come upon him; *We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever*—On hearing Jesus affirm that he was to be lifted up, or taken off by a violent death, they told him that it was inconsistent with the character of the Messiah, who, according to the law, (so they named the whole of their sacred writings,) was never to die. *And how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?*—How can these things be reconciled? *Who is this Son of man?*—Is he a different person from the Messiah, whom we have been taught to expect under the title of the *Son of man*? If not, what sort of a Messiah must he be that is to die? *Then Jesus said*—Not answering them directly, but exhorting them to improve what they had heard already; *Yet a little*

A. M. 4037. ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for ^a he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be ^o the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and ^p did hide himself from them.

37 ¶ But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, ^q Lord, who

^a Chap. xi. 10; 1 John ii. 11.—^o Luke xvi. 8; Eph. v. 8; 1 Thess. v. 5; 1 John ii. 9-11.

while is the light with you—As if he had said, Do not cavil at what I now say; but remember how short this opportunity is, which through the divine goodness you now enjoy; and improve by my instructions, who am the light of the world. See on John viii. 12. *Lest darkness*—That is, spiritual blindness; *come upon you*—By the just judgment of God. Rom. xi. 25. If that should happen to you, ye will be in a miserable condition indeed: *For he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth*—Knoweth neither the way he is walking in, nor the end he is walking toward: he knows not into what danger and misery he may fall the very next step he takes: and much more dreadful will it be for you to be deserted of God, and left to the darkness and folly of your own hearts. Observe, reader, he that is destitute of the light of the gospel, that is unacquainted with its discoveries and directions, wanders endlessly in mistakes and errors, in a thousand crooked paths, and is not aware of it: he is probably going to destruction, and knows not his danger: he is sleeping, or sporting, on the brink of the pit. *While you have the light*, therefore, *believe in the light*—While you enjoy the benefit of my doctrine, example, and miracles, which clearly prove my mission from God, believe on me; for it is thus alone you can become *children of light*—Children of God, wise, holy, and happy. *These things spake Jesus*—When the Greeks applied themselves to him; and as the unbelieving Jews were greatly irritated by the actions and discourses of the day, and would not be awakened to conviction, he left them and *departed* thence to a retired place. Greek, ἀπελθὼν ἐκρυβή ἀπ' αὐτῶν, which Dr. Campbell renders, *He withdrew himself privately from them*: observing, that he thinks our translation, *he departed and did hide himself from them*, “conveys a sense different from that of the original, which denotes simply, that in retiring he took care not to be observed by them.”

Verses 37-41. *Though he had done so many miracles before them*—So that they could not but see them; *yet they believed not on him*—That is, in general they did not; being hardened in their infidelity. *That the saying of Esaias might*—Or ra-

hath believed our report? and to whom ^{A. M. 4037.} hath the arm of the Lord been re- ^{A. D. 33.} vealed?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 ^r He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 ^s These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

^r Chap. viii. 59; xi. 54.—^q Isa. liiii. 1; Rom. x. 16.—^s Isa. vi. 9, 10; Matt. xiii. 14.—^t Isa. vi. 1.

ther, *So that the saying of Esaias was, fulfilled*, as Dr. Doddridge renders the clause, observing, “It is apparent that the accomplishment of this prophecy could not be the end they proposed to themselves in their unbelief; and consequently that the expression, *ὡς πλωρωθη*, must be rendered as above.” Thus also Dr. Macknight, who observes, that *ὡς* here, as well as in many other passages, ought to be translated *so that*, as denoting the event spoken of, and not the cause of that event. *Which he spake*—In the name of Christ and his servants, referring expressly to gospel times; *Lord, who hath believed our report?*—The tidings we bring, the testimony which we bear, especially concerning the great and wonderful humiliation and exaltation of the Messiah, predicted by that prophet in the passage referred to, namely, Isa. liiii. 1, &c., where see the notes. *And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?*—To whom has his power been manifested, so as to conquer those strong prejudices which men have entertained against the appointed method of salvation, or to save whom has it been exerted? Observe, reader, the power of God is only exerted to save those who believe the gospel report. *Therefore, they could not believe*—They were now in a manner utterly incapable of believing, because, 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 the doctrines of our Lord could make any impression upon them. *Because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, &c.*—As God is said to *harden the heart of Pharaoh* in one place, while in another it is said, *Pharaoh hardened his own heart*; (see Exod. viii. 15, 32; ix. 12;) and as we ought to be very tender of ascribing to God any thing that looks like a necessitating influence to impel men to sin, “I apprehend,” says Dr. Doddridge, “that all we are here to understand, by God’s blinding and hardening these Jews, is, that he permitted them to grow more and more prejudiced against the gospel,” namely, by withdrawing from them his abused grace. *Now these things said Esaias, when he saw his glory*—Namely, Christ’s glory. See notes on

A. M. 4037. 42 ¶ Nevertheless, among the chief
A. D. 33. rulers also many believed on him; but

because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue :

43 ^a For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

44 ¶ Jesus cried, and said, ^b He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me :

45 And he ^c that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

46 ^d I am come a light into the world, that

^a Chap. vii. 13; ix. 22.—^b Chap. v. 44.—^c Mark ix. 37; 1 Pet. i. 21.—^d Chap. xiv. 9.—^e Verses 35, 36; Chap. iii. 19; viii. 12; ix. 5, 39.

Isa. vi. 1, &c., where the glory which Isaiah saw is expressly said to be the glory of Jehovah, the supreme God. The meaning is, that Esaias uttered these remarkable words, when, in a vision, he saw the glory of the Son of God, and the manifestations which he was to make of the divine counsels, and described the effect which those manifestations would have upon his hearers, for which reason they are a prophetic description of the men of the age in which Jesus lived.

Verses 42, 43. *Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him*—Though the greater part of those to whom Christ preached rejected him, his sermons were not wholly unsuccessful; for a number of the chief magistrates, and other principal people, believed on him; yet they did not openly profess their faith, fearing they should be excommunicated by the Pharisees, whose party was now very powerful, both in church and state; *for they loved the praise of men more than, &c.*—They durst not face the contempt of their fellow-mortals, even to secure the approbation of their Maker! Such was now the state of things at Jerusalem, and such the effect of Christ's entrance into it, as above related.

Verses 44–50. *Jesus*—On some occasion or other soon after this, in order to strengthen the faith of those timid and diffident disciples (if such they could be called) last mentioned, and to inspire them with courage; *cried*—Or proclaimed, with a loud voice, when, it appears, a considerable number of people were gathered about him; *and said, He that believeth on me*—Really and cordially; *believeth not on me alone, but on him that sent me*—And thereby does honour to the Father himself. As if he had said, My doctrine, declarations, and promises are so evidently from God, that he who believeth on me, may more properly be said to believe on God, by whose authority and whose word I preach. *And he that seeth me*—He that seeth the miracles which I perform, seeth the operation of his power by whom, as man, I act. Or, He that sees me and regards me with a lively faith, *seeth him that sent*

whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, ^a I judge him not: for ^b I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 ^c He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: ^d the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For ^e I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, ^f what I should say, and what I should speak.

^a Chap. v. 45; viii. 15, 26.—^b Chap. iii. 17.—^c Luke x. 16. ^d Deut. xviii. 19; Mark xvi. 16.—^e Chap. viii. 38; xiv. 10. ^f Deut. xviii. 18.

me—As the perfections of the Father are displayed in me: whereas, he that shuts his eyes against me, excludes the only means of being brought to the true knowledge of the Father. *I am come a light into the world*—I am the Sun of righteousness, whose beams dispel the darkness of ignorance, folly, and sin, in which men are involved, and am come to deliver all who believe on me out of that darkness. *And if any man hear my words*—Which I am so frequently and continually speaking; *and yet believe not, I judge him not*—Rather, I condemn him not; *for I came not*—I am not at present come; *to judge (to condemn) the world*—Or to perform any work of wrath and terror, whatever ill usage I may meet with in it; *but the design of my present appearance is mild, kind, and gracious, and I am come to save the world*—And make its inhabitants happy, in time and in eternity, if they will be so wise as to hearken to the proposals I offer. See! Christ came to save even those that finally perish! Even they are a part of that world which he lived and died to save. *He that rejecteth me, &c., hath one that judgeth him*—But though I shall not now execute judgment upon those who hear my doctrine and do not believe and obey it, nevertheless they shall not pass unpunished. *The word that I have spoken shall judge, &c.*—For the doctrine which I have preached shall bear witness against them at the day of judgment; and because it has aggravated their sin, it shall heighten their punishment. *For I have not spoken of myself*—Either on my own motion, or on any precarious conclusions, drawn from principles divinely taught; *but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment*—Gave me ample instructions; *what I should say, and what I should speak*—Two words signifying the same thing. The Old Testament prophets sometimes spoke of themselves, but Christ spake by the Holy Spirit at all times. God the Father gave him, 1st, His commission; he sent him, as his agent and plenipotentiary, to concert matters between him and man; to set on foot a treaty of peace, and to settle the articles thereof. 2d, His in-

A. M. 4037. 50 And I know that his command-
A. D. 33. ment is life everlasting: whatsoever I

say, even as the Father A. M. 4037.
said unto me, so I speak. A. D. 33.

structions; which are here called a commandment; for they were like those given to an ambassador, directing him not only what he *may* say, but what he *must* say. The Messenger of the covenant was intrusted with a message which it was necessary he should deliver. Christ, as *Son of man*, did not speak that which was of human device or contrivance; and, as *Son of God*, he did not act separately from, but in perfect union with, his eternal Father. Observe, reader, our Lord Jesus, *though he were a Son*, learned obedience himself before he taught it us. *And I know that his commandment*—Understood, believed, and obeyed; *is life everlasting*—That is, is the way to it, and the beginning of it. *Whatsoever I speak, therefore*—Whatsoever I declare in my doctrine to those that hear me; *even as the Father said unto me, so I speak*—I alter

nothing in the message which he has sent me to deliver. In other words, because I am sensible that the doctrines and precepts which the Father hath commanded me to declare, are the only conditions of eternal life, and that it depends upon the knowledge and observance of them; therefore I have proposed them with the greatest faithfulness, plainness, and confidence. Hence I am worthy of credit; both in respect of my commission, and in respect of the fidelity with which I have executed it. So that the doctrine which I preach should be received as coming from the Father, and you should consider that by rejecting it you will be guilty of despising his authority. Thus, what is contained in this last paragraph appears to be, with St. John, the epilogue of our Lord's public discourses, and a kind of recapitulation of them.

CHAPTER XIII.

Jesus having finished his public discourses, here at the passover-supper, (1.) Washes his disciples' feet, to set them an example of humility and brotherly love, 1-17. (2.) Foretels who should betray him, 18-30. (3.) Speaks of his glorification as at hand, and enjoins his disciples to love one another, 31-35. (4.) Foretels Peter's denial of him, 36-38.

A. M. 4037. NOW ^a before the feast of the
A. D. 33. passover, when Jesus knew that ^bhis hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father,

having loved his own which were A. M. 4037.
in the world, he loved them unto A. D. 33.
the end.

2 And supper being ended, (^c the devil having

^a Matt. xxvi. 2.—^b Chap. xii. 23; xvii. 1, 11.

^c Luke xxii. 3; Verse 27.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verse 1. *Now before the feast of the passover*—That is, before they began the passover-supper; *when Jesus knew*—Greek, *εἰδὼς ἴσως*, *Jesus having known*; *that his hour was come*—The hour which he had long expected; sometimes called his enemies' hour, the hour of their triumph; sometimes his hour, the hour of his suffering, and of his triumph also; *that he should depart out of this world*—In which he had sojourned for a while; *unto the Father*—With whom he had glory, and who had loved him, *before the world was*, chapter xvii. 5, 24. *Having loved his own*—Not *τα ἴδια*, *his own things*, as chapter i. 11; but *τὰς ἰδίαις*, *his own persons*; that is, as the expression here means, his apostles; *which were in the world*—Which were to remain for some time in the world, in a state of trial and suffering, after he was taken from them; *he loved them unto the end*—Of his life; and therefore would omit nothing which might be for their advantage. The sense is, that although he knew his own sufferings were at hand, the prospect of them did not make him forget his disciples.

They rather quickened his friendship; for he indulged the tenderest feelings of love on this occasion, and after the manner of a departing friend, expressed his kindness in the most affectionate manner.

Verse 2. *And supper being ended*—Or, as *δειπνῶ γενομένῃ* should rather be translated, *supper*, or *supper-time*, *being come*, or, *while they were at supper*, as Dr. Campbell renders it. Thus, John xxi. 4, *πρωίας γενομένης*, *when morning was come*. Acts xii. 18, and xvi. 35, *ἡμερας γενομένης*, *when day was come*; and Acts xxi. 40, *σιγῆς λεγομένης*, *when silence was made*: in all which places, and in many more, which might easily be collected from the Greek writers, it would be absurd to translate the word, *ended*. "When *γενομένης*," says Dr. Campbell, "is joined with *πρωίας*, *οψίας*, *ἡμερας*, or with any term denoting a precise portion of time, it invariably signifies that the period denoted by the noun is begun, not ended." Of this he produces several incontrovertible examples. "That this was the passover-supper, may be proved by four arguments: 1st, In John's history of this supper we are told, when Jesus

A. M. 4037. now put into the heart of Judas Isca-
A. D. 33. riot, Simon's son, to betray him,)

3 Jesus knowing ^d that the Father had given all things into his hands, and ^e that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 ^f He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

^d Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18; Chap. iii. 35; xvii. 2; Acts ii. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 27; Heb. ii. 8.

had washed the disciples' feet he sat down again at table, and explained the meaning of the action, verse 12; and then declared that one of them should betray him, verses 18-21. This occasioned the beloved disciple first, and after him the other disciples, to inquire which of them should do the horrid deed, verse 23. But, by the consent of all the evangelists, that declaration and inquiry were first made while they were eating the last passover. 2d, At this supper, mentioned by John, Jesus declared that Peter should deny him, verse 38; and the words of his declaration are not, *The cock shall not crow the next, the third, or the fourth day, but, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.* therefore the declaration must have been made on the night of the denial; and consequently the supper, at which it was made, must have been the paschal-supper, for all the evangelists agree that Peter denied his Master the night in which that supper was celebrated. 3d, The connection in which John's supper stands with the subsequent facts mentioned by him shows plainly that it was the paschal-supper. For the discourse, (John xiv,) being intended to give the disciples consolation, was delivered by Christ immediately after he had foretold Peter's denial, and the cowardice of the rest. Having ended that discourse, Jesus went out of the house, (John xiv. 31,) and delivered the allegorical sermon, (John xv,) which, from the subject of it, seems to have been preached in a place where there were many vines growing, probably on the mount of Olives, whither, as the other evangelists inform us, he retired after the paschal-supper. Immediately after the allegorical sermon, he spake that which is contained in the xvith and xviiith chapters, and then went with his disciples over the brook Cedron, into the garden of Gethsemane, where he was apprehended. From this series of facts it appears, that the supper was the paschal-supper, because, between it and Jesus's crucifixion, there is not the least chasm in John's history, where the passover can be brought in. 4th, We are told, (chap. xiii. 27-30,) that after Jesus had ordered Judas to do quickly what he was about to do, he went out; upon which Jesus mentioned the near prospect he had of being glorified, to intimate that he knew Judas was gone out to betray him. From this time forth there is nothing said of Judas by John till he appeared with the armed band. Nevertheless, by the accounts of the other evangelists, Judas was present at the institution of the sacrament of the supper, after the passover. Where-

5 After that, he poureth water into A. M. 4037. a basin, and began to wash the disci- A. D. 33. ples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and ¹ Peter saith unto him, Lord, ² dost thou wash my feet?

¹ Chap. viii. 42; xvi. 28.—^f Luke xxii. 27; Phil. ii. 7, 8. ² Gr. *he.*—^g Matt. iii. 14.

fore the passover being celebrated before Judas went out, the supper mentioned by John must have been that solemnity."—Macknight. *The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas to betray him—* By this version the English reader would be led to apprehend, that it was at this paschal-supper that the devil first tempted Judas to betray Christ: but the original expression may be properly rendered, *the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas, &c.,* for the participle *βεβηγκος* is of the perfect tense, and denotes an action done at some time past, and the particle *ηδη*, rendered *now*, often signifies *already, or before*: so that what Christ says here concerning Judas, may refer to what had passed between him and the chief priests, after the reproof given him in the supper at Bethany. And therefore when John says afterward, (verse 27,) that after the sop was given him, Satan entered into Judas, the meaning must be, that he was then again incited by the devil to execute the treachery which he had before resolved upon, by a like instigation of the same evil spirit.

Verses 3-6. *Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, &c.*—That is, although he was conscious of his own greatness, as being invested with the government of all things, and as having existed in heaven before he appeared on earth, and as being sure of returning to heaven again to reign there; yet he humbled himself in the manner here related, descended to the mean office of a slave, and washed the feet of his own disciples; an action which might justly excite our wonder, if we had not proofs of his much greater humiliation, in making himself of no reputation for the great work of man's redemption. *He riseth from supper*—This implies, that in some sense supper was begun. Probably the antepast had been taken, which is mentioned by the Jews as preceding the eating of the paschal lamb, and they tell us, that it was then usual for the master of the family to wash his hands, a custom which, it is said, the Jews continue still. *And laid aside his garments*—Namely, his upper garments, which would have hindered him. *After that, he poureth water into a basin*—A large vessel, usually placed for this very purpose wherever the Jews supped. *Then cometh he to Simon Peter*—Namely, after he had washed the feet of those who sat nearest to him; and *Peter saith, Lord, dost thou wash*—Dost thou purpose, or go about to wash; *my feet?*—Thou who art the Son of God, the Messiah, and consequently

A. M. 4037. 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, A. D. 33. What I do thou knowest not now ;

^b but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, ⁱ If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean

^b Verse 12.—ⁱ Chap. iii. 5 ; 1 Cor. vi. 11 ; Eph. v. 26 ; Tit. iii. 5 ; Heb. x. 22.—^h Chap. xv. 3.

the king of the Jews, shalt thou wash my feet, who am thy disciple, a poor fisherman, and, what is still more degrading, an unworthy sinner.

Verses 7-11. *Jesus said, What I do thou knowest not now*—Thou dost not now know what I intend by this action, but thou shalt know hereafter, a declaration which we may apply on many occasions, for many of his works (whether of creation, providence, or grace) are now great mysteries to us, and known to us, either not at all, or very imperfectly. It is sufficient that we can love and obey now, and that we shall know hereafter what now appears mysterious to us, and what we cannot comprehend. *Peter saith, Thou shalt never wash my feet*—Words rashly and sinfully spoken. *Jesus answered*—And by his answer caused him to change his mind, and retract what he had uttered ; for when the mistake of his understanding was rectified, the corrupt resolution of his will was soon altered. *Jesus answered, 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 the clause may mean, If I do not wash thee from the guilt of thy past sins in my blood, and purify thee from the power and pollution of sin, and all the depravity of thy mind and heart by my Spirit, thou canst have no communion with me, nor any share in the blessings of my kingdom. *Peter saith, Lord, not my feet only, &c.*—Being now convinced that he had spoken rashly, and that the washing intended was an act of Christ's authority and grace, he readily consents to it, having before refused it, because it seemed only to be an act of Christ's humiliation. As if he had said, Lord, if this washing be necessary, in order to my having a part with thee, and be an emblem, or token thereof, I most gladly acquiesce in it, and am not only heartily willing, but desirous, that thou shouldst wash my whole person, *not my feet only*, or the defilement I may contract while I am endeavouring to walk in the way of duty, but all my executive and intellectual powers ; yea, that I may be sanctified throughout, body, soul, and spirit, and that my whole man may be dedicated to, and employed in, thy service. *Jesus*—Willing to lay hold on an expression which gave him an opportunity of pursuing a useful thought ; *saith to him further, He that is washed*—Greek, *λελυμένος*, *he that hath been bathed*, whose whole body hath been washed in

every whit : and ^h ye are clean, but A. M. 4037. not all. A. D. 33.

11 For ⁱ he knew who should betray him : therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you ?

13 ^m Ye call me Master and Lord : and ye say well ; for so I am.

ⁱ Chap. vi. 64.—^m Matt. xxiii. 8, 10 ; Luke vi. 46 ; 1 Cor. viii. 6 ; xii. 3 ; Phil. ii. 11.

water ; *needeth not*—After that, to wash any part thereof, except *his feet*—Which, in coming out of the bath, may have been defiled. As the *αποδύτηριον*, says Clarius, or room in which they dressed themselves after bathing, was different from that in which they bathed, their feet might be so soiled in walking from one to the other, as to make it necessary immediately to wash them again. Or, as Dr. Campbell thinks, there may be “an allusion in the words to the custom of the times ; according to which, those who had been invited to a feast, bathed themselves before they went ; but, as they walked commonly in sandals, and wore no stockings, it was usual to get their feet washed by the servants of the family, before they laid themselves on the couches. Their feet, which would be soiled by walking, required cleaning, though the rest of their body did not.” The spiritual meaning of our Lord's words evidently is, that persons truly converted, that is, justified and regenerated, do not, after this, unless they fall from grace, stand in need of experiencing an entire change of their state and nature ; but only to cleanse themselves by renewed acts of repentance and faith, from the smaller pollutions which they may inadvertently contract, through infirmity and carelessness, and which, in some degree, are inseparable from the weakness of human nature. For that our Lord spake of a spiritual washing, is evident from his adding, *and ye are clean, but not all*—Ye are accepted as sincere and upright, as penitent and believing, and therefore as pardoned and renewed sinners, but you are not all such. *For he knew who should betray him*—He was perfectly acquainted with the secret dispositions of their hearts, and with the hypocrisy and wickedness of the traitor, that his heart was polluted with reigning sin, yea, and was so far enslaved to the power of Satan, as to have consented to the perpetration of one of the vilest acts of wickedness ever committed.

Verses 12-15. *So after he had washed their feet, &c.*—After he had given them such a striking proof of his humility, condescension, and love, by performing to them the office of the meanest slave ; *he said, Know ye what I have done to you ?*—Know ye the meaning of what I have done ? for the action was emblematical. *Ye call me Master, and Lord*—Ο διδασκαλος και ο κυριος, *the master, or teacher, and the Lord*. “The article prefixed to each appellation,

A. M. 4037. 14 ^a If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ^o ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For ^p I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 ^q Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 ^r If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

18 [¶] I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ^s He that eateth bread with

^a Luke xxii. 27.—^o Rom. xii. 10; Gal. vi. 1, 2; 1 Pet. v. 5.—^p Matt. xi. 29; Phil. ii. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 21; 1 John ii. 6. ^q Matt. x. 24; Luke vi. 40; Chap. xv. 20.—^r James i. 25. ^s Psa. xli. 9; Matt. xxvi. 23; Verse 21.

and the nominative case employed, where in common language it would have been the accusative, give great energy to the expression, and show that the words are applied to Jesus in a sense entirely peculiar.—Campbell. *And ye say well*—I am really what you call me, being the Son of God, and Saviour of the world. *If I, then, your Lord, &c., have washed your feet*—Have condescended to so mean an office, and in all other instances have shown my readiness in love to serve you; *ye also ought 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 their 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, 1st, In every possible way to assist each other in attaining that purity. 2d, 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. *For I have given you an example that ye should do*—On all proper occasions to one another; *as I have done to you*—As if he had said, I have set you a pattern of humility, to recommend it to you: and it must be acknowledged that nothing shows us more effectually the necessity of this grace, than its being recommended to us by so high an example; a recommendation which, in the present circumstances, was peculiarly seasonable, for the disciples having heard Jesus say that the kingdom of God was at hand, (Luke xxii. 18,) their minds were so fired with ambitious passions, that, before they arose from supper, they fell into a hot contention about sharing the principal posts in the kingdom.

Verses 16-20. *Verily, the servant is not greater than his lord*—And therefore ought not to think much either of doing or suffering the same things. *If ye know these things*—Therefore, knowing your duty in this particular, ye are happy if you practise it. *I speak not of you all*—When I call you happy;

me, hath lifted up his heel against me. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

19 ^t Now ^u I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

20 ^v Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

21 ^w When Jesus had thus said, ^x he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ^y one of you shall betray me.

^t Chap. xiv. 29; xvi. 4.—^u Or, *from henceforth*.—^v Matt. x. 40; xxv. 40; Luke x. 16.—^w Matt. xxvi. 21; Mark xiv. 18; Luke xxii. 21.—^x Chap. xii. 27.—^y Acts i. 17; 1 John ii. 19.

nor do I expect that all of you will hearken to me; *I know whom I have chosen*—I know there is one among you whom no instruction will profit, and that I should have called such a one to the apostleship need not surprise any of you, for I was well acquainted with the dispositions of each of you when I made choice of you, and did not make choice of a traitor to be my apostle through ignorance of his character; *but that the Scripture may be fulfilled*—Particularly Psa. xli. 9; *He that eateth bread with me*—And has been nourished by my care and favour; *hath lifted up his heel against me*—Like an ungrateful brute, that kicks at the kind master who feeds him. Such treatment David met with from those whom he trusted, and such I know that I am to expect. *Now I tell you before it come*—I give you this intimation before I am betrayed; *that when it is come to pass*—That when what I thus foretel is accomplished, you may be so far from doubting of the truth of my mission on that account, that, on the contrary, you may more firmly believe that I am *he*—That I told you I was, even the true Messiah. *Verily, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me*—I put my own honour upon you, my ambassadors; and assure you that he who receives in faith, love, and obedience, the doctrine of you my apostles, or of any other messengers whom I send to preach the word of eternal life, receives mine, and he who receives mine, receives that of him who sent me. Whatsoever therefore I shall suffer, let not your zeal to carry on my cause be lessened, but steadfastly persevere in your adherence to it, with a firm persuasion that I will support you in it; for in this view I look upon your interest as my own. See on Matt. x. 40; Luke x. 16.

Verses 21, 22. *When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit*—To think of so ungrateful and impious a design in one so near him, and so much obliged to him; *and testified*—As they sat together, and were eating the paschal-supper, Mark xiv. 18; *Verily, one of you shall betray me*—Verily, how incredible soever what I now say may appear to

A. M. 4037. 22 Then the disciples looked one
A. D. 33. on another, doubting of whom he
spake.

23 Now ^a there was leaning on Jesus's bosom,
one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him
that he should ask who it should be of whom
he spake.

25 He then, lying on Jesus's breast, saith unto
him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall
give a ³sop, when I have dipped it. And

^a Chap. xix. 26; xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20, 24.—³ Or, morsel.

you, *one of you*, who is eating with me in this friendly and intimate manner; even one of you, my apostles and constant followers, shall, or will betray me, to those that thirst for my blood. None, indeed, could be said to betray him but those in whom he reposed confidence, and were the witnesses of his retirement. This did not lay Judas under any fatal necessity of committing the sin here spoken of; for though the event followed according to the prediction, yet it was not caused by the prediction, but would have equally happened if no such prediction had been uttered. Our Lord's speaking thus indefinitely at first, and only saying, *one of you*, was profitable to them all, as leading them all seriously to examine themselves. *Then the disciples looked one on another*—For some time, in silence, and with great astonishment; *doubting of whom he spake*—And studious to observe in whose countenance they might read any peculiar confusion, which might look like an indication of guilt.

Verses 23-26. *There was leaning on Jesus's bosom*—That is, sitting next to him at table. This phrase only expresses the then customary posture at meals, where the guests all leaned sideways 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*—This was John, the memory of whose sweet disposition, and other amiable qualities, is perpetuated in the peculiar love which Jesus bore to him. He always 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. *Simon Peter, therefore*—Not daring to ask Jesus himself; *beckoned to him*—The word *vevei*, thus rendered, might be more exactly translated, *nodded*, namely, he intimated his desire by a motion of his head; *that he should ask him privately who it should be*—Peter was probably desirous to know, not only that he might be sure it was not himself, but that, knowing who it was, he and the other disciples might withdraw from him, and guard against him, as also, if possible, prevent his design. It may appear to us a desirable thing to know who, in the church, will deceive us, yet let this suffice: Christ knows, though we do not. *He then, lying on Jesus's breast*—That

when he had dipped the sop, he gave ^a it to Judas Iscariot *the son of Simon*.
A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

27 ^b And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

29 For some of them thought, because ^c Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

^b Luke xxii. 3; Chap. vi. 70.—^c Chap. xii. 6.

is, leaning backward, and secretly whispering; *saith, Lord, who is it?* *Jesus answered*—In his ear: so careful was he not to offend (if it had been possible) even Judas himself; *He it is to whom I shall give a sop*—Το ψωμιον, the sop, which he took up while he was speaking; *and when he had dipped the sop*—In a thick kind of sauce made of dates, raisins, and other ingredients beaten together and properly diluted; *he gave it to Judas Iscariot*—Who took it readily enough, not suspecting the design of Christ's giving it to him. See note on Matt. xxvi. 20-25. The Jews still retain the use of such a sauce, which they call *haroseth*, made of such kind of ingredients, about the consistence of mortar, to represent the clay in which their forefathers wrought while they were under bondage to the Egyptians.

Verses 27-30. *And after the sop Satan entered into him*—More fully; "non secundum substantiam," says Jerome, "sed secundum operationem," *not as to his substance, but as to his operation*; as he is said to do when man's will is fully inclined to obey his motions. *Then said Jesus, That 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. *No man at the table knew why he said this*—That is, none except John and Judas, for John does not here include himself, but speaks of the other disciples; for though they could know nothing of the matter, in all probability he must have comprehended the meaning of Christ's words to the traitor. *Some thought because Judas had the bag*—Had the keeping of the common purse, on which they were to subsist during their stay at Jerusalem; *that Jesus had said, Buy that which we have need of against the feast*—That is, the seven ensuing days of the feast; *or that he should give something to the poor*—These meanings were what first occurred to the disciples. But being in great perplexity on account of his declaration concerning the treachery of one of their number, they did not think much upon what he now said to Judas. The declaration which engrossed their attention had not pointed at any of them in particular, and the discovery of the

A. M. 4037. 30 He then, having received the
A. D. 33. sop, went immediately out: and it
was night.

31 ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus
said, ^d Now is the Son of man glorified, and
^e God is glorified in him.

32 ^f If God be glorified in him, God shall
also glorify him in himself, and ^g shall straight-
way glorify him.

^d Chapter xii. 23.—^e Chapter xiv. 13; 1 Peter iv. 11.
^f Chapter xvii. 1, 4-6.—^g Chapter xii. 23.—^h Chapter vii.
34; viii. 21.

person was made to John only. They were there-
fore swallowed up in grief, and each of them would
fain have cleared himself, inquiring of Jesus, *one by
one, Lord, is it I?* Matt. xxvi. 22; Mark xiv. 19.
Judas himself even, conscious as he was of his guilty
purpose, also inquiring, with unparalleled impudence,
Master, is it I? He then, having received the sop—
With the awful words of his Master (giving him to
know that his intentions were not concealed) sound-
ing, as it were, in his ears; *went immediately out*—To
the chief priests, or, *went out soon*, without any further
reply, as *εὐθὺς*, here rendered *immediately*, some-
times signifies: for it seems he stayed till the Lord's
supper was instituted: being so utterly abandoned as
to be capable of committing his intended horrible
crime, even with this aggravation; *and it was night*
—Which was the time he had appointed to meet
those who were consulting how to execute their pur-
pose against the life of Jesus, and under the cover of
it he went to them, and fulfilled his engagement in a
little time, by delivering his Master into their hands.

Verses 31, 32. *When he was gone out*—Having
quitted the place in a mixture of rage and confusion,
as being marked out both by Christ's actions and
words; *Jesus said*—To the rest of the disciples, as
they sat at the table with him; *Now*—While I speak
this; *is the Son of man glorified*—Or, is just on the
point of being glorified; *and God is glorified in
him*—Or, is about to be immediately glorified by the
signal and extraordinary circumstances of his abase-
ment and exaltation. And *if God be glorified, &c.*
—Or, as *εἰ ο θεος εδοξασθη* may be rendered, *seeing
God is glorified in him; God shall also glorify
him, &c.*—That is, Seeing that he has already done
great honour to God by the past actions of his life,
and is about to honour him yet further by his suffer-
ings and death, which will display the divine perfec-
tions, particularly God's infinite love to men, in the
most astonishing and amiable light; he is, in his turn,
to receive glory from God; meaning, that in his
human nature he was to be exalted to the highest
dignity and power, or, as he himself expresses it,
(Matt. xxviii. 18,) *to all power, or authority, in
heaven and in earth*; and that his mission from God
was immediately to be supported by irrefragable
attestations.

Verses 33, 34. *Little children*—An expression in-
tended to signify both their weakness and his tenderness
and compassion; as if he had said, Ye whom

33 Little children, yet a little while
I am with you. Ye shall seek me; A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

^b and, as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go,
ye cannot come, so now I say to you.

34 ⁱ A new commandment I give unto you,
That ye love one another; as I have loved
you, that ye also love one another.

35 ^k By this shall all men know that ye are
my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

ⁱ Lev. xix. 18; Chap. xv. 12, 17; Eph. v. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 9;
James ii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 22; 1 John ii. 7, 8; iii. 11, 23; iv. 21.
^k 1 John ii. 5; iv. 20.

I love with parental tenderness, and whom my heart
pities under all your trials and sorrows; *yet a little
while, &c.*—That is, It is but a very little while longer
that *I am to continue with you*: a few hours more will
part us; and *ye shall seek me*—Shall wish for my
presence and converse when I am gone; *and as I
said to the Jews*, (see chap. vii. 34, and viii. 21,) *Whither
I go ye cannot come*—Not yet, being not yet
prepared for it. *A new commandment*—As if he
had said, But observe my parting words, and let them
be written on your very hearts; for I give you what
I may properly call *a new commandment*, enjoin-
ing a higher degree of mutual love than has gener-
ally been possessed and manifested among pious
people to each other; a command which I press
upon you by new motives, and a new example, and
which from henceforth I would have you to con-
sider as confirmed by a new sanction, and to keep
ever fresh in your memories. The expression,
which, says Dr. Doddridge, “signifies much more
than merely *a renewed command*, is a strong and
lively intimation, that the engagements to mutual
love, peculiar in the Christian dispensation, are so
singular and so cogent, that all other men, when
compared with its votaries, may seem un instructed
in the school of friendship, and Jesus may appear,
as it were, the first professor of that divine science.”
“He called this a new commandment,” observes
Dr. Macknight, “not because mutual love had never
been enjoined on mankind before, but because it was
a precept of peculiar excellence, for the word *new*
in the Hebrew language [often] denotes *excellence
and truth*, as appears from *Psa. xxxiii. 3; Mark i.
27; Rev. ii. 17*; and because they were to exercise
it under a *new relation*, according to a new measure,
and from *new motives*. They were to love one
another in the relation of his disciples, and with that
degree of love which he had shown to them, for they
were to lay down their lives for the brethren,
1 John iii. 16. Withal they were to love from the
consideration of his love, and in order to prove
themselves his genuine disciples, by the warmth of
their mutual affection.” So also Dr. Campbell:
“Our Lord, by this, warns his disciples against
taking for their model any example of affection
whereunto the age could furnish them; or, indeed,
any example less than the love which he all along,
especially in his death, manifested for them.”

Verse 35. *By this shall all men know that you are*

A. M. 4037. 36 ¶ Simon Peter said unto him, A. D. 33. Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but 'thou shalt follow me afterward.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I

1 Chap. xxi. 18; 2 Pet. i. 14.

my disciples—Your loving one another sincerely and fervently, and in the manner and degree I now enjoin, will be the most acceptable and the most ornamental token of your relation to me, and the noblest badge of your profession. The reader will not need to be told how remarkably this new precept of our Lord was exemplified in the spirit and conduct of the first Christians, when he recollects their historian has attested, (Acts iv. 32,) that though they were a great multitude, consisting of many thousands, they were all of one heart and of one soul; inasmuch that not any of them accounted any of the things which he possessed as his own, but they had all things in common. And the ancient apologists for Christianity inform us, that the persecuting heathen themselves could not help exclaiming in rapture, on observing the prevalence of this grace among them, *See how these Christians love one another!*

Verses 36–38. *Simon Peter saith, Lord, whither goest thou, &c.*—The exalted virtue which our Lord had just inculcated, did not make so strong an impression on Peter's mind, as the words which he had before spoken, concerning his going away to a place where his disciples could not come. He therefore replies by thus asking whither he was going. He seems to have supposed that Christ, in consequence of being rejected by the Jews, was about to go to some other part of the earth to erect his throne, where he might reign without disturbance, according to the gross notion which he had of Christ's kingdom. *Jesus answered, Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, &c.*—Thou art too weak at present to follow me in my sufferings: but thou shalt be

follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. A. M. 4037 A. D. 33.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

2 Matt. xxvi. 33–35; Mark xiv. 29–31; Luke xxii. 33, 34.

enabled to do it afterward. From this clause "we gather that the declaration, (verse 33,) *Whither I go ye cannot come*, is one of those general propositions whereof there are many in Scripture, which were spoken with a limitation not expressed. Here we are directed to add the limitation, thus, *Whither I go ye cannot come* now. For they were all, equally with Peter, to follow Jesus afterward, by suffering a violent death."—Macknight. *Peter said, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?*—He was very unwilling to believe that he was so weak as Christ's words intimated he was. He thought he was prepared to do or suffer any thing for his dear Master; adding, *I will lay down my life for thy sake*—As if he had said, Is there any road more terrible than the dark valley of the shadow of death? Yet through these black and gloomy shades I am willing to accompany thee this moment. *Jesus answered, Wilt thou lay down thy life, &c.*—Alas! Peter, thy promises are too large, and uttered with too much confidence to be relied on: thou dost not consider with what reluctance life is parted with, and what a hard task it is to suffer death. *Verily, the cock shall not crow, &c.*—Notwithstanding thy pretended affection and fortitude, a few hours shall not pass till, in great consternation at the danger with which I and my disciples will be threatened, thou shalt basely deny three several times that thou art my disciple. Peter, therefore, had no reason to be elated, though on a former occasion he had confessed Jesus to be the Son of God. And his behaviour, in this instance, affords a very affecting example of human vanity, in the midst of the greatest weakness.

CHAPTER XIV.

In this chapter Christ comforts his disciples and followers, (1.) With views of heaven as their everlasting rest, 1–3. (2.) With a representation of himself, as their way to it, and their Divine Mediator, 4–11. (3.) With promises of great power to be conferred upon them in answer to their prayers, addressed to the Father in his name, 12–14. (4.) With promises of the indwelling of his Spirit, and of fellowship with himself and his Father, to be conferred on those that should show the love they already had to him by keeping his commandments, 15–24. (5.) With promises of peculiar instructions and directions from the Holy Spirit, and much spiritual peace even on earth, 25–27. (6.) With assurances that his departure from them, in order to his return to the Father, was to him a source of consolation, as it ought also to be to them, 28–31.

A. M. 4037. **L**ET* not* your heart be troubled: ye
A. D. 33. believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions :
if *it were not so*, I would have told you. ^b I go
to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, ^c I
will come again and receive you unto myself ;
that ^d where I am, *there* ye may be also.

* St. Philip and St. James's Day, gospel, verse 1 to verse 15.
• Verse 27 ; Chap. xvi. 3, 22.—^b Chap. xiii. 33, 36.—^c Verses
18, 28 ; Acts i. 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Verse 1. *Let not your hearts be troubled*—At the thoughts of my departure from you, and leaving you in a world where you are likely to meet with many temptations, trials, and troubles, and to become a helpless prey to the rage and power of your enemies. *Ye believe in God*—The Almighty Preserver and Governor of the universe, who is able to support you under, and deliver you out of, all your distresses ; *believe also in me*—Who am sent by God, not only to teach, but to redeem and save you ; and who can both protect you from evil, and reward you abundantly for whatever losses and sufferings you sustain on my account. But the original words, *πιστευετε εις τον Θεον και εις εμε πιστευετε*, it seems, ought rather to be rendered, *Believe in God, believe also in me* ; that is, Confide in the being, perfections, and superintending providence of God : or, Rely on the great acknowledged principles of natural religion, that the glorious Maker and Governor of the world is most wise, mighty, holy, just, and good, and the sovereign disposer of all events ; and comfort yourselves likewise with the peculiar doctrines of that holy religion which I have taught you. Or, as Dr. Doddridge interprets the clause, "*Believe in God, the Almighty Guardian of his faithful servants, who has made such glorious promises to prosper and succeed the cause in which you are engaged ; and believe also in me, as the promised Messiah, who, whether present or absent in body, shall always be mindful of your concerns, as well as ever able to help you.*" It appears most natural, as he justly observes, to render the same word, *πιστευετε*, alike in both places ; and it is certain an exhortation to faith in God and in Christ would be very seasonable, considering how weak and defective their faith was. Thus Dr. Campbell : "The two clauses are so similarly expressed and linked together by the copulative [*και, and, or also*] that it is, I suspect, unprecedented, to make the verb in one an indicative, and the same verb repeated in the other an imperative. The simple and natural way is, to render similarly what is similarly expressed : nor ought this rule ever to be departed from, unless something absurd or incongruous should follow from the observance of it, which is so far from being the case here, that by rendering both in the imperative, the sense is not only good, but apposite."

Verses 2-4. *In my Father's house*—From whence

4 And whither I go ye know, and A. M. 4037
the way ye know. A. D. 33.

5 ¶ Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know
not whither thou goest ; and how can we know
the way ?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am ^e the way, and
^f the truth, and ^g the life : ^h no man cometh unto
the Father, but by me.

^d Chap. xii. 26 ; xvii. 24 ; 1 Thess. iv. 17.—^e Hebrews
ix. 8.—^f Chapter i. 17 ; viii. 32.—^g Chapter i. 4 ; xi. 25.
^h Chapter x. 9.

I came, whither I am going, and to which place I am conducting you ; *are many mansions*—Or apartments (he alludes to the palaces of kings) sufficient to receive the holy angels, your predecessors in the faith, and all that now believe, or shall hereafter believe, even a great multitude, which no man can number. Our Lord means by the expression, different states of felicity in which men shall be placed, according to their progress in faith and holiness. *If it were not so*—If there were no state of felicity hereafter, into which good men are to be received at death, I would have told you so, and not have permitted you to impose upon yourselves by a vain expectation of what shall never exist ; much less would I have said so much as I have done to confirm that expectation : but as it is in itself a glorious reality, so I am now going, not only to receive my own reward, but to prepare a place for you there. By passing into the heavens, as your great High-Priest, through the merit of my sacrifice, and by appearing in the presence of God as your Advocate and Intercessor, I shall procure for you an entrance into that place, which otherwise would have been inaccessible to you. *And if I then go and prepare a place for you*—You may depend upon it that this preparation shall not be in vain ; but that *I will* certainly act so consistent a part as to *come again and receive you to myself, that where I am*—And shall for ever be ; *ye*—After a short separation ; *may be also*—To dwell for ever with me, and partake in my felicity. *And*—Surely I may say in the general, after all the instructions I have given you ; that *whither I go ye know, &c.*—That ye cannot but know the place to which I am going, and the way that leads to it ; for I have told you both plainly enough.

Verses 5, 6. *Thomas saith*—Taking him in a gross sense ; *Lord, we know not whither thou goest*—"As their thoughts turned very much on a temporal kingdom, they might imagine that their Master intended to remove to some splendid palace on earth, which he was to prepare for their reception, making it the seat of his court." *Jesus saith, I am the way, the truth, and the life*—Christ was his own way to the Father, inasmuch as *by his own blood he entered into the holy place*, Heb. ix. 12 ; and he is our way, in that we enter by him. By his doctrine and example he teaches us our duty ; by his merit and intercession he procures for us our happiness ; and in these respects he is the way. In him God and man

A. M. 4037. 7 ¹ If ye had known me, ye should
A. D. 33. have known my Father also: and
from henceforth ye know him, and have seen
him.

8 ¶ Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the
Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long
time with you, and yet hast thou not known me,
Philip? ^h he that hath seen me, hath seen the

^h Chapter viii. 12.—^k Chapter xii. 45; Colossians i. 15;
Hebrews i. 3.

meet and are brought together, and by him a way of
intercourse is appointed and kept up between heaven
and earth; our prayers ascend to God, and his
blessings descend to us by him. He is *the truth*, 1st,
As truth is opposed to figure and emblem: he is the
substance of all the Old Testament types and shadows,
which are therefore said to be *figures of the true*
things. He is the true manna, (chap. vi. 32),
the true tabernacle, Heb. viii. 2. 2d, As truth is
opposed to falsehood and error, the doctrine of Christ
is infallibly true doctrine; *the truth as it is in Jesus*.
3d, As truth is opposed to fallacy and deceit; he is
true and faithful to all that trust in him, and will as-
suredly make good all his declarations and promises,
2 Cor. i. 20. He is *the life*, for we are made alive
unto God here, and brought to eternal life hereafter,
only in and through him, who is *the resurrection*
and *the life*, Rom. vi. 11. For as God hath given to
believers eternal life, this life is in his Son, and only
he that hath the Son hath life, John v. 11, 12. *No
man cometh unto the Father but by me*—Fallen man
may, and must come to God as a judge, but cannot
come to him as a *Father*, otherwise than by Christ
as a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; for through
him alone, through his merits and Spirit, his doctrine
and grace, can we be pardoned and renewed, justi-
fied, sanctified, and glorified.

Verse 7. *If ye had known me*—As ye might and
ought to have known me. If ye had earnestly
sought and obtained that knowledge of me which is
communicated by the Spirit of wisdom and revela-
tion, (Eph. i. 17,) ye would *have known my Father
also*—In his various perfections, and in those blessed
relations in which he stands to such as believe on
Christ with a living faith, and are *accepted* through
him, *the beloved*. “If you had had an adequate idea
of my character, from the miracles I have performed,
and from the marks of goodness, justice, and wisdom,
which have manifested themselves in my life and
doctrine; you could not have been ignorant of my
Father; because his attributes are the same.” *And
from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him*—
As it may be truly affirmed, considering the discov-
eries that I have made of him, and the manifestation
of the divine perfections which you have seen in me.

Verses 8-11. *Philip*—One of the apostles, hearing
these words; *saith unto him*—With a pious ardour
becoming his character; *Lord, show us the Father*
—Do but bring us to the sight and enjoyment of him;

Father; and how sayest thou *then*, A. M. 4037
Show us the Father? A. D. 33.

10 Believest thou not that ¹ I am in the Fa-
ther, and the Father in me? the words that I
speak unto you, ^m I speak not of myself: but the
Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and
the Father in me: ⁿ or else believe me for the
very works' sake.

¹ Verse 20; Chap. x. 38; xvii. 21, 23.—^m Chap. v. 19; vii.
16; viii. 28; xii. 49.—ⁿ Chap. v. 36; x. 38.

and it sufficeth us—It is happiness enough for us;
we desire no more, and resign every other hope in
comparison of this. “It is hard to say, whether
Philip as yet understood who the Father was, of
whom his Master spake. If he did, we cannot sup-
pose that he asked a sight of the divine essence,
which in itself is invisible, but, like Moses, he de-
sired to see the inaccessible light wherein God dwells,
it being the symbol of his presence in heaven.”
Jesus saith, Have I been so long time with you—Now
about three years conversing with you in a familiar
manner; *and hast thou not known me, Philip*—In
my person and offices, my spirit and conduct, who I
am, and what I teach and practise? Observe, reader,
the longer we enjoy the means of knowledge and
grace, the more inexcusable we are, if we be found
deficient in grace and knowledge: Christ expects
that our proficiency should be, in some measure, in
proportion to our advantages, and the time that we
have enjoyed them. *He that hath seen me, hath seen
the Father*—For I am the image of the invisible
God; and the wisdom of the Father hath shone forth
in my discourses, his power in my miracles, his hol-
iness in my spotless life, and his mercy, love, and
goodness, in all my tempers, words, and works, and
in all my proceedings day by day. *And how sayest
thou*—What reason hast thou to say; *Show us the
Father?*—As if I had not been showing him continu-
ally, from the time of my first entering upon my
public ministry, to all that had the eyes of their
understanding opened. *Believest thou not*—Dost
thou then call in question what I have before affirmed
expressly; that the *Father is in me, and I in him*,
(chap. x. 38,) by such an intimate union as suffi-
ciently warrants such language as this? *The words
that I speak unto you*—From time to time; *I speak
not of myself*—That is, not merely; and *the Father
that dwelleth in me*—In all his fulness; *he doeth the
works*—Namely, the miraculous works that you
have so often seen, works sufficient to demonstrate
the truth of this assertion, mysterious as it is, and
incredible as it might otherwise seem: for I speak
and act not separate from, but in union with the
Father, with whom I am one in essence and opera-
tion. *Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the
Father in me*—And that there is such a union be-
tween us, that as the Father knows all the thoughts
of the Son, so the Son revealeth to men all the
thoughts of the Father, respecting their salvation;

A. M. 4037. 12 ¶ ° Verily, verily, I say unto you, A. D. 33.

He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13 ° And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

15 ¶ ° * If ye love me, keep my commandments :

° Matt. xxi. 21; Mark xvi. 17; Luke x. 17.—° Matt. vii. 7; xxi. 22; Mark xi. 24; Luke xi. 9; Chap. xv. 7, 16; xvi. 23, 24; James i. 5; 1 John iii. 22; v. 14.—° Verses 21, 23; Chap. xv. 10, 24; 1 John v. 3.

and is vested with his power and authority. This thou must acknowledge, if thou considerest the miracles whereby my mission is established.

Verses 12-14. *Verily, he that believeth on me, &c.*—Having mentioned his miracles, Jesus proceeds to promise, that he would endow his apostles with a power of performing even greater wonders than any they had ever seen him do. He made them this promise to animate them in their work, and that they might not despond in his absence, when they received such tokens of his remembering them, and such proofs of his power with the Father. "How fully," says Macknight, "Jesus performed this promise, is plain from the history of the Acts throughout, particularly chap. v. 15, where we find, that the very shadow of Peter, passing by, cured the sick on whom it fell, and who were laid in the streets for that purpose: also from chap. xix. 12, which informs us, that handkerchiefs and aprons, which had touched the body of Paul, being applied to the sick and possessed, banished both the diseases and the devils. Nor should we, on this occasion, forget the gift of languages bestowed on the apostles, and which they were enabled to communicate unto others. Yet if these miracles are not thought to show greater power than Christ's, we may refer the greatness, whereof he speaks, to the effect which they were to produce on the minds of men. For, in that respect, the apostles' miracles were vastly superior to Christ's; converting more people in one day, than was done by all the miracles that Jesus performed during the course of his ministry. They converted thousands at once, made the gospel to fly like lightning through the world, and beat down every thing that stood in opposition to the faith of their Master." *And whatsoever ye shall ask*—Under the influence of my Spirit, and subservient to the great end of your life and ministry; *that will I do*—Although the promise is here conceived in general terms, yet the subject treated of directs us to understand it especially of miracles wrought in confirmation of the gospel; *that the Father may be glorified in the Son*—Who, when he is ascended up to heaven, will from thence be able to hear and answer prayer, and, even in his most exalted state, will continue to act with that faithful regard to his Father's honour, which he has shown in his humiliation

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever ;

17 *Even* ° the Spirit of truth ; ° whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, ° and shall be in you.

18 ° I will not leave you ° comfortless : ° I will come to you.

* *Whitsunday*, gospel, verse 15, ending in verse 31, at *Arise*. ° Chap. xv. 26; xvi. 7; Romans viii. 15, 26.—° Chapter xv. 26; xvi. 13; 1 John iv. 6.—° 1 Cor. ii. 14.—° 1 John ii. 27. * Matt. xxviii. 20.—° Or, *orphans*.—° Verses 3, 28.

on earth. *If ye ask any thing, &c.*—I repeat it, for the encouragement of your faith and hope, that I will be as affectionate and constant a friend to you in heaven, as I have ever been on earth.

Verses 15-17. *If ye love me*—As ye profess to do *keep my commandments*—For that will be a surer test and more acceptable expression of your regard for me than all your trouble and concern at parting with me. Keeping Christ's commandments is evidently here put for the practice of godliness in general, and for the faithful and diligent discharge of their office as apostles in particular. *And I will pray the Father*—Here we see, that he required a steady obedience to his commands, as the condition on which their prayers would be heard; (see chap. xv. 7; 1 John iii. 22;) and assured them, on their complying with that condition, he would send them *another comforter*, advocate, monitor, encourager, or intercessor, as the word *παρακλητος* may be properly rendered; *another*—For Christ himself was one: *that he may abide with you for ever*—With you and your followers in faith, unto the end of the world; to supply the want of my bodily presence. *Even the Spirit of truth*—Who has, reveals, testifies, and defends the truth, and whose office it is to guide my disciples into every branch of divine and sacred truth. *Whom the world*—Carnal and worldly people, who do not love or fear God; *cannot receive*—Except in the way of repentance and faith, in which way they will not be persuaded to walk; *because it seeth him not*—Having no spiritual senses, no internal eye, to discern the nature, necessity, or utility of his influences; nor consequently *knoweth him*. *But ye know him*—Namely, in some measure, even now, by his powerful operation in you and by you; *for he dwelleth*—Greek, *μενει, abideth*; *with you*—In part, helping your infirmities, awakening your minds to a sense of the certainty and importance of things spiritual and eternal, and exciting in you sincere and earnest desires to know and do the will of God; *and shall be in you*—By a much more ample communication, both of his gifts and graces: constituting you the temples of God, and a habitation of his holiness.

Verses 18-24. *I will not leave you comfortless*—Greek, *ορφανος*, orphans: a word elegantly applied to those who have lost any dear friend; *I will come to*

A. M. 4037. 19 Yet a little while, and the world
A. D. 33. seeth me no more; but ^a ye see me:

^a because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that ^b I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 ^c He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 ^d Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, ^e If a

^a Chap. xvi. 16.—^b 1 Cor. xv. 20.—^c Verse 10; Chap. x. 38; xvii. 21, 23, 26.—^d Verses 15, 23; 1 John ii. 5; v. 3. ^e Luke vi. 16.—^f Verse 15.—^g 1 John ii. 24; Rev. iii. 20.

you—By my spiritual presence. The Greek, *ερχομαι*, is literally, *I come to you*; for what was certainly and speedily to be, our Lord speaks of as if it were already. *Yet a little while and the world*—Which only sees by bodily eyes; *seeth me no more*—In the sense it has done for some time past, though it knows me not; *but ye see me*—That is, ye certainly shall see me; for, after I have done conversing with the world, I will appear again to you, and give you distinguishing marks of my regard for you; *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. *At that day*—When I fulfil this promise to you; when ye see me after my resurrection; but more eminently at the day of pentecost, verse 21. *He that hath my commandments*—Written in his heart; *and keepeth them*—Makes them the continual rule of his conduct; *he it is that loveth me*—And none else have any title to this character, whatever specious pretences they may make to it. *And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father*—With a peculiar love, a love of approbation and delight; *and I will love him*—In an especial manner; *and will manifest myself to him*—More abundantly. *Judas saith*—Being much surprised to hear our Lord speak as he had done; *not Judas Iscariot*—For he, as it was said before, was gone out before our Lord began this discourse; but another apostle of that name, who was also called Thaddeus and Lebbeus, the son of Alpheus, and the brother of James the less. This Judas, upon hearing Christ express himself in such a way, said, *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, &c.*—Dost thou not intend to make a public appearance, which will be obvious to the eyes of all? For, according to the notions they had conceived of the Messiah, he was to appear unto all the Jews, nay, to the whole world, and was to take unto himself universal empire. *Jesus answered, If a man love me*—It may be sufficient to tell you, that, as I said before, (verse 21,) If

man love me, he will keep my words: A. M. 4037. and my Father will love him, ^f and ^g we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. A. D. 33.

24 He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and ^h the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you.

26 But ⁱ the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, ^j he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

^h Verse 10; Chap. v. 19, 38; vii. 16; viii. 28; xii. 49. ⁱ Verse 16; Luke xxiv. 49; Chap. xv. 26; xvi. 7.—^j Chap. ii. 22; xii. 16; xvi. 13; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

a man, in deed and in truth, love me, he will keep my words, in an humble, obedient, and conscientious manner; *and my Father will love him*—Will still more approve of, and take complacency in him, for the more any one loves and obeys God, the more God will love him; *and we will come unto him*—By still larger communications of the Spirit of truth, wisdom, holiness, and comfort; *and make our abode with him*—Continually. If our Lord had been a mere creature, though of the highest rank, it would have been blasphemy in him to have joined himself in this manner with God. This promise implies such a large manifestation of the divine presence and love as far exceeds the former, given when a person is justified and first obtains peace with God. *He that loveth me not*—Though he may profess to do it; *keepeth not my sayings*—With any constancy and resolution, and thereby shows that his professions of loving me are not sincere; and, therefore, he must expect no such spiritual and eternal blessings, whatever outward privileges he may enjoy. See to it, therefore, that you diligently hearken and attend to what I say; for *the word which ye hear me speak is not mine*—Originally or merely; *but the Father's which sent me*—Who has particularly given it in charge to me, that I should thus insist on practical and universal holiness as one great end of my appearance.

Verses 25–27. *These things have I spoken, being yet present*—I have spoken these things during my personal presence with you briefly, because my time with you is short. *But the Comforter, whom the Father will send in my name*—For my sake, in my room, and as my agent; *he shall teach you all things*—Necessary for you to know; as if he had said, Though you may not now understand many of the particulars mentioned by me, you shall have a perfect knowledge of them afterward. For my Father will give you the Holy Spirit to supply my place, and he shall be a Comforter to you, teaching you every article of the Christian faith, and bringing to your remembrance all the things I have ever

A. M. 4037. 27 ¶ ^kPeace I leave with you, A. D. 33. my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. ^lLet not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 Ye have heard how ^mI said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, ⁿI go unto the Father: for ^omy Father is greater than I.

^k Phil. iv. 7; Col. iii. 15.—^l Verse 1.—^m Verses 3, 18. ⁿ Verse 12; Chap. xvi. 16; xx. 17.

said to you in the course of my ministry. Here is a clear promise to the apostles, and their successors in the faith, that the Holy Ghost should teach them all that truth which was needful for their salvation. *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!

Verses 28–31. *If ye loved me*—With a wise and rational affection, it would allay your sorrows in the mean time, and howsoever you might have a mournful sense of your own loss; *you would rejoice on my account, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father*—Whose servant I am, as Mediator; *is, in this respect, greater than I*—Consequently, it must be my honour and happiness to be in a state of greater nearness to him than the present world will admit. “These words,” as Dr. Macknight justly remarks, “afford a strong argument for the proper divinity of our Lord. For had he been a mere man, or even a mere creature of the highest order, the

29 And ^pnow I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: ^qfor the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and ^ras the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

^o Ch. v. 18; x. 30; Phil. ii. 6.—^p Ch. xiii. 19; xvi. 4.—^q Ch. xii. 31; xvi. 11.—^r Chap. x. 18; Phil. ii. 8; Heb. v. 8.

comparison would have been foolish and impertinent.” *And now I have told you before it come to pass, &c.*—I have foretold my sufferings and death, in order that, when they happen, your faith, instead of being shaken, may be confirmed. *Hereafter I will not talk much with you*—I shall not have much opportunity to talk with you after this; *for the prince of this world cometh*—To make his grand assault. The devil will stir up wicked men to kill me; but *he hath nothing in me*—No right, no claim, no power. There is no guilt in me to give him power over me; no corruption to take part with his temptation. Be assured, therefore, that I shall undergo the punishment of death, not because I deserve it; *but that the world may know*—On the most substantial evidence; *that I love the Father*—I suffer Satan thus to assault me, and I undergo death, to show the world how much I love the Father: for it is the Father’s will that I should thus act; *and as the Father gave me commandment*—Or, commission; (see chap. x. 18;) *even so I do*—Because I can refuse no act of obedience to him, (how painful or expensive soever it may be,) whereby his glory may be advanced. *Arise, &c.*—And therefore, that we may be prepared for this hour of trial that is coming upon us, *let us go hence*—And retire to a place where we may more conveniently give ourselves to prayer, and where I may be ready, when my cruel enemies shall come to apprehend me, to yield myself into their hands, and to submit to what my Father has appointed for me.

CHAPTER XV.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ represents himself under the emblem of a vine, and exhorts his disciples to faith and a persevering regard to his commandments, 1–11. (2.) He renews his exhortation to mutual love and universal obedience, by the consideration of his love to them, and the intimate friendship with him wherewith he would reward it, 12–17. (3.) He comforts them against the hatred and persecution of carnal men, by the consideration of his being hated and persecuted in the same manner, and by the promise of the Comforter, 18–27.

A. M. 4037. I AM the true vine, and my Father
A. D. 33. is the husbandman.*

2 * Every branch in me that beareth not fruit,

* St. Mark's Day, gospel, verse 1 to

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

Verse 1. *I am, &c.*—Our Lord having gone with his disciples to the mount of Olives, employed the remaining hours of his ministry in delivering to them a long and most excellent discourse, recorded in this and the following chapter. This discourse he began with the parable of the vine, taken probably from the vines that were growing around them on the mount of Olives. In this parable he shows them the excellence of his religion, and the nature of the relation in which they stood to him by the profession thereof. Moreover, he explains to them the advantages which would accrue to them from this relation. *I am the true vine*—I am to my church, and the real members thereof, what the vine is to its branches. As the branches of the vine draw nourishment from, and are made fruitful by, their union with the stock, and by the care of the dresser, so my disciples are made fruitful in all holiness and righteousness by faith in me, and in the truths and promises of my gospel, and by the influence of my Spirit. *And my Father is the husbandman*—Or vine-dresser; he has planted this vine, his providence watches over it, and by him it is dressed and cultivated, and he views with peculiar delight the growth and fertility of its branches. In this passage our Lord seems to allude to Psa. lxxx. 8, &c.; Isa. v. 3-7; where the Jewish Church is represented under the figure of a vine: and God's peculiar care thereof is set forth by the care which a husbandman takes of his vineyard. Wherefore, by calling himself, on this occasion, the true vine, Jesus intimated, that whereas the Jewish Church and people had hitherto been the peculiar care of God, they were to be so no longer. From this time forth, all such as became real partakers of the Christian religion, and who, perhaps, in allusion to this parable, were called by the apostle *the body of Christ*, were to be the true church of God, and the objects of his care, whatever nation or country they were of. See Dr. Samuel Clarke, and Macknight.

Verse 2. *Every branch in me*—True believers, who by faith have an interest in, and union with Christ, are the branches of the vine here spoken of. Though, as to the place of their abode, their religious sentiments in lesser matters, and their modes of worship, they may be distant from each other, yet they meet in Christ, their root and stock, and the centre of their unity. *That beareth not fruit*—Answerable to his advantages, fruit suitable to the relation in which he stands to me, and the union which by faith he has had with me: he whose faith in me and my gospel does not work or continue to work by love, and whose love does not continue to manifest itself by his obedience; he who does not bring forth, with constancy and perseverance, the internal and external fruits of the Spirit, namely, *all goodness, righteousness, and truth*, Eph. v. 9; *he taketh*

away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

verse 12.—Matt. xv. 13.

away—Such unfruitful branches the vine-dresser cuts off in his righteous judgment, and entirely separates them from me, depriving them of all the advantages for fruitfulness, which they derived, or might have derived, from their connection with me, and their reception of my truth and grace. *And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it*—Or rather, *pruneth it*, cuts off from it every thing superfluous, and removes all the hinderances of its fruitfulness. Thus God, in the course of his providence, by various sufferings in the minds, bodies, families, circumstances, and situations of his people, and by his word, and their faith therein, and obedience thereto, (1 Pet. i. 22;) and by the influence of his Spirit, mortifies and destroys what is still corrupt in their affections and dispositions, with what remains in them of the carnal mind, and prevents their bearing fruit to perfection. *That it may bring forth more fruit*—Than it brought forth before, to God's greater glory, the greater benefit of mankind, and their own greater progress in holiness here, and a fuller reward of felicity and glory hereafter. Dr. Campbell reads the verse, *Every barren branch in me he loppeth off: every fruitful branch he cleaneth, by pruning, to render it more fruitful*: remarking upon it as follows: "Critics have observed a verbal allusion or paronomasia in this verse. To the barren branch the word *αιρει*, [*he loppeth off*.] is applied; to the fruitful, *καθαρει*, [*he cleaneth by pruning*.] It is not always possible in a version to preserve figures which depend entirely on the sound, or on the etymology of the words, though sometimes they are not without emphasis. This verse and the following afford a remarkable instance of this trope. As our Lord himself is here represented by the vine, his disciples are represented by the branches. The mention of the method which the dresser takes with the fruitful branches, in order to render them more fruitful, and which he expresses by the word *καθαρει*, leads him to take notice of the state wherein the apostles, the principal branches, were at that time: *ηδη υμεις καθαροι, &c.*, *now are ye clean, &c.* It is hardly possible not to consider the *καθαρει*, applied to the branches, as giving occasion to this remark, which immediately follows it. Now, when the train of the thoughts arises in any degree from verbal allusions, it is of some consequence to preserve them, where it can be easily effected in a translation. It is for this reason that I have translated the word *καθαρει* by a circumlocution, and said *cleaneth by pruning*. It is evident, that *καθαρει*, in this application, means *pruneth*. But to have said in English, simply, *pruneth*, would have been to throw away the allusion, and make the thoughts appear more abrupt in the version than they do in the original; and to have said *cleaneth*, without adding any explanation, would have been obscure, or rather improper."

A. M. 4037. 3 ^b Now ye are clean through the
A. D. 33. word which I have spoken unto you.

4 ^c Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth

^b Chap. xiii. 10; xvii. 17; Eph. v. 26; 1 Pet. i. 22.—^c Col. i. 23; 1 John ii. 6.

Verses 3-6. *Now ye are clean*—All of you, to whom I now speak, are made clean from the guilt and power of sin through the word which I have spoken unto you, whose sanctifying influence has operated on your hearts, and which, when applied by the Spirit, is the grand instrument of purifying the soul. *Abide in me*—By the continued exercise of humble faith and love, producing all holiness, by which alone you can continue to be in me; and *I in you*—And I will be in you by my Spirit, to nourish your piety and virtue, and supply you, as from a living root, with every necessary grace. *As*—In the natural world; *the branch cannot bear fruit of itself*—But must presently wither; *except it abide in the vine*—Continue in a state of union with it, and be nourished by sap from thence; *no more can ye*—Be able to produce the fruits of genuine and acceptable obedience; *except ye abide in me*—And have the life of grace maintained in you by a vital union with me. *I am the vine*—That is, the root and stock of the vine of which I speak; *ye are only the branches*—And cannot flourish or subsist, much less can you bear fruit, without me. Our Lord, in this whole passage, speaks of no branches but such as are, or, at least, were once, vitally united to him by living faith. *He that abideth in me*—By a real, internal, and spiritual union, begun and continued by faith; and *I in him*—By my word and Spirit, my truth and grace; *the same bringeth forth much fruit*—In holy dispositions, and righteous, benevolent actions, to the credit of his profession, the comfort of his own soul, and the edification of his fellow-creatures; *for without me*—Χωρίς εως, separate from me, and deprived of the influences of my word and Spirit, (alluding still to the vine and its branches;) *ye can do nothing*—Nothing truly and spiritually good; can bear no fruit that will be pleasing to God, or profitable to yourselves. Without the merit of Christ, we can do nothing toward our justification; and without the Spirit of Christ, nothing toward our sanctification. We have as necessary and constant a dependance upon the grace of the Mediator for the whole of the spiritual and the divine life, as we have upon the providence of the Creator for all the actions of the natural life: as to both, it is in and by the divine power that we live, and move, and have our being. *If a man abide not in me*—By living, loving, and obedient faith, as well as by church communion, by which last, separate from the former, he may abide in Christ all his life and be withered all the time, and cast into the fire at last; *he is cast forth as a branch*—He is separated from

forth much ^d fruit; for ¹ without me A. M. 4037.
ye can do nothing. A. D. 33.

6 If a man abide not in me, ^e he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in

^d Hos. xiv. 8; Phil. i. 11; iv. 13.—¹ Or, severed from me, Acts iv. 12.—^e Matt. iii. 10; vii. 19.

Christ, as a branch that is barren is cut off from the tree which it only encumbered; and *is withered*—They that abide not in Christ by a real and vital union, though they may flourish a while in a creditable and plausible profession, yet in a little time they wither and come to nothing. Their abilities and gifts wither, their zeal and devotion wither; as do also their credit and reputation, their hopes and comforts. For they that bear no fruit will soon bear no leaves. How soon was the fig-tree withered away which Christ cursed! *And men gather them and cast them into the fire, &c.*—The loppings of the vines, in those countries where they are cultivated, are carefully gathered up, and make a considerable part of their fuel; as if he had said, As men gather up withered branches, which have been cut off from the tree on which they once grew, and throw them into the fire, where they are burned as a worthless kind of wood, fit for nothing but fuel; so, in like manner, such will be the end of those unhappy creatures. Satan's agents and emissaries will insnare and make an easy prey of them; for they that fall off from Christ soon fall in with sinners, are associated with them, and employed in the unfruitful works of darkness; so that they become fit fuel for the divine wrath, from which the profession they formerly made will not preserve them. *And they are burned*—This follows of course; but it is here added very emphatically, and makes the threatening very terrible. The original expression, *και καυραται*, is literally, and *they are burning*; for they will not be consumed in a moment, like thorns under a pot; but burning for ever in a fire, which not only cannot be quenched, but will never spend itself. Such, reader, is the consequence of apostatizing from Christ, or ceasing to live by faith in him; they draw back unto perdition, Heb. x. 38, 39. Some interpret *men's gathering them*, of the ministry of angels in the last day, when they shall gather out of Christ's kingdom *all things that offend, and them which do iniquity*, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, as tares are gathered and bound in bundles to be burned.

Verse 7. *If ye abide in me, &c.*—Our Lord having laid before his disciples the awful consequences of falling from grace, now proceeds to point out some of the peculiar advantages which should accrue from a contrary spirit and conduct; the first of which is that all their prayers should be heard and answered. *If ye abide in me*—Through a faith working by love; and *my words abide in you*—Practically and experimentally; if you adhere steadfastly to the

A. M. 4037. you, ^f ye shall ask what ye will, and
A. D. 33. it shall be done unto you.

8 ^g Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; ^h so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have

^f Verse 16; Chap. xiv. 13, 14; xvi. 23.—^g Matt. v. 16; Phil.

doctrine which I have taught you, firmly believing my declarations, conscientiously obeying my precepts, and affectionately embracing and relying on my promises; *ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you*—Two things are implied in this promise: 1st, That the true disciples of Christ, who abide in him, and in whom his word abides, as above explained, will not ask any thing but what is proper to be done for them, and according to the will of God, 1 John, v. 14, 15. They will, especially, ask spiritual blessings, which they know it is his will they should ask and receive; and will ask them in the way which he hath prescribed, namely, sincerely, earnestly, importunately, and perseveringly; and in the way of repentance, faith, and new obedience; and, in the name of Christ, relying for the success of their petitions on the mediation of Christ, and the mercy and promise of God through him. And, with respect to temporal blessings, they will ask them conditionally, and with entire resignation, desiring to receive them only so far as God foresees will be for their good and his glory. 2d, That they shall always have such an interest in Christ's sacrifice and intercession, and in God's favour through him, that all their prayers shall be accepted, and their petitions granted in the degree, time, and manner in which they themselves desire they should be granted, namely, when and as far as God sees will be for their good: which is all they desire; for they would not wish their requests to be granted to their own hurt, the hurt of others, or God's dishonour. Thus *the desire of the righteous shall be granted, and God will fulfil the desire of them that truly and consistently fear him: he also will hear their prayer, and will save them*, Prov. x. 24; Psa. cxlv. 19. To this purpose this apostle speaks, 1 Epist. v. 14, 15, *If we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us, and we have the petitions that we desired of him, and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight*. Dr. Macknight, however, and many other commentators, suppose that whatever encouragement this promise of our Lord may give to pious Christians, of all nations and ages, to believe that their sincere prayer shall be granted, yet, that it was primarily addressed to the apostles; and that our Lord, having in the preceding verses exhorted the twelve, as disciples or private Christians, proceeds now to give them directions as apostles or preachers, commissioned by him to teach his religion to the rest of mankind. They accordingly paraphrase the passage thus; *If ye abide in me, in the sincere profession and practice of my religion; and my words abide in you, if ye faithfully teach*

I loved you: continue ye in my A. M. 4037.
love. A. D. 33.

10 ⁱ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

i. 11.—^j Chap. viii. 31; xiii. 25.—^k Chap. xiv. 15, 21, 23.

mankind my doctrines and precepts, notwithstanding the difficulties you may meet with in this work; *ye shall ask what ye will, &c.*, ye may ask any miracle you please, in confirmation of your authority, and it shall be granted unto you.

Verse 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit*—“As the end for which my Father has given the gospel dispensation to men, is to make them fruitful in holiness, you, my apostles, by spreading the true knowledge thereof through the world, and by reforming yourselves and others, will do honour unto God's wisdom and goodness in bestowing this dispensation upon you.” But as the holiness of the apostles, and the diligent discharge of their duty in preaching the gospel, would be to the glory of God, in effecting, through his grace, the conversion and salvation of mankind; so, the fruitfulness of all Christians, in a lower and narrower sphere, tends greatly to promote the glory of God; for many, by seeing their good works, are brought to imitate the same, and *glorify their Father who is in heaven*, Matt. v. 16. *So shall ye be my disciples*—Thus shall you appear to all really to be what you call yourselves, my true disciples, and to act in a way worthy of your character and relation to me. Hereby shall you both evidence your discipleship and adorn it; and shall be owned by me as my disciples in the great day of final accounts, and have the reward of disciples, a share in the joy of your Lord. Observe, reader, to be a disciple of Christ, is both the foundation and height of Christianity.

Verses 9–11. *As the Father hath loved me*—As certainly as he hath loved me; and with that kind of love wherewith he hath loved me, namely, with a love of approbation and delight, constancy and perseverance; *so have I loved you*—As truly, as affectionately, as invariably: *continue ye in my love*—Keep your place in my affection: see that ye do not forfeit that invaluable blessing. How needless was this caution, if it were impossible for them not to abide in his love. *If ye keep my commandments*—If you carefully perform all the things which I have enjoined, both as my apostles and as private Christians; *ye shall abide in my love*—You shall be always the objects of it: on these terms, and on no other, shall you continue to possess my special affection: *even as I have kept my Father's commandments*—Have exactly performed all the duties of my office, as Mediator, as the Teacher, Redeemer and Saviour of my church, their lawgiver and example; *and abide in his love*—Continue to be the object of his infinite complacency. *These things have I spoken unto you*—Not to grieve you by any

A. M. 4037. 11 These things have I spoken
A. D. 33. unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and ^k that your joy might be full.

12 ¶ ¹ This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 ^m Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 ⁿ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

^k Chap. xvi. 24; xvii. 13; 1 John i. 4.—¹ St. Barnabas's Day, gospel, verse 12 to verse 17.—^m Chap. xiii. 34; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 Pet. iv. 8; 1 John iii. 11; iv. 21.—ⁿ Chap. x. 11, 15; Rom. v. 7, 8; Eph. v. 2; 1 John iii. 16.

intimation that I suspect the sincerity of your regards to me, but that you may be fortified and animated against all the temptations that will assault you, and may continue steadfast in your attachment to my cause and interest, and in your fidelity to me your Master, and zeal and diligence in serving me; that my joy may remain in you—That my complacency in you, as my faithful friends, may still continue; and that your joy might be full—May be maintained in its full height, and may greatly increase; as it certainly will, in proportion to your fidelity, zeal, and diligence in my service.

Verse 12. *This is my commandment*—This I especially enjoin you, whether as apostles or private Christians; that ye love one another—Cordially and constantly; even, if it be possible, with as great fervency and constancy, as I have loved you—So as to be ready to sacrifice your lives for each other, as I expose and give up mine for you. It is remarkable, that no one duty is more frequently inculcated, or more pathetically urged upon his disciples, by our Lord, than that of mutual love. *This is my commandment*, he says, as if it were the most necessary of all the commandments. The reason might be, 1st, That as under the law, the prohibition of idolatry was the commandment more insisted on than any other, because God foresaw the people would be prone to that sin; so Christ, foreseeing that the Christian Church would be addicted to uncharitable contentions and divisions, strife and animosity, thought proper to lay the greatest stress upon this precept. 2d, Mutual love among Christians is a duty which both includes many other duties, and has a good influence upon all: and to this duty, Christ's love to us all should at once direct, animate, and urge us; he having thereby both shown us our duty in this respect, and laid us under the most powerful obligations to perform it. Add to this, that our Lord was thus earnest in pressing his disciples to the duty of mutual love, not only because it was the great design of his gospel to promote it, but because this virtue exercised by his apostles and first disciples among themselves, and toward all mankind, would be one great means of making their preaching successful; just as Christ's immense love to men will

15 Henceforth I call you not ser- A. M. 4037
vants; for the servant knoweth not A. D. 33.
what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; ^o for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.

16 ^p Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ^q ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that ^r whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

^o Chap. xiv. 15, 23; Matt. xii. 50.—^p Gen. xviii. 17; Chap. xvii. 26; Acts xx. 27.—^q Chap. vi. 70; xiii. 18; 1 John iv. 10, 19.—^r Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15; Col. i. 6.—^s Ver. 7; Chap. xiv. 13.

always have a great influence in drawing them to him.

Verses 13–16. *Greater love*—To his friends, (of whom here he only speaks,) *hath no man than this*—That is, a greater degree of love than this never existed in the world; that a man lay down his life for his friends—That a man should be willing, not only on some sudden alarm, or in some extraordinary and unexpected danger, to hazard his life on their account; but on the coolest deliberation, to submit to lay it down for their preservation and happiness. *Ye are my friends*—Ye are the friends for whom I will lay down my life, and who shall certainly share in the blessings which I shall thereby procure for my disciples; if ye do whatsoever I command you—If you practically acknowledge my authority, and are so influenced by my love, as to make conscience of obeying all my commands. On this condition, and not otherwise, shall we be acknowledged by Christ as his friends. Who then dares assert that God's love does not at all depend on man's obedience? *Henceforth I call you not servants*—Though the distance that is between you and me, and your obligations to obey me, might have warranted me to treat you as servants, and particularly to conceal from you my counsels and designs, I have not acted toward you in that manner; but I have called you friends—I have treated you as friends are wont to be treated; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you—I have all along communicated to you the most important of those gracious counsels which my Father, as the expression of his friendship, imparted unto me; nay, I have commissioned you to reveal them to the world, and have made you not only my friends, but my assistants, in the great work of saving the world. *Ye have not chosen me*—You have not, as principals in this affair, adopted me your associate, but I, the great author of the gospel, have adopted you my associates; and ordained—Greek, και εθηκε, appointed you; that ye should go and bring forth fruit—That ye may go and convert sinners; and that your fruit should remain—Even to the remotest generations; that whatsoever ye shall ask, &c.—The consequence of your going and bearing fruit will be, that all your prayers will be heard and answered.

A. M. 4037. 17 * * These things I command you,
A. D. 33. that ye love one another.

18 ¶ If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 ¶ If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto

you for my name's sake, because A. M. 4037. they know not him that sent me. A. D. 33.

22 ¶ If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

23 ¶ He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

* St. Simon and St. Jude, gospel, verse 17 to the end.
Verse 12.—† 1 John iii. 1, 13.—‡ 1 John iv. 5.—§ Chap. xvii. 14.—¶ Matt. x. 24; Luke vi. 40; Ch. xiii. 16.—‡ Ezra

iii. 7.—‡ Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 9; Chap. xvi. 3.—‡ Chap. ix. 41.—‡ Rom. i. 20; James iv. 17.—‡ Or, excuse.—‡ 1 John ii. 23.—‡ Ch. iii. 2; vii. 31; ix. 32.—‡ Psa. xxxv. 19; lxi. 4.

Verses 17-21. *These things I command you, &c.*—Again I would remind you, that if you would continue thus to be the objects of these my Father's gracious regards, you must carefully practise your duty to each other, as well as to him; you must continue to love one another; and this you should the rather do, as you will be the mark of common hatred and persecution. Yet, *if the world hate you*—You will have no reason to be offended or surprised at it; for *ye know that it hated me*—Mild and benevolent as my conduct has always been; *before it hated you*—Before it discharged its venom and malignity on you. *If ye were of the world*—If your dispositions and actions were like those of the bulk of mankind; or if your doctrines and practices were conformable to its customs and maxims; *the world would love its own*—No doubt you would meet with general approbation, and be much caressed; *but because ye are not of the world*—Because your desires and designs, your spirit and conduct, are quite opposite to theirs, and *I have chosen you out of the world*—Have called you not only to separate yourselves from, but to oppose its vices and follies, and even to be leaders in that holy and necessary opposition; *therefore the world hateth you*—Notwithstanding that the cause in which you are engaged is most honourable, and your lives most useful and beneficent. And for the very same reason must the world in all ages hate those who are not of the world. *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant, &c.*—To reconcile you to the persecutions you are to meet with, you ought always to bear in mind what I told you on this subject the first time I sent you out, (see Matt. x. 24.) that no servant can expect to be better treated than his master; and therefore, seeing they have persecuted me, they will naturally persecute you. *If they have kept my saying*—Have conformed themselves to my doctrine; *they will keep yours also*—Will be properly influenced by it, and will walk according to it; therefore, by the reception my doctrine meets with, you may judge how yours will be relished. *But all*

these things will they do unto you—All the opposition which they will show to your persons and ministry, will be exerted *for my name's sake*—Because of the enmity which they have to me, and the cause in which I am engaged; *because they know not him that sent me*—Because they are not acquainted with the nature and perfections of that God to whom they boast so near a relation, and who has sent me into the world to declare and establish a religion which shocks their prejudices, and is contrary to their carnal and worldly spirit. And in all ages and nations, they who know not God will, *for this cause*, hate and persecute those that do.

Verses 22, 23. *If I had not come and spoken unto them*—Thus plainly; *they had not had sin*—Their guilt would not have been so great. "If I had not appeared in person among them, according to their own prophecies, and proved my mission by arguments which put it beyond all reasonable possibility of doubt, they would not have been so much to blame for rejecting the gospel." *But now they have no cloak for their sin*—But now that all the things foretold by Moses and the prophets are fulfilled in me; that my gospel is every way worthy of God; and that my mission from God is sufficiently proved by my miracles; they have no plea whatever to excuse their unbelief. *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also*—As if he had said, This clearness of evidence, wherewith my mission is attended, makes the crime of rejecting me equal to, if not the same with, the crime of rejecting God. Their hatred to me implies also hatred to my Father. "How much," says Dr. Doddridge, "is it to be wished, that those who make light of Christ, while they pretend a great veneration for the Father, would seriously attend to this weighty admonition, lest haply they be found even to fight against God! Acts v. 39."

Verses 24-27. *If I had not done among them, &c.*—If I had wrought no miracle at all among them; nay, if I had not done such extraordinary works as no other man ever did, not even their prophets,

A. M. 4037. 26 ¶^e But when the Comforter is come,
A. D. 33. whom I will send unto you from the Fa-
ther, even the Spirit of truth,^h which proceedeth

^e Luke xxiv. 49; Chap. xiv. 17, 26; xvi. 7, 13; Acts ii. 33.
^h 1 John v. 6.—* Sunday after Ascension, gospel, verse 26,
ending in verse 4 of chapter 16, at *And these*.

or Moses himself; *they had not had sin*—Any degree of sin comparable to that which they are now under: *but now they have both seen, &c.*—But now, as they have rejected my superior miracles, which they have seen with their own eyes, at the same time that they own the evidence of those which Moses wrought, of which they have heard only by distant report, they manifest such an obstinate perverseness of temper, that I may truly say, *they have both seen and hated both me and my Father*. For in my miracles, which are greater than any hitherto exhibited, they have seen, or might have seen, who I am; namely, the only-begotten Son of God; and who is my Father; for the glory of all the divine perfections shines forth in my miracles. Nevertheless, they have rejected me, who have performed these miracles, and my Father likewise, who sent me to perform them; so that, shutting their eyes against the light thus shining on them, and hardening their hearts against that incontrovertible evidence of my mission, which my mighty works afford, it is evident they reject me, not out of ignorance and weakness, but out of wilful hatred to me, and him that sent me, and therefore are utterly inexcusable. *But this cometh to pass*—This is all permitted; *that the word might be fulfilled*—Or, in consequence of this being permitted, the word is fulfilled; see note on chap. xii. 37–40; *that is written in the law*—Or in their sacred volume; (namely, *Psa. xxxv. 19*;) *They hated me without a cause*—These very words, strictly speaking, were spoken concerning David, and are here applied to the Messiah, both because David was a type of him, and because he was hated without a cause, (see *Isa. iii. 3–9*; *Dan. ix. 26*; *Zech. xii. 10*.) as David was. The meaning is, Be not surprised that I, who am the Messiah, have been rejected of the Jews. It has happened according to the prediction of their own prophets. *But when the Comforter is come, &c.*—But, “for your encouragement

from the Father, he shall testify of me.* A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. 27 And ye also shall bear witness, be-
cause ye have been with me from the beginning.

ⁱ Luke xiv. 48; Acts i. 8, 21, 22; ii. 32; iii. 15; iv. 20, 33;
v. 32; x. 39; xiii. 31; 1 Pet. v. 1; 2 Pet. i. 16.—^k Luke i.
2; 1 John i. 1, 2.

I assure you, that they will not always continue thus obstinately bent against me and my religion. When he, who is to comfort you under all your troubles by the aid he will afford you, and who on that account is justly styled the Comforter; when he is come, *whom I will send you from the Father*—To remain always with you; *even the Spirit of truth*—He shall bear witness to me and to my religion so effectually, that many of the Jews shall be converted.”—Macknight. We may observe here, that 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 said to be sent by Christ *from the Father*, as well as sent by the Father in Christ’s name. *And ye also*—Weak as you now appear, shall, by his powerful assistance, bear a courageous and convincing testimony to me, *because you have been with me from the beginning*—Namely, of my ministry, and therefore are the best qualified to give an account of my whole conduct; which, the better it is known, the more it will justify my cause, and expose the wickedness of those that rise up against me. In other words, “In process of time men’s eyes shall be opened to discern the authority of your testimony; and they shall give credit to your reports concerning me, because they shall know that ye have been my companions from the very first, consequently eye and ear-witnesses of all that I have done and said: so that after a while you shall testify concerning me, and preach my religion far more successfully than it will be in your power to do at the beginning.” See Doddridge and Macknight.

CHAPTER XVI.

In this chapter we have the conclusion of Christ’s farewell discourse to his disciples; in which, (1.) He warns them of the persecutions they should suffer, 1–4. (2.) Taking notice of their grief at the thoughts of his departure from them, he shows it was expedient, as being necessary in order to his sending them the Holy Spirit, 5–7. (3.) He explains the nature and effects of the Spirit’s influence, 8–15. (4.) He gives them intimations of his death, resurrection, and ascension, assuring them that their sorrow should be turned into joy, and their prayers in his name should be heard and answered, 16–28. (5.) The disciples, comprehending his meaning, profess their faith in him, and he foretells they would desert him in his sufferings, and yet promises them peace and comfort amidst their tribulation in the world, 29–33.

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye ^a should not be offended.

2 ^b They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, ^c that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service.

3 And ^d these things will they do unto you,

^a Matt. xi. 6; xxiv. 10; xxvi. 31.—^b Chap. ix. 22, 34; xii. 42.—^c Acts viii. 1; ix. 1; xxvi. 9-11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

Verses 1, 2. *These things have I spoken, that you should not be offended*—I have informed you beforehand concerning the opposition which you are to expect from the world, and the proportionable supports which you will receive from the Holy Spirit, that you may not be discouraged in, or turned aside from, the path of your duty; by my leaving you, or by the troubles which you will meet with from my enemies and yours, whose rage will excite them to use all manner of violence and cruelty against you. *They shall put you out of the synagogues*—The Jews will excommunicate you, as the most execrable of men: *yea, whosoever killeth you, will think he doeth God service*—That he doth the most acceptable thing possible; or that he offers sacrifice to God, as Dr. Campbell and others render *λατρείαν προσφέρειν τῷ Θεῷ*; observing, that as *λατρεία* properly signifies the public service of religion, when it is joined, as in this place, with *προσφέρειν*, (to offer up,) can only mean *sacrifice*; and it is so rendered in the Syriac and Gothic versions. This gives a beautiful turn to our Lord's sentiment, which is, "The time shall come when the killing you will be thought a part of the worship of God, and equally meritorious and acceptable with the offering of sacrifices." Archbishop Leighton's observation on the passage is, that "the servants of Christ should be considered not only as sheep for the slaughter, but as sheep for the altar too." The rage of the persecuting enemies of God's church, and, beyond all comparison, the murders committed by Papal cruelty in the name of the Lord, in the hecatombs of whole burnt-offerings, (if an expression may be allowed which falls far short of the dreadful truth,) too justly illustrate the remark. But how justly God has already resented, and will still resent, the murder of his children upon his altar, the day in which he makes inquisition for blood does and will declare.

Verse 3. *And these things will they do*—These cruelties will they exercise upon you, not because ye have done them any harm; but *because they have not known the Father nor me*—Which, if they had done, instead of injuring me, and exercising such inhumanities toward you, my apostles, they would have received us with the greatest affection and gratitude. Here we have the true root of persecution in all its forms; it is ignorance of God and of Christ, and of the real nature of Christianity: it is a spirit that is hostile to all true piety and virtue; and our Lord here says in effect, Let this comfort

because they have not known the Father, nor me. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

4 But ^e these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And ^f these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

⁴ Chapter xv. 21; Romans x. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 8; 1 Timothy i. 13.
^e Chap. xiii. 19; xiv. 29.—^f Matt. ix. 15.

you, that none will be your enemies but the worst of men. Observe, reader, 1st, Many that pretend to know God are wretchedly ignorant of him, for *he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him*, 1 John ii. 4. Israel of old *transgressed the covenant*, and yet cried, *My God, we know thee*. 2d, They that are ignorant of Christ cannot have any right knowledge of God. In vain do men pretend to know God and religion while they slight Christ and Christianity. 3d, Those are wretchedly ignorant of God indeed, who think it an acceptable piece of religion to persecute good people. For they that know Christ, know that he came not into the world to destroy men's lives, but to save them; that he rules by the power of truth and love, not by fire and sword. 4th, It is possible for those that are real enemies to God's service to pretend a mighty zeal for it. Satan's work has often been done in God's livery, and one of the most mischievous enemies Christianity ever had, *sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God*, 2 Thess. ii. 4. Nay, 5th, It is common to patronise enmity to religion, with the colour of duty to God and service to his church. God's people have suffered the greatest hardships from conscientious persecutors: Paul *verily thought he ought to do what he did against the name of Jesus*, Acts xxvi. 9. This, however, does not lessen the sin of persecutors, for villainies cannot be consecrated by their being acted in God's name; but it greatly increases the sufferings of the persecuted to cause them to suffer under the character of being enemies to God; but there will be a resurrection of *names*, as well as of *bodies*, at the great day.

Verses 4-6. *But these things have I told you*—And forewarned you of them; *that when the time shall come*—In which they shall happen; *ye may remember that I told you of them*—And so may turn what has so discouraging an aspect into a further confirmation of your faith. *And these things I said not at the beginning*—Of my ministry; *because I was with you*—And could easily suggest proper instructions and consolations, as new circumstances of difficulty arose; and because, being with you, I could bear the chief shock of persecution in my own person, and so screen you from it. *But now I go to him that sent me*—But now, that my ministry is drawing toward a conclusion, and I am going to leave you, I could no longer defer speaking of these things to you; because it is of great importance you should know them, in order that when they come

A. M. 4037. 5 ¶ * But now * I go my way to him
A. D. 33. that sent me, and none of you asketh
me, Whither goest thou ?

6 But because I have said these things unto
you, ^h sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth : it is ex-
pedient for you that I go away : for if I go not
away, ⁱ the Comforter will not come unto you ;

* Fourth Sunday after Easter, gospel, verse 5 to verse 15.
† Verses 10, 16 ; Chapter vii. 33 ; xiii. 3 ; xiv. 28.—^h Verse
22 ; Chap. xiv. 1.

to pass you may not be surprised and stumbled.
And none of you asketh me—Now when it is most
seasonable ; *whither goest thou?*—Though I men-
tioned to you my departure once before, (chap. xiii.
33,) none of you has inquired of me the reasons of
my departure, nor the effects of it ; nor is concern-
ed to make those inquiries about that better world,
which surely might well become you in such a cir-
cumstance. *But because I have said these things*
—Have spoken of leaving you for a time, and have
informed you of the persecutions you will meet with
when I am gone ; *sorrow hath filled your heart*—
Hath engrossed your thoughts, and filled you with
sadness.

Verses 7, 8. *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth*—I
acquaint you with the case just as it is, and tell you
the reasons of my going away, though you have
not asked them. It is necessary even on your ac-
count that I should depart, because, *if I go not
away*, and enter upon my mediatorial office, *the
Comforter*—By whose assistance, as I told you, you
are to convert the world, will not visit you : whereas,
if I depart—And take possession of my kingdom ;
I will send him unto you—As the first-fruits of the
exercise of my kingly power, to answer all the
great and glorious purposes for which you and my
church shall need him. *And when he is come, he
will reprove the world of sin, &c.*—Greek, *ελεξει
τον κοσμον περι αμαρτιας, &c.* ; rather, *he will convince
the world concerning sin, and concerning righteous-
ness, and concerning judgment.* So Dr. Campbell,
who interprets the passage as follows : “ *Concerning
sin*—That is, *their sin* in rejecting me, whereof the
Spirit will give incontestable evidence, in the mira-
cles which he will enable my apostles to perform in
my name, and the success with which he will crown
their teaching. *Concerning righteousness*—That
is, *my righteousness*, or innocence, the justice of my
cause ; of which the same miraculous power, exerted
for me by my disciples, will be an irrefragable
proof, convincing all the impartial that I had the
sanction of Heaven for what I did and taught, and
that, in removing me hence, God hath taken me to
himself. *Concerning judgment*—That is, *divine
judgment*, soon to be manifested in the punishment
of an incredulous nation, and in defence of the
truth.” Dr. Whitby gives nearly the same inter-
pretation of this important paragraph ; remarking
that the original word, *παρακλητος*, here used, signi-

a

but ^k if I depart, I will send him unto
you. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

8 And when he is come, he will ^l reprove the
world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judg-
ment :

9 ^l Of sin, because they believe not on me ;

10 ^m Of righteousness, ⁿ because I go to my
Father, and ye see me no more ;

^l Chap. vii. 39 ; xiv. 16, 26 ; xv. 26.—^k Acts ii. 33 ; Eph
iv. 8.—^l Or, *convince*.—^m Acts ii. 22-37.—ⁿ Acts iii. 32
^o Chap. iii. 14 ; v. 32.

fies both an *advocate* and a *comforter* ; he observes,
in explanation of the terms, “ He performed the
part of an advocate in respect of Christ and his
gospel, by convincing the world of sin in their not
believing on him, and of the righteousness [the in-
nocence and holiness] of Christ ; and by confirming
the apostles’ testimony of him, by signs and mira-
cles, and various gifts imparted to them, Heb. ii. 4 ;
1 John v. 6-8 ; and by pleading their cause before
kings and rulers, and against all their adversaries,
Matt. x. 18, 19 ; Luke xxi. 15 ; Acts vi. 10. In re-
spect of the apostles and the faithful he also did the
part of a comforter, as being sent for their consola-
tion and support in all their troubles, filling their
hearts with joy and gladness, and giving them an
inward testimony of God’s love to them, and
an assurance of their future happiness, Rom.
viii. 15, 16.”

Verses 9-11. *Of sin, because they believe not on
me*—He will convince the world of that aggravated
sin of which they are guilty, in that they do not be-
lieve in me, to the truth of whose mission he will
bear an unanswerable testimony, by his enlighten-
ing influences and miraculous operations. With re-
gard to the latter, it may be observed, that they had
been withdrawn from the Jews about four hundred
years since, and their being restored, according to
Christ’s promise, was sufficient to evince that Jesus,
who had restored them by shedding the Holy Spirit
upon his disciples, was the true Messiah, and so to
convince them of sin, who believed not in him, as
we see it did, Acts ii. 37-41. *Of righteousness*—
He will convince them of my innocence and holi-
ness ; *because I go to, and am accepted of my Fa-
ther*—Which will evidently appear, when I send the
Spirit from him in so glorious a manner ; *and ye see
me no more*—Appearing among you in the form of
a servant ; but are assured, that, having finished
what I was to do on earth, I am taken up to heaven,
and received into glory. Though Christ was con-
demned by the Jews as an impostor, yet his being
received into heaven, and sending the Holy Spirit
thence upon his disciples, was a sufficient evidence
that the Father owned him as a righteous person,
and his true prophet and messenger. Hence, from
this effusion of the Holy Spirit, Peter argues, that
this Jesus was by God made *Lord and Christ* ; and
that the Jews had crucified that *holy and just One*,
whom the Father hath glorified, Acts ii. 36 ; and iii.

A. M. 4037. 11 ° Of judgment, because ^p the
A. D. 33. prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you,
but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit, when he, ^t the Spirit of truth, is come, ^e he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.

15 ^t All things that the Father hath are mine:

^o Acts xxvi. 18.—^p Luke x. 18; Chap. xii. 31; Eph. ii. 2; Col. ii. 15; Heb. ii. 14.—^q Mark iv. 33; 1 Cor. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12.—^r Chap. xiv. 17; xv. 26.—^s Chap. xiv. 26; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

13, 14. *Of judgment*—He will convince them of my being invested with a power of executing judgment; *because the prince of this world*—The great head of the apostasy, *is* now, as it were, already *judged* and condemned, and shall be triumphed over in a very remarkable manner, when his oracles are silenced, and he is cast out from many persons and countries also, which he before possessed. Whence it may appear that all who belong to his kingdom, and choose rather to serve him than Christ, their lawful Prince and Judge, shall be condemned with him.

Verses 12–15. *I have yet many things to say unto you*—There are many other things concerning which I must give you information. *But ye cannot bear them now*—But the weakness of your understanding, your desire and expectation of my erecting a temporal kingdom, your prejudices in favour of your own nation and law, and your aversion to the Gentiles, are so great, that you cannot yet bear the discovery. For which reason I judge it more prudent to be silent for the present. The things which our Lord had in view probably concerned his passion, death, resurrection, and the consequences of it; the abrogation of the ceremonial law, the abolition of the whole Jewish economy, the doctrine of justification by faith without the deeds of the law, the rejection of the Jews, and the reception of believing Gentiles, without subjecting them to the law of Moses. *Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, (so called on account of his office,) is come*—According to the promise I have given you; *he will guide you into all truth*—All necessary truth: so that you will sustain no loss by my not discovering these things to you now; for when the Comforter comes, he will inspire you with the knowledge of them, and of every other matter necessary for you to understand. *For he shall not speak of himself, &c.*—That you may have the greater confidence in, and satisfaction from, the revelations which he shall make to you, know that he shall speak to you by my direction, revealing to you nothing but what he is commissioned to discover. *And he will show you*

therefore said I, that he shall take of ^{A. M. 4037.} mine, and shall show *it* unto you. ^{A. D. 33.}

16 ¶ ^u A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, ^w because I go to the Father.

17 Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

^u Matt. xi. 27; Chap. iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 10.—^v Verse 10; Chap. vii. 33; xiii. 33; xiv. 19.—^w Third Sunday after Easter, gospel, verse 16 to verse 23.—^x Verse 23; Chap. xiii. 3.

things to come—His revelation shall be so full and complete, that he will discover unto you all such future events as you may be any way concerned to know. *He shall glorify me*—He shall do me great honour in this respect, that all his revelations to you shall be perfectly conformable to the doctrines which I have taught you in person; *for he shall receive of mine*—Or of those doctrines which relate to me, and those benefits which I procure and bestow; *and will show it unto you*—In the most clear and attractive light; will enable you clearly to understand the doctrines, and will assure you of your possession of the benefits, manifesting to you at the same time their unspeakable excellence. *All things that the Father hath are mine*—Be not surprised that I said, *he shall receive of mine*; for all the treasures of the Father's wisdom, power, and goodness, truth, justice, mercy, and grace are mine; yea, in me *dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. Could any mere creature say this?

Verses 16–22. *A little while*—When I am dead and buried; *and ye shall not see me*—I shall not converse with you on earth, as I have hitherto done; *and again*—For your encouragement and comfort. I assure you it will be but *a little while* longer, *and ye shall see me*—And that to your much greater comfort and advantage; *because I go to the Father*—When I shall be so mindful of your interest with him, as, ere long, to bring you to an eternal abode with him. *Then said some, What is this that he saith*—The terms in which Jesus had spoken of his death, resurrection, and ascension, being very obscure, the disciples were altogether at a loss to understand them. Wherefore, having revolved them a while in their own minds, they asked one another privately if they could comprehend what he meant. But each of them declared, with a kind of astonishment, that he could affix no idea to his words at all. Jesus, observing their perplexity, and knowing that they inclined to ask him about this matter, prevented them, by signifying that he knew what they had been saying. *He therefore said, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, &c.*

A. M. 4037. 19 Now Jesus knew that they were
A. D. 33

desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 * A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 † And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and ‡ your heart shall re-

* Isa. xxvi. 17.—† Verse 6.—‡ Luke xxiv. 41, 52; Chap. xiv. 1, 27; xx. 20; Acts ii. 46; xiii. 52; 1 Pet. i. 8.—* Fifth Sunday after Easter, gospel, verse 23 to the end.

—I will explain myself upon this point: *Verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament*—When ye see me dead; *but the world shall rejoice*—Your not seeing me is an event which shall occasion great grief to you, and joy to my enemies. However, *your sorrow shall be turned into joy*—When ye see me risen. *A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, &c.*—“The state of mind you shall be in when the events happen of which I am speaking, I cannot better describe than by comparing it to the condition of a woman in travail. During her labour she hath exquisite pain, because the birth approaches; but as soon as she is delivered, she forgets the anguish she was in, being filled with joy that she has brought one of the human species into the world. Just so, you, my disciples, will be in the greatest distress during the time of my departure. But, as I am to rise again from the dead, and to ascend into heaven, you will forget your sorrow, and rejoice exceedingly; and from that time forth your joy shall be of such a kind, as that it shall not be in the power of men to rob you of it.”—Macknight.

Verses 23, 24. *In that day ye shall ask me nothing*—*Εμε οκ ερωτησετε οδεν, you shall not inquire any thing of me*, or, as Dr. Campbell renders it, *you will put no questions to me*. That is, when I have sent the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth, you shall have no need to ask for information in any thing as now you do, or to inquire after the sense of any thing suggested to you by the Spirit, as you now sometimes ask the meaning of my words. *Verily, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, &c., in my name*—And if ever you stand in need of instruction, or assistance, or any other blessing, whether for the propagation of the gospel or your own salvation, the Father will immediately supply you with it, upon your asking it in my name. The word *αιτησητε*, rendered, *ye shall ask*, in this latter clause, is different from that used in the former, and properly sig-

joyce, and your joy no man taketh
A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33

23 * And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. † Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, † that your joy may be full.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in † proverbs: but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in † proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.

26 † At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

* Matt. vii. 7; Chapter xiv. 13; xv. 16.—† Chapter xv. 11. † Or, *parables*.—‡ Or, *parables*.—c Verse 23.

nifies, to present a request, as the other word does to make inquiry, or ask questions. *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name*—Not having been used to regard me under the character of a Mediator between God and man; but then, having received a fuller revelation of the doctrine of my intercession, you may come with a cheerful boldness to the throne of grace, and freely ask whatever shall be necessary, or conducive to the success of your great undertaking, or your support and comfort amidst your temporal discouragements; and, I assure you, you shall receive such gracious answers as will exceedingly increase your joy.

Verses 25–28. *These things*—Though very weighty and important; *have I spoken unto you in proverbs*—In the obscurity of parables, which have appeared dark and mysterious to you; *but the time cometh, &c.*—You may comfort yourselves with this thought, that the time is at hand *when I shall speak unto you no more in proverbs*—No more in that obscure manner; *but I shall show you plainly of the Father*—Shall, by the teaching of my Spirit, declare to you, in plain terms, the whole counsel of God relating to the erection of his church and the salvation of men. *At that day ye shall ask in my name, &c.*—I repeat it to you again, that after my ascension you shall offer up all your addresses unto the Father, through my mediation; *I say not that I will pray the Father for you*—I do not mean that I will solicit the Father in your behalf, as if he were unwilling to bestow on you the blessings you stand in need of; *for the Father himself loveth you*—In a peculiar manner; and therefore will be always ready to grant your requests, and to watch over you with paternal affection and care; *because ye have loved me*—With sincerity and fervency; *and have believed that I came out from God*—As the Messenger of his grace to men; and have accordingly relied on me with such steadfastness, that you have ventured your all upon

A. M. 4037. 27 ^d For the Father himself loveth
A. D. 33. you, because ye have loved me, and
* have believed that I came out from God.

28 ^f I came forth from the Father, and am
come into the world: again, I leave the world,
and go to the Father.

29 ¶ His disciples said unto him, Lo, now
speakest thou plainly, and speakest no ^g pro-
verb.

30 Now are we sure that ^h thou knowest all
things, and needest not that any man should

^d Chapter xiv. 21, 23.—^e Verse 30; Chapter iii. 13; xvii. 8.
^f Chap. xiii. 3.—^g Or, *parable*.—^h Chap. xxi. 17.—ⁱ Verse
27; Chapter xvii. 8.—^j Matthew xxvi. 31; Mark xiv. 27.
^k Chapter xx. 10.—^l Or, *his own home*.

that belief. And you have therein acted a very prudent and happy part; for indeed *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world*—For purposes of infinite importance to the glory of God and the happiness of the human race; *again*—Having finished the work I came to do, *I leave the world and go to the Father*—From whom I came, with whom I shall continually abide, and into whose presence I will shortly conduct you, putting you in possession of a more glorious kingdom than you ever expected, or could expect on earth.

Verses 29-32. *His disciples*—Struck with the correspondence of what he said to what was secretly passing in their own minds; *said, Lo, now speakest thou plainly*—We acknowledge that now thou speakest in such a manner as we can easily understand; *and speakest no proverb*—Usest no obscure form of expression; *now we are sure that thou knowest all things*—Now, by this further token, even by discerning our inmost doubts on this subject, we are persuaded that nothing is hid from thee; *and thou needest not that any man should ask thee*—“By the things which thou hast now spoken to us we clearly perceive, that thou so perfectly knowest the hearts of men, that in conversing with them thou hast no need that they should tell thee their thoughts, by asking any question. For, although no question is asked thee, thou answerest the thoughts of every one. In short, thy knowledge of our hearts fully convinces us that thou art come from God.” It

ask thee: by this ^b we believe that A. M. 4037.
thou camest forth from God. A. D. 33.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 ⁱ Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now
come, that ye shall be scattered, ^k every man to
^l his own, and shall leave me alone: and ^m yet
I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that
ⁿ in me ye might have peace. ^o In the world
ye shall have tribulation, ^p but be of good cheer:
^q I have overcome the world.

ⁱ Chap. viii. 29; xiv. 10, 11.—^j Isa. ix. 6; Chap. xiv. 27;
Rom. v. 1; Eph. ii. 14; Col. i. 20.—^k Chap. xv. 19-31.
^l 2 Tim. iii. 12.—^m Chap. xiv. 1.—ⁿ Rom. viii. 37; 1 John
iv. 4; v. 4.

seems, through the whole of this discourse, Jesus had obviated the objections and answered the questions which his apostles were going to propose, or would gladly have proposed to him. *Jesus answered, Do ye now believe*—Are ye now at length fully persuaded that I am the promised Messiah?—Be on your guard. Your faith in me is not so firm but it may be shaken. *Behold the hour cometh that ye shall be scattered, &c.*—The time is coming, nay, is come already, when every one of you shall desert me, fleeing wherever you think to be in safety from approaching danger; so that I shall be left singly to encounter mine enemies. Nevertheless, I am not alone, because my Father is with me continually.

Verse 33. *These things I have spoken, that ye might have peace*—“I have said these things to you concerning my departure out of the world, the coming of the Holy Ghost, my resurrection from the dead, the Father’s hearing your prayers, and concerning the great trial you are to be exposed to, in order that you may have consolation in the prospect of the benefits you are to receive, and not be terrified when afflictions draw nigh which are to overtake you. The truth is, you shall have great tribulation in this present life, because the malice of men will everywhere pursue you; nevertheless, be not discouraged, rather take heart, by reflecting how, through constancy and patience, I have overcome the malice of the world, and that I am able to make you overcome it in like manner also.”—Macknight.

CHAPTER XVII.

In this chapter our Lord, having finished his ministry, and given his disciples all the instructions he judged necessary, closes the whole with a solemn prayer to God, asking, (1.) For himself, that he might be reinstated in his original glory with God, 1-5. (2.) For the apostles, that they might be kept from evil through his name, and preserved in unity, 6-16; and that they might be sanctified through the truth, 17-19. (3.) For all believers, that they might be united to the Father, to him, and to one another; that by this love and unity, apparent among them, the world might be brought to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, 20-23. (4.) He prays for all believers, that they might be with him for ever in heaven, and so enjoy the happy effects of such love of the Father as he bore to Christ himself, 24-26.

A. M. 4037. **THESE** words spake Jesus, and
A. D. 33. lifted up his eyes to heaven,
and said, Father, *the hour is come; glo-
rify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify
thee:

2 ^b As thou hast given him power over all

^a Chap. xii. 23; xiii. 32.—^b Dan. vii. 14; Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18; Chap. iii. 35; v. 27; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 27; Phil. ii. 10; Heb. ii. 8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

Verses 1-3. *These words spake Jesus*—Namely, the words recorded in the three preceding chapters; and *lifted up his eyes to heaven*—Put himself in the posture of prayer. The following has been called *Our Lord's Intercessory Prayer*, because it is considered as a pattern of the intercession he is now making in heaven for his people. In it 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. It contains the easiest words, and the deepest sense, of any chapter in all the Scriptures; yet is there no incoherent rhapsody, but the whole is closely and exactly connected. *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 most full of love and humble confidence. *The hour is come*—The time of my sufferings is come; *glorify thy Son*—Let me have such succours from thee as will enable me to bear them; let the circumstances of my trial, both in the Jewish and Gentile courts of judicature, be such as will plainly prove my innocence; and let my death be accompanied with such interpositions of thy power as will remove the scandal of the cross, and demonstrate the relation I stand in to thee; particularly let me be raised from the dead, and taken up to heaven; finally, shed down upon my apostles such miraculous gifts as will qualify them for bearing witness to my miracles, my death, my resurrection, and my ascension. Thus glorifying thy Son, he also will *glorify thee*—By converting to the belief and practice of true religion, many who will celebrate thy praises eternally. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh*—Thou hast sent thy Son into the world, and given him power over all men, in this respect, that he can bestow eternal life upon as many as thou hast given him, namely, upon all believers. This is a clear proof that Christ designed his sacrifice should avail for all mankind; yea, that all flesh, every man, should partake of everlasting life. For, as the Father had given him power over all, so he gave himself a ransom for all. *And this is life eternal*—Is the way to, a preparation for, and a pledge and earnest of life eternal; *that they might know*—Or, to know, by loving, obedient faith, thee; *the only true God*—The only cause and end of all things; not excluding the *Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God*, (chap. i. 1,) nor the Holy Ghost, any more than the Father is excluded from

flesh, that he should give eternal A. M. 4037.
life to as many ° as thou hast given A. D. 33.
him.

3 And ^d this is life eternal, that they might
know thee ° the only true God, and Jesus
Christ ^f whom thou hast sent.

^c Verses 6, 9, 24; Chap. vi. 37.—^d Isa. liiii. 11; Jer. ix. 24.
^e 1 Cor. viii. 4; 1 Thess. i. 9.—^f Chapter iii. 34; v. 36, 37;
vi. 29, 57; vii. 29; x. 36; xi. 42.

being Lord, (1 Cor. viii. 6,) but the false gods of the heathen; and *Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*—To be thy prophet, priest, and king. The meaning of our Lord here is, either, "1st, I teach that men should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, as the means of obtaining that eternal life which thou hast given me power to bestow: Or, 2d, Now this eternal life is bestowed by me on men, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; importing that the happiness of eternity will consist in the knowledge of God and Christ. It is justly observed by Grotius, that the Father is here styled, *the only true God*, in exclusion of those deities which the ignorance and folly of the heathens had introduced. For, as in the latter clause our Lord undoubtedly spake of the Jews, when he mentioned it as the means of eternal life, that they should know Jesus Christ; so, it is probable, that in the former he had the Gentiles in his eye, when he represented the knowledge of the true God as the road to felicity. If so, we cannot from this passage infer that Jesus is not truly, or really God. For, had this been the meaning of the words, would the evangelist have begun his gospel with so solemn a declaration of our Lord's divinity? Besides, in other passages of Scripture, the word *μονος* denotes a partial exclusion. For instance, (Gen. xiii. 38,) Jacob, speaking of Benjamin, says, *His brother is dead, και αυτος μονος καταλειπται*, and he only is left: he did not mean that he was his only son absolutely, but his only son by Rachel. In like manner, (Luke ix. 18,) *And it came to pass as he was alone, praying, his disciples were with him*; where *καταμονος* is to be understood in exclusion of the multitude, and not of the disciples, who were now with him. So also, (Luke ix. 36,) Jesus is said to be left (*μονος*) alone, notwithstanding the three disciples were with him. The meaning is, he was alone in respect of Moses and Elias, who were now departed from him. And to give no more instances, Jude, verse 4, uses *μονος* in this partial sense, where, speaking of some wicked men in his time, he says, *they denied, τον μονον δεσποτην Θεου, και Κυριον ημων Ιησυν Χριστον, our only Master, God and Lord, Jesus Christ*. For, whether the first clause is understood of Christ, it cannot mean that he is our only Lord and God, in exclusion of the Father; or, whether it is understood of the Father, it cannot be said that he is our only Lord, in exclusion of Christ, who is expressly styled *Δεσποτης, Master*."

A. M. 4037. 4 ^a I have glorified thee on the earth: A. D. 33. ^b I have finished the work ^c which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory ^b which I had with thee before the world was.

6 ¶ ^d I have manifested thy name unto the men ^e which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

^a Chap. xiii. 31; xiv. 13.—^b Chap. iv. 34; v. 36; ix. 3; xix. 30.—^c Chap. xiv. 31; xv. 10.—^d Chap. i. 1, 2; x. 30; xiv. 9; Phil. ii. 6; Col. i. 15, 17; Heb. i. 3, 10.

Verses 4, 5. *I have glorified thee on earth*—My doctrine, example, and miracles have manifested thy glory here on earth. *I have finished the work thou gavest me to do*—I have almost finished the work which I undertook for man's redemption. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thyself*—Or, *in thine own presence*, as Dr. Campbell translates *παπα σεαυτω*, observing, that the force of the Greek preposition, *παπα*, is not rightly expressed by the English *with*, which, as applied here, is exceedingly vague and indeterminate. *With the glory which I had with thee*—He does not say *received*. He always had it till he emptied himself of it in the days of his flesh; *before the world was*—"The Socinians, who deny, not only our Lord's divinity, but his existence before he appeared in the world, are at a loss how to explain this passage, in consistency with their opinion. They imagine, that as in the prophetic writings, things to come are spoken of as already existing, to denote the divine decree concerning them, and the certainty of their happening; so, Jesus is here said to possess glory with the Father before the foundation of the world, not because he then existed, but because that glory was appointed him in the divine decree from eternity, and was certainly to be bestowed upon him in the fulness of time. Withal, in confirmation of this observation, they cite Rev. xiii. 8, where Christ is called *a lamb slain from the foundation of the world*; and 2 Tim. i. 9, where the apostle, speaking of the favours conferred on Christians, says, *Hath saved us, and called us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*. But here, without laying the whole stress of the matter on the answer given by Whitby, namely, that these passages are mistranslated, I observe, that though, for the reasons mentioned, the sacred writers, when warmed with the grandeur of their subject, might, in their discourses, represent the great events which were to befall the church under the gospel dispensation, as existing from eternity; yet, no fire of imagination could authorize the figure in the present instance. For it were absurd to fancy that Jesus, in this his last solemn prayer with his disciples, gravely spake of himself as existing from eternity, and as enjoying with God blessings which were to be bestowed upon him only in time. Such figures, how-

7 Now they have known that all ^a things whatsoever thou hast given ^b me are of thee: A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

8 For I have given unto them the words ^a which thou gavest me; and they have received ^b them; ^c and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: ^d I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

¹ Verse 26; Psa. xxii. 22.—^a Verses ii. 9, 11; Chap. vi. 37, 39; x. 29; xv. 19.—^b Chap. viii. 28; xii. 49; xiv. 10. ^c Verse 25; Chap. xvi. 27, 30.—^d 1 John v. 19.

ever proper they may be in prophecy, are not of the style of prayer, far less of our Lord's prayers, which are remarkable for their simplicity. Besides, it should be remembered that this is not the only passage which speaks of Christ's pre-existence, for the Evangelist John (chap. i. 1) represents him as existing from eternity, and making all things. And (chap. viii. 58) Jesus himself tells us that he existed before Abraham. And Paul affirms, (Phil. ii. 6,) that before Jesus took the form of a servant, he was in the form of God."—Macknight.

Verses 6-8. *I have manifested thy name*—All thy attributes; and in particular thy paternal relation to believers; *to the men which thou gavest me out of the world*—The apostles; and so verse 12. *Thine they were*—By creation, by preservation, by descent from Abraham, and by being members of thy church, under the Mosaic dispensation; *and thou gavest them me*—By giving them faith in what I have spoken; *and they have kept thy word*—Have readily embraced, and hitherto have resolutely adhered to and obeyed thy gospel. *Now they have known that all things*—Which I have done and spoken, are of thee, and consequently are right and true. They are fully persuaded, "that the commission whereby I act, the doctrine of salvation which I teach, the miracles which I perform, and the authority with which I am clothed, are all really derived from thee." In this, indeed, they have acted upon the surest evidence; *for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me*—I have taught them no other doctrine but that which thou gavest me to teach. *And they have received them*—Being fully sensible that my doctrine is in all points agreeable to thy blessed nature and perfections, they have received it as such; *and have known surely that I came out from thee*—That I am no impostor, but a prophet, truly commissioned by thee to reveal thy will to mankind. *And*—While I have been rejected by an ungrateful world, they have regarded me as the true Messiah; *and have believed that thou didst send me*—On the great errand of man's salvation.

Verses 9, 10. *I pray for them*—Who have attended me as my apostles. These only he prays for here, as appears from verse 12, where he says, he had kept all the persons he was praying for in the faith and practice of true religion, except the son of

A. M. 4037. 10 And all mine are thine, and
A. D. 33. ^a thine are mine; and I am glorified
in them.

11 ^r And now I am no more in the world,
but these are in the world, and I come to thee.
Holy Father, ^s keep through thine own name
those whom thou hast given me, ^t that they
may be one, ^u as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world, ^v I
kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest

^a Chap. xvi. 15.—^r Chap. xiii. 1; xvi. 28.—^s 1 Pet. i. 5; Jude 1.—^t Verse 21, &c.—^u Chap. x. 30.—^v Chap. vi. 39; x. 28; Heb. ii. 13.

perdition; and from verse 18, where he says, he had commissioned them to go forth into the world for the same purpose that the Father had sent him; and from verse 20, where he expressly distinguishes them from all other believers whatever. *I pray not for the world*—Not in these petitions, which are adapted to the state of believers only. But this no more proves that our Lord did not pray for the world, both before and afterward, than his praying for the apostles only in these verses proves that he did not pray for them also who should believe in him through their word, verse 20. *But for them which thou hast given me, &c.*—See on verse; for they are thine—The reason thus assigned for making them the subject of his prayers at this time is remarkable. It is as if he had said, “I employ the last moments of my life in praying particularly for my apostles, because they are more especially thy servants, destined for that work which is the great object of thy attention, the instruction and salvation of the world.” *All mine are thine*—All my servants are thy servants; that is, whosoever assists me in my work, serves thee in thy great designs of love and mercy to men. *And thine are mine*—Thy servants are my servants; every one who really serves thee must join issue with me, and assist me in my work. *And I am glorified in them*—By the zeal, faithfulness, and success of my servants in converting the world, I am greatly honoured. This, however, is not our Lord’s only meaning in this clause; the original words being τα εμα παντα σα εσι, και τα σα εμα, not, *all my servants are thy servants, &c.*, but, *all things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine*; 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, by their believing in him, and so acknowledging his glory.

Verses 11, 12. *And now I am no more in the world*—Having finished the work thou gavest me to do in it; *but these*—My apostles; *are in the world*—Exposed to various hardships and dangers; *and I come*

me I have kept, and ^w none of them ^x is lost, ^y but the son of perdition; ^z that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 ^b I have given them thy word; ^c and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, ^d even as I am not of the world.

^w Chap. xviii. 9; 1 John ii. 19.—^x Chap. vi. 70; xiii. 18. ^y Psa. cix. 8; Acts i. 20.—^z Verse 8.—^a Chap. xv. 18, 19; 1 John iii. 13.—^b Chap. viii. 23; Verse 16.

to thee—Whom I have chosen and served, and whom my soul thirsteth after; to thee, the Fountain of light and life, the Crown and Centre of bliss and joy; now my longing shall be satisfied, my hopes accomplished, my happiness completed. *Holy Father, keep through thine own name*—Thy mercy, wisdom, and power; *those whom thou hast given me*—To be my messengers to mankind; *that they may be one*—One with us, and with each other; one body, separate from the world; *as we are*—By resemblance to us, though not equality. *While I was with them, &c., I kept them in thy name*—In the firm faith and steadfast practice of my religion, so far as I revealed it unto them. Or, as the clause may be read, *through thy name*, as in the preceding verse, *through thy power and grace*; *those that thou gavest me*—I say, the twelve persons whom thou gavest me for apostles, *I have thus kept, and none of them is lost*—None of them has apostatized; *but the son of perdition*—That wicked person who deserves perdition; *that the Scriptures might be fulfilled*—That is, whereby the Scripture is fulfilled. See note on chap. xii. 40. As if he had said, His apostacy has happened, not through any defect in my care, but in consequence of its being permitted, for the wisest reasons; and therefore long ago predicted in the Scriptures, particularly Psa. cix. 8. *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.

Verses 13–19. *These things I speak in the world*—That is, before I leave the world; *that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves*—I offer this prayer in behalf of my apostles, with this intention; that being heard for them, they may receive all the endowments necessary to qualify them for converting the world, and be filled with my joy, the great joy I have in being the means of saving mankind. *I have given them thy word, &c.*—I have omitted nothing that on my part was necessary to fit them for converting the world, and partaking of my joy. *And*—Though they are indeed the greatest friends and benefactors of the human race, yet *the world hath hated them*—And will be sure to persecute them with the utmost violence; *because they are not of the world*—

A. M. 4037. 15 ¶ I pray not that thou should-
A. D. 33. est take them out of the world,
but * that thou shouldest keep them from the
evil.

16 † They are not of the world, even as I am
not of the world.

17 ¶ † Sanctify them through thy truth: † thy
word is truth.

18 † As thou hast sent me into the world,
even so have I also sent them into the
world.

19 And † for their sakes I sanctify myself,

* Matt. vi. 13; Gal. i. 4; 2 Thess. iii. 3; 1 John v. 18.
† Verse 14.—‡ Chap. xv. 3; Acts xv. 9; Eph. v. 26; 1 Pet.
i. 22.—§ 2 Sam. vii. 28; Psa. cxix. 142, 151; Chap. viii. 40.
¶ Chap. xx. 21.

Are neither influenced by the principles, nor conformed to the spirit or conduct, of carnal men; *even as I am not of the world*—In which respects they resemble me. *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world*—As if he had said, Although these persecutions, which shall befall them, are another great reason why I offer up this prayer for them; nevertheless, my meaning is not that, on account of these difficulties, thou shouldest immediately remove them out of the world by death; *but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil which is in the world*, or rather, *from the evil one*, as *απο τῆς πονηρίας* properly signifies, that is, from the influence of his subtlety and power; from being taken in the snares he will lay for them, deceived by his wiles, or led into sin by his temptations. *They are not of the world*, &c.—This sentiment he repeats, as reflecting with great pleasure on their being separated from the world, both in their dispositions and actions; and on their resembling himself in this respect; and hence he was the more solicitous that, after his departure, they might be preserved blameless, and therefore prays as in the following words, *Sanctify them through thy truth*—Consecrate them to their office, and perfect them in holiness, by the instrumentality of thy truth, accompanied by thy grace. *Thy word is truth*—Thy gospel, which they are to preach, is the great system of sanctifying truth, whereby real holiness is ever to be promoted: and may these my apostles experience more and more of its vital energy on their own souls, to qualify them more fully for the office of dispensing it to others. *As thou hast sent me into the world*—To be the messenger of this grace; *even so have I sent them*—Namely, on the same errand, to publish and proclaim what they have learned of me. *And for their sakes*—As well as for the salvation of all that do or shall believe in me; *I sanctify myself*—I set myself apart, as an offering holy to thee. Or, I devote myself as a victim to be sacrificed; *that they also might be sanctified through the truth*—That, taught by my example, and animated

that they also might be † sanctified A. M. 4037.
through the truth. A. D. 33.

20 ¶ Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word:

21 † That they all may be one; † as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; † that they may be one, even as we are one;

* 1 Cor. i. 2, 30; 1 Thess. iv. 7; Heb. x. 10.—† Or, *truly sanctified*.—‡ Verses 11, 22, 23; Chap. x. 16; Rom. xii. 5; Gal. iii. 28.—§ Chap. x. 38; xiv. 11.—¶ Chap. xiv. 20; 1 John i. 3; iii. 24.

by my dying love, they may be fully fitted for, and wholly devoted to, their important work. *To sanctify*, signifies, in general, to set apart to some appropriate use; and is used with peculiar propriety with reference to a sacrifice, which seems to be the sense in which our Lord applies it to himself in this verse.

Verses 20-23. *Neither pray I for these alone*—I do not make my apostles the only subjects of this my last prayer; I pray likewise for all such as shall by their word, whether preached or written, be brought to believe on me, in whatever age or nation; *that they also*, being influenced by the same Spirit, and possessed of the same love; *may be one*—Truly and intimately; (see on verse 11;); *as thou, Father, art in me*—Dwelling in me by thy Spirit; *and I in thee*—By a constant, indissoluble union; *that they also may be one in us*—Closely and vitally united to us, and deriving from us the richest supplies of divine wisdom and grace, power, purity, and consolation. This also is to be understood in a way of similitude, and not of sameness or equality. *That the world may believe*—That, seeing their benevolence, charity, and holy joy, the people of the world, the carnal part of mankind, may believe that a religion productive of such amiable fruits is indeed of divine original. It is plainly intimated here by our Lord, that “dissensions among Christians would not only be uncomfortable to themselves, but would be a means of bringing the truth and excellence of Christianity into question: and he must be a stranger to what hath passed, and is daily passing, in the world, who does not see what fatal advantage these divisions have given to infidels, to misrepresent it as a calamity, rather than to regard it as a blessing to mankind.”—Doddridge. Here we see Christ prays for the world, and may observe that the sum of his whole prayer is, 1st, Receive me into thy own and my glory; 2d, Let my apostles share therein; 3d, And all other believers; 4th, And let all the world believe. *And the glory which thou gavest me*—With respect to my human nature, namely, to be a habitation of thyself by the Spirit; *I have given them*—Have bestowed

A. M. 4037. 23 I in them, and thou in me,
A. D. 33. ° that they may be made perfect
in one; and that the world may know that
thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as
thou hast loved me.

24 ° Father, I will that they also whom
thou hast given me be with me where I
am; that they may behold my glory which
thou hast given me: ° for thou lovedst

° Col. iii. 14.—° Chap. xii. 26; xiv. 3; 1 Thess. iv. 17.
° Verse 5.—° Chap. xv. 21; xvi. 3.

on them the honour and happiness of having a
measure of the same Spirit dwelling in them, en-
riching them with various gifts and graces, stamp-
ing them with thine image, and communicating
unto them thy divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. *That
they may be one, even as we are one*—May possess
the closest union, and enjoy a most holy and happy
fellowship with us and with each other here, and in
consequence thereof may dwell together with us in
eternal felicity hereafter. *I in them*—Dwelling in
their hearts by faith; (Eph. iii. 17;) *and thou in me*
—By thine indwelling presence; *that they may be
made perfect in one*—May possess the most perfect
and uninterrupted union of love and purity, without
any jarring affection or disposition, and through
that union may grow up into me their living head
in all things, till they arrive at *the measure of the
stature of my fulness*, and are perfected in that
holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.
That the world may know that thou hast sent me—
That the clearest demonstration may thus be given of
the efficacy of thy grace in creating men anew, and
constituting them saints indeed, visibly and justly
the favourites of Heaven; and that it may be mani-
fest to all that thou *hast loved them as thou hast
loved me*—And hast conferred this grace upon them
for my sake.

Verse 24. *Father, I will*—He asks as one having
a right to be heard; and prays, not as a servant, but
as a Son; *that they also whom thou hast given me*—
Not only my apostles and first disciples, but all my
believing, loving, and obedient people; *may be with
me where I am*—Namely, in that heavenly world to
which I am now removing. As if he had said, Since
no improvements, either in holiness or comfort, can
completely answer the purposes of my love and the
promises of my grace to them; therefore I request
felicity for them in another and more perfect state
of things; *that they may behold*—May contemplate
with everlasting and delightful admiration; my

a

me before the foundation of the A. M. 4037.
world. A. D. 33.

25 O righteous Father, ° the world hath not
known thee: but ° I have known thee, and
° these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 ° And I have declared unto them thy
name, and will declare it: that the love
° wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in
them, and I in them.

° Chap. vii. 29; viii. 55; x. 15.—° Verse 8; Chap. xvi. 27.
° Verse 6; Chap. xv. 15.—° Chap. xv. 9.

glory, which thou hast—By thy sure appointment;
given me—And art just ready to bestow upon me;
*for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the
world*—And didst then decree for me that media-
torial kingdom with which thou art now about to in-
vest me. Observe, reader, the happiness of heaven
chiefly consists in beholding the glory of the Fa-
ther and of the Son, Matt. v. 8; 1 John. iii. 2.

Verses 25, 26. *O righteous Father*—Faithful and
just, as well as merciful. When he prayed that be-
lievers might be sanctified, he called him *holy
Father*: but now, praying that they might be glo-
rified, he terms him *righteous Father*: for it is a
crown of righteousness which the righteous Judge
will give, and the admission of believers into the
presence of God, through Christ, flows, not only
from the mercy, but even from the justice of God.
The world hath not known thee—The world, being
ignorant of thy nature and perfections, and of thy
gracious counsels for the salvation of mankind,
has rejected me; *yet I have known thee*—Have
been perfectly acquainted with thy counsels and
designs, and have accordingly directed the whole
of my ministrations to thy glory. *And these have
known that thou hast sent me*—And therefore have
believed in me as the Messiah, a truth which they
will courageously assert at the expense of their
lives; which is the reason I am so solicitous that
they should behold the glory thou hast given me.
And I have declared to them thy name—Have made
them acquainted with thy nature, perfections, and
counsels, and especially thy new best name of love;
and I will declare it—Still more fully, both by my
word and by my Spirit; *that the love wherewith
thou hast loved me may be in them*—That their
graces and services may be more eminent, as an
evidence of thy unspeakable love to them; and
that I also may take up my constant residence in
them by my spiritual presence, when my bodily
presence is removed, as it will quickly be.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In this chapter we are informed, (1.) How Christ was arrested by Judas and his band in the garden; and after manifesting his power over them, and care for his disciples' safe escape, surrendered himself a prisoner, 1-12. (2.) How he was abused in the high-priest's court, and thrice denied by Peter, 13-27. (3.) How he was prosecuted before Pilate, and examined by him concerning his kingly office, 28-37. (4.) How the Jews preferred Barabbas, a murderous robber, to him, 38-40.

A. M. 4037. **W**HEN Jesus had spoken these words, ^a he went forth with his disciples over ^b the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: ^c for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

3 ^d Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

^a Matt. xxvi. 36; Mark xiv. 32; Luke xxii. 39.—^b 2 Sam. xv. 23.—^c Luke xxi. 37; xxii. 39.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

Verses 1-3. *When Jesus had spoken these words*—Had delivered the discourse recorded above, and concluded his intercessory prayer; *he went with his disciples over the brook Cedron*—On the other side of which was a garden, known by the name of the garden of Gethsemane; (see notes on Matt. xxvi. 36;) and 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. Cedron, or 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 his people, weeping, in his flight from Absalom. *Judas, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft-times resorted thither, &c.*—Namely, for the sake of retirement and devotion. *Judas, having received a band of men*—Greek, *την σπειραν*, a cohort of Roman foot-soldiers, as the word signifies, and the title of its commander (*χιλιάρχος*, a *chiliarch*, answering to our colonel) implies; *and officers*—Some Jewish officers, sent for that purpose; *from the chief priests and other Pharisees*—Belonging to the sanhedrim, who were chiefly concerned in this affair; *cometh thither with lanterns and torches, &c.*—Which they brought with them, though it was now full moon, to discover him if he should endeavour to hide himself; *and weapons*—To use if they should meet with

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *he*. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

9 That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, ^e Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none.

^d Matt. xxvi. 47; Mark xiv. 43; Luke xxii. 47; Acts i. 16. ^e Chap. xvii. 12.

any opposition, which they foolishly imagined they might.

Verses 4-11. *Jesus, knowing all things that should come upon him*—That is, knowing, not only in general, that he must suffer a variety of insults, tortures, and even death itself, but also all the particular circumstances of ignominy and horror that should attend his sufferings; *went forth*—Namely, after his repeated supplications to his heavenly Father, and his agony, as is related at large, Matt. xxvi. 37-46; Mark xiv. 34-42; Luke xxii. 41-46; where see the notes; *and said unto them*—With the greatest composure of mind; *Whom seek ye?*—The appointed time of our Lord's sufferings being come, he did not now, as formerly, avoid his enemies, but readily came forward, and gave them an opportunity of apprehending him, telling them, when they said they sought Jesus of Nazareth, *I am he*—Which expression he had no sooner uttered than the whole band *went backward, and fell to the ground*—By which exertion of his divine power he evidently showed them that they could not apprehend him without his consent. 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 further damage. See note on Matt. xxvi. 47-50. *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 his word as not to seize even Peter, when he had cut off the

A. M. 4037. 10 ¶ Then Simon Peter, having
A. D. 33. a sword, drew it, and smote the high-priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

12 ¶ Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,

13 And ^h led him away to ⁱ Annas first, (for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high-priest that same year.¹)

14 ^k Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

15 ¶ ^l And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and

¹ Matthew xxvi. 51; Mark xiv. 47; Luke xxii. 49, 50. ² Matthew xx. 22; xxvi. 39, 42.—^h Matthew xxvi. 57. ^l Luke iii. 2.

ear of Malchus. *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it*—No other evangelist names the person that drew the sword, nor could they without exposing Peter to danger. But John, writing after his death, might do it without any such inconvenience. *And smote the high-priest's servant, &c.*—See note on Matt. xxvi. 51–54. *Then said Jesus, Put up thy sword, &c.*—For I will not have recourse to this or any other method of defence. *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*—You look only at second causes, and have but an imperfect view of things; but I consider all the sufferings I am now to meet, as under a divine direction and appointment, and therefore willingly acquiesce in what I know to be my heavenly Father's will.

Verses 12, 13. *Then the band, &c.*—To whom Jesus, without any opposition, surrendered himself; *took and bound him*—Foolishly supposing, that he might attempt to make his escape. *And led him away to Annas*—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 him 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.

Verses 15–17. *Simon Peter followed*—See note on Matt. xxvi. 58; Luke xxii. 54–62; *and so did another disciple*—Generally supposed to have been John himself, it being the manner of this evangelist to speak of himself in the third person. Grotius, however, is of opinion, that the disciple intended was not one of the twelve, but rather an inhabitant of Jerusalem; possibly, the person at whose house our Lord ate the passover. Whitby likewise thinks it was not John. "These authors found their opinion on this circumstance, that the twelve being Galile-

so did another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high-priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high-priest.

16 ^m But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple which was known unto the high-priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; (for it was cold;) and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 ¶ The high-priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

¹ And Annas sent Christ bound unto Caiaphas the high-priest, Ver. 24.—^k Chap. xi. 50.—^l Matt. xxvi. 58; Mark xiv. 54; Luke xxii. 54.—^m Matt. xxvi. 69; Mark xiv. 66; Luke xxiii. 54.

ans, and men of mean station, could not any of them be so well acquainted in the high-priest's family, as to procure admission for a friend at a time when there was so much ado there. Nevertheless the common opinion may still be adhered to. For though John was a Galilean, and a person in a mean station, there is neither impossibility nor improbability in the notion, that he might have had a relation, friend, or acquaintance in the station of a servant at the high-priest's, who might not only give him admittance, but, at his desire, admit Peter also. Further, when we consider that John was to write a history of Christ's life, it will appear extremely proper that, in the course of providence, he should have an opportunity afforded him of being an eye-witness of our Lord's trial before the council.²—Macknight. That disciple was known unto the high-priest, and therefore was admitted into the palace, without any objection or impediment. *But Peter stood at the door without*—Having no interest or acquaintance in the high-priest's house. *Then went out that other disciple*—Namely, out of the inner room, into which Jesus had been carried in order to his examination; *and spake unto her that kept the door*—Desiring her to open it, and admit Peter, whom he brought in. *Then saith the damsel unto Peter, Art not thou also*—As well as the other; *one of this man's disciples*—Of Peter's sundry denials of Christ, and of the manner in which the accounts given thereof by the different evangelists may be reconciled, see the notes on Matt. xxvi. 69–75; Mark xiv. 66–72; Luke xxii. 54–62.

Verses 19–27. *The high-priest then asked Jesus*—As he stood before him; *of his disciples, and of his doctrine*—What it was that he taught, and with what view he had gathered so many followers. In these questions there was a great deal of art. For, as the crime laid to our Lord's charge was, that he

A. M. 4037. 20 Jesus answered him, ^a I spake
A. D. 33. openly to the world; I ever taught
in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither
the Jews always resort; and in secret have I
said nothing.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which
heard me, what I have said unto them: be-
hold, they know what I said.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the
officers which stood by, ^o struck Jesus ² with the
palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the
high-priest so?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken
evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why
smitest thou me?

24 (^p Now Annas had sent him bound unto
Caiaphas the high-priest.)

^a Matt. xxvi. 55; Luke iv. 15; Chap. vii. 14, 26, 28; viii. 2.—^o Jer. xx. 2; Acts xxiii. 2.—^p Or, with a rod.—² Matt. xxvi. 57.—³ Matt. xxvi. 69, 71; Mark xiv. 69; Luke xxii. 58.

set himself up for the Messiah, and deluded the people, they expected he would claim that dignity in their presence, and so, without further trouble, they would have condemned him on his own confession. But, to oblige a prisoner to confess what might take away his life, being an unjust method of procedure, Jesus complained of it with reason, and bade them prove what they laid to his charge, by witnesses. *Jesus answered, I spake openly, &c.*—What I have taught has been delivered in the most public manner. *I ever taught in the synagogue*—As I had opportunity; *and in the temple, whither the Jews resort*—In the greatest numbers; *and in secret have I said nothing*—Even to my most intimate friends, but what has been perfectly agreeable to the tenor of my public discourses. *Why askest thou me*—Whom thou wilt not believe? It was greatly to the honour of our Lord's character, that all his actions were done in public, under the eye even of his enemies; because, had he been carrying on any imposture, the lovers of truth and goodness would thus have had abundant opportunities to have detected him. With propriety, therefore, in this defence, he appealed to that part of his character; nevertheless, his answer was thought disrespectful. For, *when he had spoken, one of the officers*—Belonging to the court; *struck Jesus, saying, Answerest thou the high-priest so?*—With so little reverence? *Jesus answered*—With his usual mildness; *If I have spoken evil*—Any thing false or improper; *bear witness of the evil*—Show wherein it lies; *but if well, why smitest thou me*—Can reason be answered by blows? Or, can such a sober appeal to it deserve them? Thus Jesus became an example of his own precept, (Matt. v. 44,) bearing the greatest injuries with a patience that could not be provoked. *Now Annas had sent him bound to Caiaphas the high-*

25 ¶ And Simon Peter stood and ^a warmed himself. ^a They said there-
A. M. 4037. fore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of his dis-
A. D. 33. ciples? He denied *it*, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high-priest
(being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off)
saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with
him?

27 Peter then denied again: and ^r immedi-
ately the cock crew.

28 ¶ ^r Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas
unto ³ the hall of judgment: and it was early;
^t and they themselves went not into the judg-
ment-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that
they might eat the passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said,
What accusation bring ye against this man?

^r Matt. xxvi. 74; Mark xiv. 72; Luke xxii. 60; Chap. xiii. 38.—^s Matt. xxvii. 2; Mark xv. 1; Luke xxiii. 1; Acts iii. 13. ³ Or, *Pilate's house*, Matt. xxvii. 17.—^t Acts x. 28; xi. 3.

priest—The evangelist mentions that Jesus was sent to the high-priest, because he had before said that he was sent first to Annas, the high-priest's father-in-law. Moreover, he takes notice that he was sent bound, to show the inhumanity of the officer who struck him in that condition. Of what took place while Jesus stood before the high-priest, see the notes on Matt. xxvi. 59-68.

Verse 28. *Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment*—Το πραιτωριον, the pretorium, the governor's palace. Properly speaking, the pretorium was that part of the palace where the soldiers kept guard, Mark xv. 16; but in common language it was applied to the palace in general. The Jewish high-priests and elders sent Jesus hither that he might be tried by the Roman governor, Pilate, because they could not otherwise accomplish their purpose, the power of life and death being now taken out of their hands. *And it was early*—Although by this time it was broad daylight, yet it was early in the morning, and much sooner than the governor used to appear. It is therefore probable that he was called up on this extraordinary occasion; *and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall*—Or into the palace, of which the judgment-hall was a part; *lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover*—Having purified themselves in order to eat the passover, they would not enter into the palace, which was the house of a heathen, for fear of contracting such defilement as might have rendered them incapable of eating the paschal-supper. They stood, therefore, before the palace, waiting for the governor, who on such occasions came out to them.

Verses 29-32. *Pilate then went out and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?*—This was the most natural question imaginable for a judge

A. M. 4037. 30 They answered and said unto
A. D. 33. him, If he were not a malefactor, we
would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him,
and judge him according to your law. The
Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful
for us to put any man to death :

32 * That the saying of Jesus might be ful-
filled, which he spake, signifying what death
he should die.

33 * Then Pilate entered into the judgment-
hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him,
Art thou the King of the Jews ?

* Matthew xx. 19; Chapter xii. 32, 33.—* Matthew xxvii. 11.
† 1 Tim. vi. 13.

to ask on such an occasion ; nevertheless the priests
thought themselves affronted by it. *They answered,*
haughtily, *If he were not a malefactor*—Greek,
κακοποιος, an evil-doer, a notorious offender; we
would not have delivered him up unto thee—It
seems they knew the governor's sentiments con-
cerning the prisoner, and understood his question
as carrying an insinuation along with it, of their
having brought one to be condemned against whom
they could find no accusation. *Then said Pilate,*
Take ye him, and judge him according to your law
—By making this offer to them, the governor told
them plainly, that in his opinion the crime which
they laid to the prisoner's charge was not of a capi-
tal nature ; and that such punishment as they were
permitted by Cesar to inflict, might be adequate to
any misdemeanour Jesus was chargeable with. *The*
Jews therefore said, It is not lawful for us—It is
not allowed, you well know, by the government
under which we are ; *to put any man to death*—By
which they signified, that the prisoner was guilty of
a capital crime, that he deserved the highest punish-
ment, and that none but the governor himself could
give judgment in the cause. *That the saying of*
Jesus might be fulfilled, &c.—That is, in conse-
quence of this procedure of the Jews, there was an
accomplishment of the divine counsels concerning
the manner of our Lord's death, of which Jesus had
given frequent intimations in the course of his mini-
stry. *Signifying what death he should die*—For
crucifixion was not a Jewish, but a Roman punish-
ment. So that had he not been condemned by the
Roman governor, he could not have been crucified.
Thus was the governor's first attempt to save Jesus
frustrated. He made four other efforts to the same
purpose, but was equally unsuccessful in them all.
This good effect, however, has flowed from them ;
they serve to testify how strongly Pilate was im-
pressed with the conviction of our Lord's innocence,
and at the same time they show to what a height of
malice and wickedness the Jewish great men were
now risen.

Verses 33—40. *Then Pilate entered into the judg-
ment-hall again*—See the note on Matt. xxvii. 11.

a

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest A. M. 4037.
thou this thing of thyself, or did A. D. 33.
others tell it thee of me ?

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew ? Thine
own nation, and the chief priests, have deli-
vered thee unto me. What hast thou done ?

36 † Jesus answered, * My kingdom is not of
this world : if my kingdom were of this world,
then would my servants fight, that I should
not be delivered to the Jews : but now is my
kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou
a king then ? Jesus answered, Thou sayest

* Daniel ii. 44 ; vii. 14 ; Luke xii. 14 ; Chapter vi. 15 ;
viii. 15.

It seems, as the governor had heard an honourable
report of Jesus, and observed in his silence, under
the accusations brought against him, an air of meek
majesty and greatness of spirit, rather than any con-
sciousness of guilt, or any indication of a fierce con-
tempt, he was willing to discourse with him more
privately before he proceeded further. He there-
fore called Jesus, and said, *Art thou the king of the*
Jews?—Dost thou really pretend to any right to
govern them ? *Jesus answered, Sayest thou this*
thing of thyself?—Dost thou ask this question of thy
own accord, because thou thinkest that I have affected
regal power ? *or did others tell it thee of me?*—Or
dost thou ask it according to the information of the
priests, affirming that I have acknowledged myself
to be a king ? No doubt Jesus knew what had hap-
pened ; but he spake to the governor after this man-
ner, because, being in the palace when the priests
accused him, he had not heard what they said.
Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?—Dost thou think
that I am acquainted with the religious opinions,
expectations, and disputes of the Jews ? *Thine own*
nation, &c., have delivered thee unto me—As a sedi-
tious person, one that assumes the title of a king :
What hast thou done—To merit the charge of sedi-
tion ? *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this*
world—Not a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom,
which does not at all interfere with the dominion of
Cesar, or of which any prince has reason to be
jealous. *If my kingdom were of this world*—Were
of an external or temporal nature ; *then would my*
servants fight—Or rather, *would have fought.* would
have endeavoured to establish me on the throne by
force of arms, and would have fought against the
Jews when they came to apprehend me. But as I
have done nothing of this, but readily put myself
into their hands, it is evident *my kingdom is not*
from hence—Nor to be erected here ; and therefore
I have been so far from arming my followers with
secular weapons, that the guard who came to appre-
hend me know I forbade their making use of those
they had. *Pilate said, Art thou a king then?*—
Art thou a king, notwithstanding thy kingdom is not
of this world ? *Jesus answered, Thou sayest I am*

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A. M. 4037. that I am a king. To this end was
A. D. 33. I born, and for this cause came I into
the world, that I should bear witness unto the
truth. Every one that ^a is of the truth, heareth
my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?
And when he had said this, he went out again

^a Chap. viii. 47; 1 John iii. 19; iv. 6.—^b Matt. xxvii. 24;
Luke xxiii. 4; Chap. xix. 4, 6.

a king—That is, according to the Hebrew idiom, It is as thou sayest: I am a king, but not of this world: even the appointed Head and Governor of the whole Israel of God; nor will I ever basely seek my safety by renouncing my claim to the most excellent majesty and extensive dominion. *To this end was I born, &c.*—Our Lord speaks of his human origin; his divine was above Pilate's comprehension: yet it is intimated in the following words: *For this cause came I into the world*—Namely, from heaven; that *I should bear witness unto the truth*—That by explaining and proving the truth, I might impress it upon men's consciences, and make them obedient to its laws. In this consisteth my kingdom, and all the lovers of truth obey me, and are my subjects. This is what Paul calls the *good confession*, which he tells Timothy, (1 Epist. vi. 13.) Jesus witnessed before Pontius Pilate. And justly does the apostle term it so. For our Lord did not deny the truth to save his own life, but gave all his followers an example highly worthy of imitation. It is remarkable, that Christ's assuming the title of king did not offend the governor in the least, though it was the principal crime laid to his charge. Probably the account which he gave of his kingdom and subjects, led Pilate to take him for some Stoic philosopher, who pleased himself with the chimerical royalty attributed by his sect to those they termed *wise men*. See Horace, Lib. I. Sat. iii. Accordingly he desired him to explain what he meant by *truth*. *Pilate saith, What is truth?*—That is, the truth to which thou referrest, and speakest of as thy business to attest. Or perhaps he meant, *What signifies truth?* Is that a thing worth hazarding thy life for? So he left him presently, to plead with the Jews for him;

unto the Jews, and saith unto them, A. M. 4037.
^b I find in him no fault *at all*. A. D. 33.

39 ^c But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

40 ^d Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. ^e Now Barabbas was a robber.

^c Matt. xxvii. 15; Mark xv. 6; Luke xxiii. 17.—^d Acts iii. 14.
^e Luke xxiii. 19.

looking upon him, it is probable, as an innocent but weak man. *He went out again unto the Jews, and saith*—To those that were assembled about the judgment-hall, namely, chief priests and others: *I find in him no fault at all*—No opinion inconsistent with the good of society, neither any action or pretension criminal in the least degree. *But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover*—And I am ready now to oblige you in this affair. This, it seems, was said in consequence of the multitude desiring him to do as he had been wont to do at preceding passovers. See Mark xv. 8-10. *Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?*—It seems he hoped by this proposal to preserve the life of Jesus, of whose innocence he was fully convinced; and accordingly, that he might induce them to choose him, he proposed no other alternative than Barabbas, a robber and murderer. See note on Matt. xxvii. 15-18, 20-22. *Then cried they all again*—Or, *all at once*, as some translate *παλι* here, because it does not appear that the people had refused Jesus and asked Barabbas before this time. But indeed "that word is wanting in a considerable number of manuscripts, in the Complutensian edition, the Syriac, Coptic, Saxon, Arabic, Armenian, and Ethiopic versions. In many Latin manuscripts it is not found. Besides, it does not suit the preceding part of our Lord's trial, as related by this evangelist, who makes no mention of their crying in this manner before."—Campbell. *Not this man*—We will not have this man released; but *Barabbas*—A robber and murderer. And thus, when Pilate would have let him go, they *denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them*, Acts iii. 14. See note on Luke xxiii. 18-25.

CHAPTER XIX.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The remainder of Christ's trial before Pilate, 1-15. (2.) His condemnation and crucifixion between two thieves, 16-18. (3.) His title in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, fixed by Pilate on the cross, 19-22. (4.) The parting of his garments, 23, 24. (5.) His recommendation of his aged mother to the care of John, 25-27. (6.) Their offering him vinegar to drink, 28, 29. (7.) His dying triumph over death, 30. (8.) The piercing of his side with a spear 31-37. (9.) The burial of his body by Joseph and Nicodemus, 38-42.

A. M. 4037. **THEN** ** Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

4 ¶ Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, ^b that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the

* Good Friday, gospel, verse 1 to verse 38.—^a Matt. xx. 19; xxvii. 26; Mark xv. 15; Luke xviii. 33.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIX.

Verses 1-3. *Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him*—The Romans usually scourged the criminals whom they condemned to be crucified, which was the reason why Pilate ordered our Lord to be scourged before he delivered him up to suffer that punishment. See note on Matt. xxvii. 26. *And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns*—Intending thereby to add cruelty to scorn. See on Matt. xxvii. 29. *They put on him a purple robe*—Or, a purple mantle, as Dr. Campbell renders *ματιο πορφυρεν*. It is called, Matt. xxvii. 28, a scarlet cloak, *χλαμυδα κοκκινην*. "The names denoting the colour of the garment, ought to be understood with all the latitude common in familiar conversation. This cloak, in strictness, may have been neither purple nor scarlet, and yet have had so much of each, as would naturally lead one to give it one of these names, and another the other." *And they smote him with their hands*—Matthew says, *They took a reed which they had put into his right hand, and smote him on the head*. And Mark also says, *They smote him on the head with a reed*. It seems some smote him with a reed on his head, laying their blows upon the thorns, and driving the prickles thereof into his temples. And others smote him with their hands on his cheeks, or some other part of his body. See note on Matt. xxvii. 29, 30; Mark xv. 19.

Verses 4-7. *Pilate went forth again*—Although he had given sentence that it should be as the Jews desired, and had delivered Jesus to the soldiers, to be scourged and crucified, he thought, if he were shown to the people in the condition in which he now was, covered with blood and wounds through the scourges, spit upon, crowned with thorns, &c., they might yet relent and let him go. And that the impression might be stronger, he went out himself and spoke to them, saying, *Behold, I bring him forth, &c.*—Though I have sentenced him to die, and have scourged him as one that is to be crucified, I bring him forth to you this once, that I may testify to you again how fully I am persuaded of his innocence, and that you may have an opportunity to save his life. Upon this Jesus appeared on the pavement, having his face, hair, and shoulders all

a

crown of thorns, and the purple robe. A. M. 4037. **And Pilate** saith unto them, Behold the man!

6 • When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

7 The Jews answered him, ^d We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because ^e he made himself the Son of God.

8 ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

^b Chap. xviii. 38; Verse 6.—^c Acts iii. 13.—^d Lev. xxiv. 16
^e Matt. xxvi. 65; Chap. v. 18; x. 33.

clotted with blood, and the purple robe bedaubed with spittle: when Pilate said, *Behold the man!* But all was to no purpose. The priests, whose rage and malice had extinguished, not only the sentiments of justice and feelings of pity natural to the human heart, but that love which countrymen usually bear to one another, no sooner saw Jesus than, fearing, perhaps, lest the fickle populace might relent, they cried out with all their might, *Crucify him! Crucify him!* *Pilate saith, Take ye him and crucify him*—He seems to have uttered these words in anger, vexed at finding the chief priests and rulers thus obstinately bent on the destruction of a person from whom they had nothing to fear that was dangerous either to the church or state. But they refused this offer also, perhaps "thinking it dishonourable to receive permission to punish one who had been more than once publicly declared innocent by his judge. Besides, they considered with themselves that the governor afterward might have called it sedition, as the permission had been extorted from him. Wherefore they told him, that though none of the things alleged against the prisoner were true, he had committed such a crime in the presence of the council itself, as by their law (Lev. xxiv. 16) deserved the most ignominious death. He had spoken blasphemy, calling himself the *Son of God*, a title which no mortal could assume without the highest degree of guilt. And therefore, said they, since by our law blasphemy merits death, and though Cesar is our ruler, he governs us by our own laws, you ought by all means to crucify this blasphemer." It is evident they must have understood our Lord as using the title, *Son of God*, in the highest sense, otherwise they could not have accounted his applying it to himself *blasphemy*.

Verses 8-12. *When Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid*—He before feared to shed innocent blood, and now he became more afraid than ever to take his life; suspecting, probably, that the account which he heard of him might be true, and that he might be a divine person. For doubtless he had heard of some of the many miracles which Jesus had performed, and now, it seems, began to

A. M. 4037. 9 And went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? ^{A. D. 33.} [†] But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

11 Jesus answered, [‡] Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that de-

[†] Isa. liiii. 7; Matt. xxvii. 12, 14.—[‡] Luke xxii.

think that perhaps what had been currently reported was true, and that he really had performed the wonderful works ascribed to him. For it is very well known, that the religion which the governor professed directed him to acknowledge the existence of demi-gods and heroes, or men descended from the gods. Nay, the heathen believed that their gods themselves sometimes appeared on earth, in the form of men, Acts xiv. 11, 12. Pilate, therefore, *went again into the judgment-hall*—Being resolved to act cautiously; *and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou?*—That is, From whom art thou descended? or what is this divine original which thou art charged with claiming? *But Jesus*—Knowing that his innocence was already apparent, even to the conviction of Pilate's conscience; *gave him no answer*—To that question. Indeed, Pilate's ordering, or allowing such cruelties to be inflicted on a person he knew to be innocent, rendered him unworthy of an answer. *Then saith Pilate*—Marvelling at his silence, and being displeased with it; *Speakest thou not unto me?*—Dost thou make me no reply, and not so much as speak to me in such a circumstance as this, in which thy life is so evidently concerned? *Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee?*—To adjudge thee to that terrible death; *and have power to release thee?*—If I please, notwithstanding all the clamorous demands of thine enemies? *Jesus answered*—With great calmness and mildness; *Thou couldest have no power at all against me*—For I have done nothing to expose myself to the power of any magistrate; *except it were given thee*—In an extraordinary way; *from above*—From the God of heaven, whose providence I acknowledge in all these events. Some have thought that the word *ανωθεν*, *from above*, refers to the situation of the temple, which stood much higher than the pretorium: and that it is as if Jesus had said, I know that whatever thou dost against me, is only in consequence of the sentence passed in yonder court held above, so that their guilt is greater than thine. But though this would very well account for the connection of the latter part of this verse, "I cannot think," says Dr. Doddridge, "it altogether just; for had Providence permitted Pilate to seize Christ as one dangerous to Cesar's dignity, he would have had as much

livered me unto thee hath the greater ^{A. M. 4037.} ^{A. D. 33.} sin.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, [‡] If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend. [†] Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cesar.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

53; Ch. vii. 30.—[‡] Luke xxiii. 2.—[†] Acts xvii. 7.

power of putting him to death as he now had. It is therefore much more reasonable to suppose it refers to the permission of God's providence." *Therefore he that delivered me unto thee*—Namely, the Jewish high-priest, with his council, having far greater opportunities of being acquainted with God and his law than thou hast, and knowing, also, that I have done nothing amiss; *hath the greater sin*—Is more blameable than thou art. *And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him*—That is, he was still further satisfied of the injustice of the prosecution, and of the innocence of Jesus, so that he endeavoured even more than before to have him released. For the reader will observe, that this was not the first attempt of Pilate to release Jesus. This evangelist himself tells us, (chap. xviii. 39,) that he had once before offered to release him. And the answer of the priests on this occasion corresponds thereto. *They cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend*—That is, thou art not faithful to the emperor; by which they insinuated that they would accuse him to his master, if he did not do his duty. This argument was weighty, and shook Pilate's resolution to the foundation. He was frightened at the very thought of being accused to Tiberius, who in matters of government, as Tacitus and Suetonius testify, was apt to suspect the worst, and always punished the least crimes relative thereto with death. *Whosoever maketh himself a king*—Or rather, *maketh, or calleth himself king, speaketh against Cesar*. So Dr. Campbell reads the clause, observing, "the sentence is true, when βασιλεα [the word here used] is rendered king, but not when rendered a king. Judea, at that time, together with Syria, to which it was annexed, made a province of the empire. Nothing is more certain than that whoever in Judea called himself king, in the sense wherein the word was commonly understood, opposed Cesar. But it did not therefore hold, that whosoever called himself a king, opposed Cesar. For if the kingdom to which he laid claim was without the bounds of the Roman empire, the title in nowise interfered with the rights of the emperor."

Verses 13-15. *When Pilate heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth*—Brought him out of the palace a second time; *and sat down in the judgment-seat*—On the tribunal which was then erected

A. M. 4037. 14 And ^k it was the preparation of the
A. D. 33. passover, and about the sixth hour: and
he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

15 But they cried out, Away with *him*, away
with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them,
Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests
answered, ^l We have no king but Cesar.

16 ^m Then delivered he him therefore unto

^k Matt. xxvii. 62.—^l Gen. xlix. 10.—^m Matt. xxvii. 26, 31;
Mark xv. 15; Luke xxiii. 24.

without the palace; *in a place that was called*, in Greek, λιθοστρωτον, *the Pavement*—So called on account of a beautiful piece of Mosaic work, with which the floor was adorned; *but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha*—Or, *the high place*, because it stood on an eminence; so that the judge, being seated there, might be heard and seen by a considerable number of people. *And it was the preparation of the passover*—Or, *of the paschal sabbath*. The word παρασκευη, [here rendered *preparation*,] in the New Testament, denotes always, in my opinion, says Dr. Campbell, “the day before the sabbath, and not the day which preceded any other festival, unless that festival fell on the sabbath. My reasons for this opinion are, 1st, This explanation coincides exactly with the definition which Mark gives of that word, (chapter xv. 42,) *It was the preparation, that is, the eve of the sabbath*. 2d, The word occurs six times in the New Testament, and, in all these places, confessedly means the sixth day of the week, answering to our Friday, and consequently the day before the Jewish sabbath, or Saturday. 3d, The preparation of all things necessary the day before the sabbath was expressly commanded in the law, Exod. xvi. 5, 23. There was nothing analogous to this enjoined in preparation for the other feasts.” *And about the sixth hour*—Or rather, *the third hour*: for as there is no reason to think that John computed time in a manner different from that used by the other evangelists; “as six o’clock, (according to the Roman computation,) or soon after sunrise, must have been much too early for all the events to have occurred that morning which preceded our Lord’s crucifixion; as Mark has expressly mentioned *the third hour*, or nine o’clock, for the time of that event, to which the accounts of the other evangelists accord; and as the sixth hour, or noon, (according to the Jewish computation,) would be too late to agree with the parallel scriptures; so it seems the most easy way of solving the difficulty, to suppose that [τ] *sixth*, instead of [γ] *third*, was inserted by some of the early transcribers of this gospel. The mistake would be very easily fallen into; and in a few places it is necessary to allow that something of this kind has happened. Indeed some manuscripts read *the third hour*.”—Scott. See this point more fully explained and defended in the note on Mark xv. 25. *And he saith unto the Jews*—Who were present in vast numbers; *Behold your king*—Pointing to Jesus as he now appeared in the mock pomp of

them, to be crucified. And they took ⁿ Jesus, and led *him* away. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

17 ¶ ⁿ And he bearing his cross ^o went forth into a place called *the place* of a scull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha:

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

ⁿ Matt. xxvii. 31, 33; Mark xv. 21, 22; Luke xxiii. 26, 33.
^o Num. xv. 36; Heb. xiii. 12.

royalty, wearing the purple robe and crown of thorns, and with his hands manacled. It seems he spoke thus, either in ridicule of the national expectation, or, which is more probable, to show the Jews how vain the fears were which they pretended to entertain about the emperor’s authority in Judea, the person who was the occasion of them, showing, in the whole of his deportment, a temper of mind no ways consonant to the ambition which they branded him with. *But they cried out*—With indignation and disdain; *Away with him, &c.*—See on Luke xxiii. 18–25. *Pilate saith, shall I crucify your king?*—According to most commentators, Pilate said this, mocking him. But it is more agreeable to his general behaviour in this affair to suppose, that he spake it with a view to move the populace, who he knew had once held Jesus in great esteem as the Messiah. For John tells us, (verse 12,) that he now sought to release him. *The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar*—“In this reply they publicly renounced their hope of a Messiah, which the whole economy of their religion had been calculated to cherish: and likewise they acknowledged publicly their subjection to the Romans; and by so doing condemned themselves when they afterward rebelled.”

Verses 16–18. *Then delivered he him*—Having now laid aside all thoughts of saving Jesus, Pilate gave him up to the will of his enemies, and commanded the soldiers to prepare for his execution. *And they took Jesus, and led him away*—After they had insulted and abused him, as is related Matt. xxvii. 27–31; Mark xv. 16–20, where see the notes. *And he, 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 part they used to make the person carry who was to be executed. *Went forth*—Out of the city, to a place which it seems lay on the western side of Jerusalem, but a little without the boundaries of it; *unto a place called a place of the scull*—The place of execution had this name given it from the criminals’ bones which lay scattered there. See note on Matt. xxvii. 33. *Golgotha* is a Syriac word, and signifies a *scull*, or head. Here some of Christ’s friends offered him a stupifying potion, with a view, probably, to render him insensible of the ignominy and pain of his punishment. See note on Matt. xxvii. 33, 34. *And two other with him, on either side one*—See note on Luke xxiii. 32, 33.

A. M. 4037. 19 ¶ And Pilate wrote a title, and
A. D. 33. put it on the cross. And the writing
was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE
KING OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews:
for the place where Jesus was crucified was
nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew,
and Greek, and Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to
Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but
that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written,
I have written.

¶ Matt. xxvii. 37; Mark xv. 26; Luke xxiii. 38.—¶ Matt. xxvii.

Verses 19–22. *And Pilate wrote a title, &c.*—The governor, as usual, put a title or writing on the cross, signifying the crime for which Jesus was condemned. This writing probably was in black characters on a whitened board. *And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews*—Here, as Bengelius has observed, John gives us the very words ordered to be written by Pilate, (and without doubt the same in the three languages,) although the other evangelists do not express them at large. *This title then read many of the Jews*—Who came up to the feast of the passover; for the place was nigh to the city—Lying but just without the gates; and, that the inscription might be generally understood, it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin—So that it might easily be read by Jews, Romans, and most other foreigners. It was written in Latin, for the majesty of the Roman empire; in Greek, for the information of the Hellenists, who spoke that language, and came in great numbers to the feast; and, in Hebrew, because it was the language of the nation. The inscription set up in the temple, to prohibit strangers from coming within those sacred limits, was written in all these three languages. It is remarkable, that, by the influence of Providence, the cross of Christ bore an inscription in the languages of those nations which were soon to be subdued to the faith of it; for not only the Jewish religion was to give place to it, but likewise the Grecian learning, and the Roman strength. *Then said the chief priests, Write not, The King of the Jews, &c.*—“When the priests read this title, they were exceedingly displeas’d; because, as it represented the crime for which Jesus was condemned, it intimated that he had been acknowledged for the Messiah. Besides, being placed over the head of one who was dying by the most infamous punishment, it implied that all who attempted to deliver the Jews should come to the same end. Wherefore, the faith and hope of the nation being thus publicly ridiculed, the priests thought themselves highly affronted, and came to Pilate in great concern, begging that the writing might be altered. But he, having intended the affront, because they had constrained him to crucify Jesus, contrary both to his judgment and inclination, would not hear them, but

23 ¶ Then the soldiers, when A. M. 4037
A. D. 33. they had crucified Jesus, took his
garments, and made four parts, to every sol-
dier a part; and also his coat: now the coat
was without seam, ¹ woven from the top
throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves,
Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it whose
it shall be: that the scripture might be ful-
filled, which saith, ² They parted my raiment
among them, and for my vesture they did
cast lots. These things therefore the sol-
diers did.

35; Mark xv. 24; Luke xxiii. 34.—¹ Or, wrought.—² Ps. xxii. 18.

rejected their application with some warmth, and with that inflexibility which historians represent as part of his character.”—Macknight.

Verses 23, 24. *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus*—That is, erected the cross with him upon it; they took his garments, and made four parts, &c.—Because four soldiers only are mentioned in the division of the clothes, it does not follow that only four were present at the crucifixion. Since, if soldiers were necessary at all, a great number must have been present to keep off the crowds which usually press to see such spectacles as near as they can. From Matt. xxvii. 54, it appears that the soldiers who assisted at the crucifixion were commanded by a centurion. It is therefore more than probable that the whole band, which Matthew tells us expressly was gathered together to scourge Jesus, (verse 27,) was present at his execution, especially as two others suffered at the same time. The four soldiers who parted his garments, and cast lots for his vesture, were the four who nailed him to the cross, (each of them fixing a limb,) and who, it seems, for this service had a right to the crucified person’s clothes. *That the scripture might be fulfilled, &c.*—That is, all this was done agreeably to an ancient prophecy, where, in these circumstances of the Messiah’s sufferings were mentioned, to show that he was to be crucified naked; and consequently, that he was to suffer a most ignominious, as well as a most painful death. The reader will observe that the words here referred to, *they parted my garments among them, &c.*, are quoted from the 22d Psalm, where they seem to be spoken of David. But the fact is, that no circumstance of David’s life bore any resemblance to this prediction, or to several other passages in this Psalm. So that, in this portion of Scripture, as also in some others, the prophet seems to have been thrown into a preternatural ecstasy, wherein, personating the Messiah, he spoke barely what the Spirit dictated, without any regard to himself. *These things therefore the soldiers did*—Though with the utmost freedom as to themselves, yet by the secret disposal of Providence, which led them to act in a remarkable correspondence to the divine oracle.

A. M. 4037. 25 ¶ Now there stood by the cross
A. D. 33. of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's
sister, Mary the wife of ² Cleophas, ³ and Mary
Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother,
and ⁴ the disciple standing by whom he loved,
he saith unto his mother, ⁵ Woman, behold thy
son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy
mother! And from that hour that disciple took
her ⁶ unto his own home.

⁴ Matt. xxvii. 55; Mark xv. 40; Luke xxiii. 49.—⁵ Or, *Cleopas*.
⁶ Luke xxiv. 18.—⁷ Chap. xiii. 23; xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20, 24.

Verses 25-27. *Now*—While Jesus, hanging on the cross, suffered all manner of insults and sorrows; *there stood by the cross his mother*—“Neither her own danger, nor the sadness of the spectacle, nor the reproaches and insults of the people, could restrain her from performing the last office of duty and tenderness to her divine son on the cross. Grotius justly observes, that it was a noble instance of fortitude and zeal. Now a sword (according to Simeon’s prophecy, Luke ii. 35) struck through her tender heart, and pierced her very soul; and perhaps the extremity of her sorrows might so overwhelm her spirits, as to render her incapable of attending the sepulchre, which we do not find that she did. Nor do we, indeed, meet with any thing after this in the sacred story concerning her, or in early antiquity: except that she continued among the disciples after our Lord’s ascension, which Luke observes, Acts i. 14.” *And his mother’s sister, &c.*—See note on Matt. xxvii. 55, 56. *When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved*—Jesus was now in the depth of his own sufferings, yet when he saw his mother and her companions, their grief greatly affected him, particularly the distress of his mother. Therefore, though he was almost at the point of death, he spake a few words, in which he expressed his most affectionate regard to her. *He saith, Woman, behold thy son*—Meaning John. His words were intended to assure her that that disciple whom he loved would, for the sake of that love, supply the place of a son to her after he was gone; and therefore he desired her to consider him as such, and expect from him all the duty of a son. *And*—Besides expressing great filial affection toward his mother, he gave the beloved disciple also a token of his high esteem. *He saith to him, Behold thy mother*—To whom thou art now to perform the part of a son in my place; thus singling him out as that disciple on whom he could most depend to fulfil that duty, and thereby conferring upon him a peculiar honour. *And from that hour*—That is, from the time of our Lord’s death; *that disciple took her unto his own home*—And maintained her; Joseph, her husband, it seems, being dead. Thus, in the midst of the heaviest sufferings that ever human nature sustained, Jesus

28 ¶ After this, Jesus knowing that
all things were now accomplished,
⁸ that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith,
I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vine-
gar: and ⁹ they filled a sponge with vinegar,
and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his
mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the
vinegar, he said, ¹⁰ It is finished: and he bowed
his head, and gave up the ghost.

⁸ Chapter ii. 4.—⁹ Chapter i. 11; xvi. 32.—¹⁰ Psalm lxix. 21.
¹¹ Matt. xxvii. 48.—¹² Chap. xvii. 4.

demonstrated a divine strength of benevolence. Even when his own distress was at the highest pitch, his friends had such a share of his concern, that their happiness for a while interrupted the feelings of his pains, and engrossed his thoughts.

Verses 28-30. *After this*—After what is related above; and after other events recorded by the other evangelists, such as the three hours supernatural darkness, and the doleful exclamation of Jesus, *Eloi, Eloi, &c.*, of which see notes on Matt. xxvii. 46, 47; Mark xv. 34; *Jesus, knowing that all things*—All the grievous and terrible sufferings he had to endure; *were now upon the point of being accomplished*—And being parched with a violent drought: *that the scripture might be fulfilled*—Where the Messiah is described as crying out, *My tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*, (Psa. xxii. 15, lxix. 21,) to show that he endured all that had been foretold concerning him; *saith, I thirst. Now there was set*—As usual on such occasions; *a vessel full of vinegar*—Near the cross: as vinegar and water was the common drink of the Roman soldiers, perhaps this vinegar was set here for their use. *And they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop*—That is, a stalk of hyssop; *and put it to his mouth*—In a contemptuous manner. See note on Matt. xxvii. 48. “There must have been some plant in Judea of the lowest class of trees, or shrubs, which was either a species of hyssop, or had a strong resemblance to what the Greeks called *υσσωπος*; inasmuch as the Hellenist Jews always distinguished it by that name. It is said of Solomon, (1 Kings iv. 33,) that *he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall*. Now they did not reckon among trees any plants but such as had durable and woody stalks, see note on Matt. vi. 30. That their hyssop was of this kind, is evident also from the uses of sprinkling, to which it is in many cases appointed by the law to be applied.”—Campbell. *When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished*—The predictions of the prophets that respect my personal ministry are all fulfilled. The important work of man’s redemption is accomplished. The demands of the law, and of divine justice, are satisfied, and my sufferings are now at an end.

A. M. 4037. 31 ¶ The Jews therefore, ^c because
A. D. 33. it was the preparation, ^d that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs :

^c Verse 42; Mark xv. 42.—^d Deuteronomy xxi. 23.
^e 1 John v. 6, 8.

It appears from Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that in speaking these words he cried with an exceeding loud voice; probably to show that his strength was not exhausted, but that he was about to give up his life of his own accord. Having thus shouted, he addressed his Father, with a tone of voice proper in prayer; saying, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*, and then bowed his head, and gave up the ghost—Leaving us the best pattern of a recommendatory prayer in the article of death. See note on Matt. xxvii. 50; Luke xxiii. 46.

Verses 31-37. *That the bodies should not remain on the cross*—It was customary among the Romans to let the bodies of persons who had been executed continue on the crosses, or stakes, till they were devoured by birds or beasts of prey. But the law of Moses expressly prohibited the Jews from suffering the bodies of those who were hanged to remain all night on the trees, Deut. xxi. 22; for that reason, as well as because the sabbath was at hand, which would have been profaned by their remaining, especially as that sabbath was a day of peculiar solemnity, being 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; therefore, *the Jews besought Pilate that the legs of the three crucified persons might be broken, to hasten their death; and Pilate consented, and gave the order they desired.* *Then came the soldiers*—Who guarded the execution; *and brake the legs of the first*—Malefactor, or of him that hung nearest the place where they had been sitting; and then, passing by Jesus, who hung in the middle, they went and brake the legs of the other, who was crucified with him. *But when they came to Jesus, perceiving that he was dead already*—They did not take the trouble of breaking his legs; *but one of the soldiers*—Had so much boldness and inhumanity that, with a spear, which he had in his hand, he pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water—Real blood and real water; the spear having pierced both the pericardium and heart, the water issuing from the former and the blood from the latter; a wound which must inevitably have killed him, had he been living when it was given, and which consequently put it out of all doubt

34 But one of the soldiers with a ^{A. M. 4037.}
spear pierced his side, and forthwith ^{A. D. 33.}
^e came thereout blood and water.

35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, ^f that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another scripture saith, ^g They shall look on him whom they pierced.

^f Exod. xii. 46; Num. ix. 12; Psa. xxxiv. 20.—^g Psa. xxii. 16, 17; Zech. xiii. 10; Rev. i. 7.

that he was really dead, before he was taken down from the cross; a point of infinite importance to be ascertained. For the grand evidence of Christ's mission is his resurrection, which implies the certainty of his death. On that account, crucifixion might have seemed, on a slight view, a less proper execution than some others, such as *beheading, burning, and the like*; but this wound, which pierced his heart, would effectually exclude all pretences of his having been taken down alive by his friends; and hence, false and malicious as his enemies were, we do not find that they ever had recourse to such an evasion. Accordingly, as it was of such importance to mankind to be ascertained of the truth of Christ's death, the evangelist here, in speaking of it, attests this circumstance, which demonstrates it, as being a thing which he himself saw; saying, *And he that saw it bare record, &c., and he knoweth*—By the most certain testimony of his senses; *that he saith true*—And he makes this declaration that you, whoever you are, into whose hands this history may come, may believe—And may be confirmed in your adherence to that gospel which is established on the death and resurrection of Christ. Of the mystical meaning of the blood and water which issued out of the side of Christ, see the note on 1 John v. 6. *For these things were done*—Or were permitted to be done, in the course of divine providence, however inconsiderable they may appear, *that the scripture should be fulfilled*—That is, Jesus's legs were not broken, that the passage, (Exod. xii. 46,) *Neither shall ye break a bone thereof*, might be fulfilled. "These words were primarily spoken of the paschal lamb, whose bones were not to be broken, that it might be a fit representation of the Messiah, typified by this sacrifice; and who, though he was to suffer a violent death, was to have none of his bones broken, because he was to rise from the dead on the third day. Wherefore, as the scripture which speaks of the type has necessarily a reference to the antitype, the evangelist had good reason to interpret what is there said of the paschal lamb, as prophetic of this circumstance of our Lord's death. And the rather, as by so doing he makes his readers sensible it was not owing to accident that the soldiers treated Christ's

A. M. 4037. 38 ¶^h And after this, Joseph of A. D. 33. Arimathea (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretlyⁱ for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also^k Nicodemus (which at the first came to Jesus by night) and brought

^h Matt. xxvii. 57; Mark xv. 42; Luke xxiii. 50.

body otherwise than they treated the bodies of those who were crucified with him. It happened by the direction of God, who had always determined that Christ should rise from the dead, and that his mission should be fully demonstrated by the evidence of miracles and prophecies united. John observes also, that Christ's side was pierced with a spear, because another scripture (Zech. xii. 10) had said, *They shall look on him whom they have pierced;*^l that is, 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.

Verses 38, 39. *Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly*—Because he durst not openly profess his faith in him; *for fear of the Jews*—And their rulers, who were so strongly prejudiced against him. This man, acknowledging Christ even when his chosen disciples forsook him, *besought Pilate that he might take away the body*—To preserve it from future insults, and to bury it in a decent and respectful manner. *And Pilate gave him leave*—As soon as he was assured by the centurion who guarded the execution that Jesus was actually dead. *He came, therefore*—Being thus authorized by Pilate; *and took the body of Jesus*—That is, took it down from the cross, with proper assistance. *And there came also Nicodemus*—Another member of the sanhedrim, of whom repeated mention has been made in the preceding narrative; *who at the first*—At the beginning of Christ's public ministry; *came to Jesus by night*—See chap. iii. 1, 2; and being now grown more courageous than before, and to testify his great regard for Jesus, he brought with him *a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight*—According to Josephus, great quantities of spices were wont to be used by the Jews for embalming a dead body, when they intended to show marks of respect to the deceased. Eighty pounds of spices were used at the funeral of Gamaliel the elder. See notes on Matt. xxvii. 57–60; Mark xv. 42–46.

Verse 40. *Then*—To prepare for his interment; *they took the body of Jesus*—Without regarding the reproach to which it might expose them; *and wound it in linen clothes*—Wrapped it in a great many folds of linen; *with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury*—Or rather, *to embalm*, for the proper meaning of the verb *ενταφιαζειν*, here used, is not *to bury*, but *to embalm*, as Dr. Campbell proves in a

a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about A. M. 4037 a hundred pounds *weight*. A. D. 33.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and^l wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

^l Ch. ix. 22; xii. 42.—^k Ch. iii. 1, 2; vii. 50.—^l Acts v. 6.

note on the words; showing that the verb *ενταφιαζειν*, and the noun *ενταφιασμος*, are used in the New Testament only in relation to the embalming of the body of our Lord; the word used for *to bury*, being invariably *θαπτειν*, which accords perfectly with the use made of the same words by the LXX. See Gen. 1. 2, 5, where the import of both words, and the distinction between them, is exemplified. It seems Joseph and Nicodemus intended to embalm our Lord's body in a more exact manner as soon as the sabbath was over; hoping that, in the mean time, the spices lying near the body might preserve it from all taint of corruption. "Those who have written upon the manners and customs of the Jews tell us, that they sometimes embalmed their dead with an aromatic mixture of myrrh, aloes, and other gums or spices, which they rubbed on the body, more or less profusely, according to their circumstances and their regard for the dead. After anointing the body, they covered it with a shroud, or winding-sheet, then wrapped a napkin round its head and face, others say, round the forehead only; because the Egyptian mummies are observed to have it so; last of all, they swathed the shroud round the body as tightly as possible, with proper bandages made of linen. At other times, they covered the whole body in a heap of spices, as is said of Asa, 2 Chron. xvi. 14. From the quantity of myrrh and aloes made use of by Joseph and Nicodemus, it would appear that the office performed by them to their Master was of this latter kind; for they had not time to embalm him properly." They seem, however, to have done all that was usual in such circumstances to persons of wealth and distinction, which, as well as the sepulchre itself, agreed to Isaiah's prophecy, chap. liii. 9.

Verses 41, 42. *Now in the place where he was crucified*—In the same tract of land; *there was a garden*—But the cross did not stand in the garden; *and in the garden a sepulchre*—Which happened very commodiously for his immediate interment. By the circumstance of the sepulchre's being "nigh to the place where Jesus was crucified, and consequently nigh to Jerusalem, all the cavils are prevented, which might otherwise have been occasioned, in case the body had been removed farther off. Moreover, it is observed that the sepulchre was a new one, wherein never any man had been laid. This plainly proves that it could be no other than Jesus who arose; and cuts off all suspicion that he

A. M. 4037. 42 ^mThere laid they Jesus there—
A. D. 33. fore, ⁿbecause of the Jews' prepara-

tion-day; for the sepulchre was nigh ^{A. M. 4037.}
at hand. ^{A. D. 33.}

^m Isa. liii. 9.

ⁿ Verse 31.

was raised by touching the bones of some prophet who had been buried there, as happened to the corpse which touched the bones of Elisha, 2 Kings xiii. 21. Further, the evangelists take notice that it was a sepulchre hewn out of a rock, to show that there was no passage by which the disciples could get into it, but the one at which the guards were placed, Matt. xxvii. 60; and, consequently, that it was not in their power to steal away the body, while the guards remained there performing their duty."—Macknight. *There laid they Jesus, because of the Jews' 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 they had no time to carry him far. "The boldness of Joseph, and even of Nicodemus himself, deserves our notice on such an occasion. They are not ashamed of the infamy of the cross, but come with all holy reverence and

affection to take down those sacred remains of Jesus; nor did they think the finest linen or the choicest spices too valuable on such an occasion. But who can describe their consternation and distress, when they saw him who they trusted should have delivered Israel, a cold and bloody corpse in their arms; and left him in the sepulchre of Joseph, whom they expected to have seen on the throne of David. We leave, for the present, his enemies in triumph, and his friends in tears, till his resurrection; which soon confounded the rage of the former, and revived the hopes of the latter;—hopes which must otherwise have been for ever entombed under that stone with which they now covered him. But happy and comfortable is the thought, that this his transient visit to the grave has (as it were) left a perfume in the bed of dust, and reconciled the believer to dwelling a while in the place where the Lord lay."—Doddridge.

CHAPTER XX.

In this chapter evidence is given of Christ's resurrection, (1.) By his body's not being found by Peter and John in the sepulchre, where his grave-clothes were lying in good order, 1-10. (2.) By the appearance of two angels to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, 11-13. (3.) By Christ's own appearance to her, 14-18. (4.) By his appearing that night to all the apostles, except Thomas, 19-25. (5.) By his appearing to them on that day seven-night, and offering Thomas his desired proof of feeling his wounded body, 26-31.

A. M. 4037. **THE** ^a first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

loved, and saith unto them, They ^{A. M. 4037.} have taken away the Lord out of the ^{A. D. 33.} sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the ^b other disciple whom Jesus

3 ^c Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

^a Easter Day, gospel, verse 1 to verse 11.—^b Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 1.

^b Chapter xiii. 23; xix. 26; xxi. 7, 20, 24.—^c Luke xxiv. 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

Verses 1-9. *The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene alone early, when it was yet dark*—See notes on Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 1, 2; Luke xxiv. 1; where the circumstance of John's mentioning only Mary Magdalene as visiting the sepulchre, is accounted for, and explained at large. *And seeth*—With the other women, mentioned by the three other evangelists; *the stone taken away from the sepulchre*—And that the tomb was open. Probably, in consequence of the distinguished ardour of her affection for her dear Lord and Master, she had advanced a little way before the others, and there-

fore first discovered that the stone was removed. *Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter*—That is, after she and the other women had entered into the sepulchre, had made search for the body there, and had not found it, (Luke xxiv. 3.) but before she and they had seen the angels, who informed them that he was risen: for after that it is very improbable that she should speak as the evangelist says she did to Peter, in the next words, *They have taken away the Lord, &c., and we know not where they have laid him.* Peter, therefore—Upon hearing that the stone was removed, and the body gone; *went forth, and that other disciple*—Imme-

A. M. 4037. 4 So they ran both together: and
A. D. 33. the other disciple did outrun Peter,
and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw
the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him,
and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the
linen clothes lie;

^d Chap. xix. 40.—^a Chap. xi. 44.

diately, and made all possible haste to the sepulchre, to satisfy themselves whether what was told them was a fact, and to see if they could make any further discoveries. Some think the other disciples were with Peter and John, when Mary gave them this information; but it seems more probable that she told it only to them; at least, it is evident that only these two went to the sepulchre. *So they ran both together*—Being eager and anxious to have their doubts cleared up. *And the other disciple*—John, being probably the younger man; *outran Peter, and came first to the sepulchre*—He did not, however, go in, perhaps being afraid; he only stooped down; *and saw the linen clothes lying*—Or rollers which had been about Christ's body. *Then cometh Simon Peter*—Following him very quickly; *and went into the sepulchre*—Without hesitation; *and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, &c.*—And that in such regular order as fully satisfied him that the body had not been taken away in a hasty manner, by persons who feared being interrupted or detected. Doubtless, the angels who ministered to him, when he rose, folded up the napkin and the linen clothes, and laid them in this order. *Then went in also that other disciple*—Who, being less adventurous than Peter, had hitherto stood without; *and he saw*—That the body was not there; *and believed*—That it had been taken away, as Mary had told them. Thus Grotius, Bengelius, Wesley, Macknight, Campbell, and most commentators understand the clause, which sense certainly the next words favour. Whitby, however, and Doddridge, view it in a different light. "Peter," says the former, "only saw and admired what was done; (Luke xxiv. 12;) but John saw and believed, not the words of Mary, for we find not that either of them suspected her of falsehood, but the resurrection of Jesus, or the words of Christ, *After three days I will rise again*. This, John saith, was the reason of his faith, not the predictions of the Old Testament; for, as for the apostles, (verse 9,) *as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead*." Dr. Doddridge speaks to the same purpose. "I understand it," says he, "as a modest intimation, that he, (John,) first indeed of all others, believed the truth of Christ's resurrection, inferring it, as he reasonably might, from the order in which he found the sepulchre. The words," adds he, "have a force and grace in this interpretation, which I think no other can give them." In consistency with this view of the passage, he translates and paraphrases the next verse as follows. "*For hitherto they did not*

7 And * the napkin that was about
his head, not lying with the linen
A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple
which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw,
and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the ^fScripture,
that he must rise again from the dead.

^f Psa. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 25-31; xiii. 34, 35.

know, or had not known, as *εδωκεν ηδεισαν* properly means; the full meaning of the various intimations of *Scripture*, to which Jesus had so often referred, to convince them *that he must certainly rise from the dead*; which if they had considered, they would cheerfully have expected the accomplishment of them, and would not have been so much surprised at the news which Mary brought them."

Whichever be the sense of the clause, it must, at least, be acknowledged, that the circumstances of which these two disciples were now spectators "were very awakening, and very proper to prepare their minds for something extraordinary, since nothing but the resurrection of Jesus could, in right reason, be concluded from them. The body, they saw, was gone; but by whom could it be taken away, and for what purpose? Not by *friends*; for then, in all probability, they would have known something about it. Not by Jews; for they had nothing to do with it. Pilate, to whom alone the disposal of it belonged, as the body of a malefactor executed by his orders, had given it to his disciples, who laid it in the sepulchre but two days before: and wherefore should they remove it again so soon? Not to bury it; for in that case they would not have left the linen clothes or winding-sheet, and the napkin, folded up behind them. Whoever, therefore, had removed the body, they could not have done it with a design to bury it, and yet no other purpose for the removal of it could be imagined. Besides, it must have been removed in the night by stealth, and consequently in a hurry. How then came the winding-sheet and napkin to be folded up, and disposed in so orderly a manner in the sepulchre? Add to this, that the stone was very large; and therefore many people must have been concerned in this transaction; not one of whom was there to give an answer to any such questions. These, and such like reflections, could not but rise in their minds, and these difficulties could not but dispose them to expect some extraordinary event; especially as they knew the life of Jesus was a life of miracles, and that his death was attended with prodigies and wonders; all which would now come crowding into their memories." Still, however, they did not understand from the prophets, that the Messiah was to rise again from the dead: on the contrary, they supposed them to have predicted that he should *not die, but abide for ever*; which was an additional cause of perplexity to them, and an obstacle to their believing Jesus was risen. See West.

A. M. 4037. 10 Then the disciples went away
A. D. 33. again unto their own home.

11 ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because

† Mark xvi. 5.—‡ Matt. xxviii. 9; Mark xvi. 9.

Verses 10-13. *Then the disciples* (Peter and John) *went away again unto their own home*—Went to their companions in the city, as the original expression, *προς εαυτους*, seems evidently to signify. Accordingly, soon after this the women found the eleven and the rest together. It was very prudent in Peter and John to retire immediately, lest they should have been questioned by the rulers, if found near the sepulchre. *But Mary stood without*—It seems she had followed Peter and John to the sepulchre, but did not return to the city with them, being anxious to find the body of her Lord; but after they were gone, *she stood without at the sepulchre weeping*—Being in great perplexity at her not knowing what was become of it. *And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre*—To examine it afresh; and *seeth*—To her great surprise; *two angels*—In the form of men; *in white*—That is, clothed in white habits; *the one at the head, and the other at the feet, &c.*—“The sepulchre seems to have been a square room hewn out of a rock, partly above ground, its roof being as high as the top of the door, which formed its entrance. This door opened upon a stair which ran down straight to the bottom of the sepulchre, along with the side of its left wall. Having carried the body down with its feet foremost, they would naturally place it length-ways, by the right-side wall of the sepulchre, with its feet to the back wall. This description is agreeable to the accounts which travellers give us of the Jewish sepulchres, particularly Mr. Maundrell, who was on the spot and saw several of them. They were generally caves, or rooms hewn out of rocks. And as the Jews did not make use of coffins, they placed their dead separately in niches, or little cells cut into the sides of these caves. But Joseph’s sepulchre, being a new one, was in all probability unfinished; and might have no niches cut into its sides, where they could deposit the dead; for which reason they laid Jesus on the floor, in the manner described, intending when the sabbath was passed to remove him to some finished burying-place.”—Macknight. *And they say unto her*—With a tender regard; *Woman, why weepest thou?*—This question was only designed to give occasion to inform her of that which would turn her mourning into rejoicing. *She saith, Because they have taken away my Lord*—The blessed body which I came to em-

they have taken away my Lord, and A. M. 4037.
I know not where they have laid him. A. D. 33.

14 ^b And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and ⁱ knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

¹ Luke xxiv. 16, 31; Chap. xxi. 4.

balm; and *I know not where they have laid him*—That is, laid it; or how the sacred corpse may be neglected or abused.

Verses 14, 15. *And when she had thus said, she turned herself back*—Probably hearing a sudden noise behind her, and being affrighted; and *saw Jesus standing*—Near her; but *knew not that it was Jesus*—His habit being changed, her eyes also overflowing with tears, and her mind being so far from any expectation of his appearance, and so much distressed, that she probably did not so much as look up to the face of the person who appeared; *Jesus saith*—With his usual tone of voice and accent; *Woman, why weepest thou?*—These were probably the first words Christ spoke after his resurrection. *Why weepest thou?*—I am risen. The resurrection of Christ has enough in it to allay all our sorrows, to check the streams, and dry up the fountains of our tears. Here we may observe, Christ takes cognizance, 1st, Of his people’s griefs, and inquires why they weep? 2d, Of his people’s cares, and inquires whom or what they seek, or what they would have; when he knows they are seeking him, yet he will know it from them; they must tell him whom they seek. *She, supposing him to be the gardener*—The person employed by Joseph to dress and keep his garden, who she thought was come hither thus early to his work; *saith, Sir, if thou have borne him hence*—If, for any unknown reason, thou hast taken him away from this place, where the master of the sepulchre saw fit so honourably to lay him but a few hours ago; *tell me where thou hast laid him*—Where I may find his corpse; and *I will take him away*—Will take effectual care that his corpse shall be removed and decently interred elsewhere. Here we may observe, 1st, That her taking Jesus for the gardener intimates, that there was nothing very splendid in his dress: accordingly when he appeared to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, they seem to have taken him for a person of a rank not superior to their own. 2d, That she accosts this stranger in respectful language, even when she took him for a servant, prudently reflecting, that an error on that hand would be more excusable than one on the other, supposing he should prove a person of superior rank in a plain dress. 3d, That she does not name Jesus, but speaks in indefinite terms; *If thou have borne him hence*—Intimating that he was

A. M. 4037. 16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary.
A. D. 33. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to ^kmy brethren, and say unto

^k Psa. xxii. 22; Matt. xxviii. 10; Rom. viii. 29; Heb. ii. 11.

the one person of whom her own thoughts and heart were so full, that she took it for granted every one must know whom she meant. 4th, She seems to have supposed, that this gardener disdained that the body of a person who was ignominiously crucified should have the honour of being laid in his master's new tomb, and that therefore he had removed it to some sorry place which he thought fitter for it.

Verses 16, 17. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary*—Expressing himself with an emphasis, and that air of kindness and freedom, with which he had been wont to speak to her. This one word, *Mary*, was like that to the disciples in the storm, *It is I*. She turned herself directly toward him, and, eagerly fixing her eyes upon him, instantly discovered who it was; and transported with a mixture of unutterable passions, she cried, *Rabboni, which is to say, Master*—And so much was her heart affected, that she could say no more, but immediately prostrated herself at his feet to embrace them; according to that modesty and reverence with which the women of the East saluted the men, 2 Kings iv. 27; Luke vii. 38. But Jesus refused this compliment, saying, *Touch me not*—Do not embrace me, either to pay thine homage to me, or to confirm thy faith; or *do not cling to me*; for it seems she held him by the feet, Matt. xxviii. 9. Or, *Do not detain me now, or waste time in embracing me; for I am not yet ascended to my Father*—I have not yet left, and am not immediately to leave, the world; thou wilt, therefore, have many other opportunities of testifying thy regard to me. “The word *απεσθαι*, (says Dr. Campbell, here rendered to *touch*), in the use of the LXX., denotes also to *lay hold on*, and to *cleave to*, as in Job xxxi. 7; Ezek. xli. 6, and other places.” The sense here plainly is, “Do not detain me at present. The time is precious. Lose not a moment, therefore, in carrying the joyful tidings of my resurrection to my disciples.” Accordingly it follows, *Go to my brethren, &c.*—Thus does he intimate in the strongest manner the forgiveness of their fault, even without ever mentioning it. These exquisite touches, which everywhere abound in the evangelical writings, show how perfectly Christ knew our frame. *And say unto them, I ascend*—He anticipates his ascension in his thoughts, and so speaks of it as a thing already present; *to my Father and your Father; my God and your God*—This uncommon expression shows, that the only-begotten Son has every kind of fellowship with his Father. And a fellowship with God, 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

them, ^lI ascend unto my Father A. M. 4037. and your Father, and to ^mmy God A. D. 33. and your God.

18 ⁿMary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her.

^l Ch. xvi. 28.—^m Eph. i. 17.—ⁿ Matt. xxviii. 10; Luke xxiv. 10.

is his, in a singular and incommunicable manner, and ours through him, in such a kind as a creature is capable of.

According to Mr. West, this text, *I am not yet ascended, &c.*, comprehends, in a few words, a variety of very important hints, which have not commonly been taken notice of in them; particularly that our Lord intended by them to recall to the minds of his disciples the discourse he had with them three nights before, in which he explained what he meant by *going to the Father*, (John xvi. 28,) and by twice using the word *ascend*, designed to intimate that he was to go up to heaven, not merely in spirit, as the pious dead do, but by a corporeal motion and translation, and that it would be some time before he took his final leave of earth, by this intended ascension. All which expressions and predictions concur, with a great many other circumstances, to show how impossible it was that such an apprehended appearance should have been merely the result of a disordered imagination, which Mr. West illustrates at large, as he also does the mistaken apprehension of those disciples, who, when some of their companions, whose veracity they could not suspect, testified they had seen the Lord, thought his body was not risen, but that it was only his spirit which appeared to them.

Verse 18. *Mary Magdalene came*—With the other women; *and told the disciples*—As they mourned and wept for the loss of their beloved Master, (Mark xvi. 10,) *that she had seen the Lord, &c.*—That he had indeed appeared to her, and that he had spoken these gracious things mentioned above. Peter and John had left Mary seeking their common Lord carefully with tears, and would not stay to seek him with her; and now she comes to tell them that she had found him, and to rectify the mistake she had led them into by inquiring after the dead body; for she now found it was a living body, and a glorified one; so that she found what she sought, and, what was infinitely better, she had the happiness of having seen the Master, and was willing to communicate of her joy to them, for she knew it would be good news to them. And, as she told them what she had seen, so also what she had heard: she had seen the Lord alive by this token, that he had spoken these things unto her as a message to be delivered to them, and she delivered it faithfully. Observe, reader, when God comforts us, it is with this design, that we should comfort others. And they that are acquainted with the word of Christ themselves, should communicate their knowledge for the good of others, and not grudge that others should know as much as they do.

A. M. 4037. 19 ¶ * Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he showed unto them *his hands* and his side. ¶ Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be*

* First Sunday after Easter, gospel, verse 19 to verse 24. • Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 5.—† Chap. xvi. 22.

Verses 19, 20. *Then the same day at evening*—The day on which he arose from the dead; *being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut*—And fastened on the inside; *where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews*—In this translation the arrangement of the sentence, as Dr. Campbell observes, is not proper, as it either suggests a false meaning, or at least renders the true meaning obscure. “The disciples assembled, but surely not for fear of the Jews; for, as they did not intend by violence to oppose violence, if any should be offered them, they could not but know that to assemble themselves would more expose them to danger than any other measure they could take. The plain matter is, they assembled for mutual advice and comfort, and being assembled, *the doors were shut for fear of the Jews*; as they were well aware of the consequence of being discovered at such a time in consultation together. Further, the words do not necessarily imply, that while the doors continued shut our Lord entered miraculously. The word *κεκλεισμενων* is even more literally rendered, *having been shut*, than, *being shut*, or, *when they were shut*: as it is the preterperfect, not the present, or imperfect participle. They may, therefore, for aught related by the evangelists, have been made by a miracle to open and give him access.” The reading of the sentence, therefore, ought to be, *Jesus came where the disciples were assembled, the doors having been shut for fear of the Jews*. This circumstance of the doors being shut is very happily mentioned by John, because it suggests the reason why the disciples took Jesus for a spirit, as Luke tells us they did, chap. xxiv. 37, notwithstanding that the greatest part of them believed he was risen. *Jesus stood in the midst, and saith, Peace be unto you*—See the note on Luke xxiv. 36–43. *When he had so said, he showed them his hands*—*And his feet*, (Luke xxiv. 39,) with the prints of the nails in them; *and his side*—Containing the mark which the spear had left in it. Thus giving them infallible proofs, that he had the very identical body which had been nailed to the cross and pierced. *Then were the disciples glad*—As it might reasonably be expected they should be, when they thus saw the Lord, and were assured by such infallible tokens that he was really alive.

Verses 21–23. *Then said Jesus again, Peace be*

unto you: ¶ as *my Father* hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

23 ¶ Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

24 ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, ¶ called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

¶ Matt. xxviii. 18; Chap. xvii. 18, 19; Heb. iii. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 2. • Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18.—* St. Thomas's Day, gospel, verse 24 to the end.—† Chap. xi. 16.

unto you—This is the foundation of the mission of a true gospel minister; peace in his own soul, in consequence of his having received pardoning mercy from God through Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 1. *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you*—Christ was the apostle of the Father, Heb. iii. 1: Peter and the rest the apostles of Christ. *And when he had said this, he breathed on them*—In a solemn manner, communicating unto them new life and vigour; *and saith unto them*—As ye receive this breath out of my mouth, so receive ye—That is, ye shall receive; *the Holy Ghost*—Out of my fulness, in his various graces and gifts, influencing your minds and hearts in a peculiar manner, and fitting you for your great and important embassy. He refers chiefly to those extraordinary influences of the Spirit which they were to receive at the following pentecost. *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 and unbelieving; *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 the absolution by Christ's ministers here spoken of? And are not the sins of one who does not repent and believe, retained even with it? What then does this commission imply? Can it imply any more than, 1st, A power of declaring with authority the Christian terms of pardon, whose sins are *remitted* and whose retained? as is done in the form of absolution contained in our church service: and, 2d, A power of inflicting and remitting ecclesiastical censures? that is, of excluding from, and readmitting into, a Christian congregation? See note on Matt. xvi. 19. Some, indeed, are of opinion, that something further than this is intended in this commission, as given to the apostles, namely, the gift of discerning the spirits of men in such perfection, as to be able to declare with certainty to particular persons in question whether or not they were in a state of pardon and acceptance with God; and it must be acknowledged that such a gift was doubtless conferred in certain cases on some, if not on many, of the first ministers of Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 10.

Verses 24, 25. *But Thomas, called Didymus*—That is, the twin; *was not with them when Jesus came*—The cause of his absence is not mentioned.

A. M. 4037. 25 The other disciples therefore said
A. D. 33.

unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my

Possibly it might be affliction, or some other unavoidable hinderance. Through this, however, he missed the satisfaction and happiness of seeing his Master risen, and of sharing with the disciples in their joy upon that occasion. Here we may observe, those know not what they lose who unnecessarily and carelessly absent themselves from the stated, solemn assemblies of the people of God. *The other disciples, therefore, said to him*—The next time they saw him, and that doubtless with great joy; *We have seen the Lord*—Relating to him, probably, all that had passed at the time, and particularly the satisfaction Christ had given them, by showing them *his hands and his side*. But he said, *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, &c.*—As if he had said, This is a matter of too great importance for me to believe on any report, even on yours; nay, more is necessary to convince me than merely a transient sight of mine own eyes: for unless I shall have the fullest evidence of my own feeling, as well as sight of him, I will not by any means, or any testimony whatsoever, believe that he is risen. “Thus ended the transactions of the day on which our Lord arose from the dead; a day much to be remembered by men throughout all generations, because it brought fully into act the conceptions which had lodged in the breast of Infinite Wisdom from eternity, even those thoughts of love and mercy on which the salvation of the world depended. Christians, therefore, have the highest reason to solemnize this day with gladness each returning week, by ceasing from labour, and giving themselves up to holy meditations, and other exercises of devotion. The redemption of mankind, which they commemorate thereon in its finishing stroke, affords matter for eternal thought, being such a subject as no other, how great soever, can equal; and whose lustre, neither length of time nor frequent reviewing can ever diminish. For, as by often beholding the sun we do not find him less glorious or luminous than before, so this benefit, which we celebrate after so many ages, is as fresh and beautiful as ever, and will continue to be so, flourishing in the memories of all reasonable beings through the endless revolutions of eternity.”—Macknight.

Verse 26. *After eight days*—That is, eight days after his resurrection, namely, the next Sunday; *again his disciples were within*—Were in a private room, as they were before; and *Thomas with them*—For though he had been absent once, yet he would not be absent a second time. When we have lost one opportunity of receiving good, we should give the more earnest heed to lay hold on the next. *Then came Jesus, the doors being shut*, as before, and *stood in the midst*—And they all knew him;

hand into his side, I will not believe. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

26 ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

for he showed himself now just as he had shown himself before. Our Lord deferred this his second appearance for some time, 1st, To show his disciples that he was not risen to such a life as he had formerly lived, to converse daily and hourly with them, but was as one that belonged to another world, and visited this only as angels do, now and then, when there was occasion. Where Christ was during these eight days, and the rest of the time of his abode on earth, would be folly to inquire, and presumption to determine. Wherever he was, no doubt angels ministered unto him. 2d. He deferred it so long as seven days for three reasons: 1st, That he might put a rebuke on Thomas for his incredulity, and perhaps also for his negligence. He had not attended the former meeting of the disciples, and to teach him to prize those seasons of grace better for the future, he shall not have such another opportunity for several days. A very melancholy week we have reason to think he had of it; drooping and in suspense, while the other disciples were full of joy: and the cause was in himself: it was his own folly and unbelief. 2d, That he might try the faith and patience of the rest of the disciples. They had gained a great point when they were satisfied that they had seen the Lord; then were the disciples glad; but he would try whether they could keep the ground they had gained when they saw no more of him for seven days. And thus he would gradually wean them from his bodily presence, which they had doted and depended too much upon. 3d, That he might put an honour upon the first day of the week, and give a plain intimation of his will, that it should be observed in his church as the Christian sabbath, that is, the weekly day of holy rest and holy convocations. That one day in seven should be religiously observed, was an appointment from the beginning; as old as innocence; and that, in the kingdom of the Messiah, the first day in the week should be that solemn day, Christ's meeting his disciples in a religious assembly once and again on that day was indication sufficient. Add to this, it is highly probable, that in his former appearance to them he had ordered them to come together again that day seven-night, and had promised to meet them, and also that he appeared to them every first day of the week, (besides at some other times,) during forty days. And the religious observance of that day has been from thence transmitted down to us through every age of the church. This therefore is the day which the Lord has made sacred, and appointed for his peculiar worship and service. On this occasion also Christ said, *Peace be unto you*—Thus saluting them all in a friendly and affectionate manner, as he had done before. And this was no vain repetition, but significant of

A. M. 4037. 27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach
A. D. 33. hither thy finger, and behold my
hands; and 'reach hither thy hand, and thrust
it into my side; and be not faithless, but be-
lieving.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto
him, My Lord and my God.

† 1 John i. 1.—‡ 2 Cor. v. 7; 1 Pet. i. 8.

the abundant and assured peace which he gives, and of the continuance of his blessings upon his people, for they fail not, but are *new every morning*, new every meeting.

Verses 27-29. *Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, &c.*—Thus our Lord lets them see, that he was not unacquainted with what had lately passed among them in his absence, and at the same time takes an effectual way to convince and satisfy his over-scrupulous disciple. Referring to what Thomas had said, he answers it word for word: for he had heard it, though unseen: and one would suppose that his telling him of it so particularly must surely have put him to the blush. Observe well, reader, there is not an unbelieving word in our tongues, no, nor thought in our minds at any time, but it is known to the Lord Jesus. *And be not faithless, but believing*—Believe on this evidence at least, which addresses itself to so many of thy senses. *And Thomas*—Overwhelmed at once with such abundant demonstration of the fact in question, and such condescending kindness of his Master, fell under the conviction in a moment, and, instead of entering on any further scrutiny, *answered*—In the utmost transport of astonishment and joy; *My Lord and my God!*—As if he had said, I now not only acknowledge thee to be Jesus my Lord, as I have formerly done, and to be infallibly risen from the dead, as my fellow-disciples have affirmed, but I confess thy divine knowledge and power, and prostrate myself before thee as the great incarnate Deity, the glorious Immanuel. And this glorious confession he makes without putting his finger into the print of the nails, &c. The irrefragable argument arising from these words, in proof of the Deity of our blessed Lord, (which so many good writers have stated at large,) cannot be evaded by saying, that these words are only an *exclamation of surprise*, as if he had said, Good God! is it indeed thus? for it is expressly declared, he spoke these words *to him*: and no doubt Christ would severely have reproved him, if there had not been just reason to address him thus. It is worthy of observation here, that this slowness and backwardness in Thomas to believe, ought to strengthen and confirm our faith. For hereby it appears, that the witnesses of Christ's resurrection, who attested it to the world, and pledged their lives upon it, were not easy, credulous men, but very cautious persons, that suspended their belief till they saw the utmost evidence of it which they could desire. *Jesus saith unto him,*

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, A. M. 4037.
because thou hast seen me, thou hast A. D. 33.
believed: 'blessed *are* they that have not seen,
and *yet* have believed.

30 ¶ 'And many other signs truly did Jesus
in the presence of his disciples, which are not
written in this book.

* Chap. xxi. 15.

Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed—Thou hast believed my resurrection, because thou hast had it confirmed to thee by the united testimony of several of thy senses. *Blessed are they who have not seen me themselves, and yet have believed*—On the credible testimony of others. For they have manifested a greater degree of candour and humility, which renders the faith it produces so much the more acceptable: in other words, they are persons of a more pious and virtuous disposition, who, without the evidence of sense, are so candid as to yield to the proofs which the divine wisdom has thought sufficient for convincing the world. If it be queried why a greater blessedness is pronounced on those who believe on more slender evidence, it may be answered, that our Lord by no means intended to assert, that every one who believes without seeing, is happier than any one believing on sight; for then the meanest Christian now would be more happy than the greatest of the apostles: but only that, where the effects of that faith were equal, it argued greater simplicity, candour, and wisdom to yield to reasonable evidence *without seeing*, than could be argued merely from having believed *on sight*, after sufficient evidence of another kind had been proposed. It was therefore, in effect, telling Thomas, his faith would have been more acceptable, if he had not stood out so long: and it was doing it in such a manner as would be most calculated for the comfort and encouragement of believers in future ages, to whom, in many of his speeches to the apostles themselves, our Lord expresses a most obliging and affectionate regard. Let us then maturely consider this declaration of our great Instructor and Saviour. And though we have not those sensible manifestations which were granted to Thomas, let it suffice us, that the apostles were the appointed witnesses of all these things; and *what they saw with their eyes, and their hands handled, of the word of life, that have they declared unto us*, 1 John i. 1, 3. Let us thankfully receive so convincing a testimony. Let us show an upright and candid mind in accepting such evidence as the wisdom of God has seen fit to give us; remembering, that a truly rational faith is the more acceptable to God, in proportion to the difficulties which it is able to surmount; and that there are peculiar blessings in store for them *who have not seen, and yet believed*.

Verses 30, 31. *And many other signs truly did Jesus*—That is, Jesus wrought many other miracles, *which are not written in this book*—In this gospel

A. M. 4037. 31 ¹ But these are written, that ye
A. D. 33. might believe that Jesus is the Christ,

the Son of God; ² and that believing ye might have life through his name. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

¹ Luke i. 4.

² Chap. iii. 15, 16; v. 24; 1 Pet. i. 9.

of John, nor indeed in those of the other evangelists; but these are written that ye might believe—That ye, into whose hands soever this narrative shall fall, may believe, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ—The true Messiah; the Son of God—In a sense in which no creature, man or angel, can be his son, (see Heb. i. 4–12,) being not only miraculously begotten, as to his human nature, on which account he is also termed the Son of God, (Luke i. 35,) but that eternal Son, who had glory with his Father, and was

beloved by him before the world was, chap. xvii. 5, 24; and who was without beginning of days, as well as without end of life, Heb. vii. 3: and that believing—Applying to, and confiding in, him for salvation, as the only person in and through whom it can be attained, (Acts iv. 12,) and receiving him in all his characters and offices, chap. i. 12: ye might have life through his name—Spiritual life, the life of grace here, and eternal life, the life of glory, hereafter.

CHAPTER XXI.

In this chapter, (1,) Christ discovers himself to seven of his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, gives them a miraculous draught of fishes, and familiarly dines with them, 1–14. (2,) He thrice examines Peter touching the sincerity of his love to him, and as often commissions him to feed his people by gospel ministrations; and warns him of his future sufferings and martyrdom, 15–19. (3,) He checks Peter's curiosity about the life of John, and the time and manner of his death, 20–23. (4,) The certainty of the gospel record, and the multitude of Christ's miracles, are declared, 24, 25.

A. M. 4037. AFTER these things Jesus showed
A. D. 33. himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias: and on this wise showed he himself.

Thomas called Didymus, and ^a Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and ^b the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with

^a Chap. i. 45.

^b Matt. iv. 21.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXI.

Verse 1. *After these things, &c.*—Grotius thinks this whole chapter was written by some of the elders of the church of Ephesus, and added to the rest of the book by the approbation of that society, as agreeable to the relations which they had heard from the mouth of St. John: and Le Clerc follows him in this conjecture; but Dr. Mill has taken pains to invalidate it; (*Prolegom.*, p. 249;) and the beginning of verse 24, destroys the force of Grotius's arguments from the latter part of it. *Jesus showed himself again to the disciples, &c.*—Our Lord having first by the angels, and then in person, ordered his disciples to go home to Galilee, with a promise that they should see him there, it is reasonable to think that they would depart as soon as possible. Wherefore when they were come to their respective homes, and were employed in their former occupation of fishing, Jesus showed himself to them, as is related in the following verses.

Verse 2. *There were together*—Namely, in one house; *Simon Peter, and Thomas, &c.*—Doubtless they often met and conversed together about the great things which they had seen and heard during the three years in which they had attended on Christ

as his disciples, and especially concerning the late events of which they had been eye-witnesses, namely, the death and resurrection of their Master. And Christ chose to manifest himself to them when they were assembled; not only to countenance Christian society, but that they might be joint witnesses of the same matters of fact, and so might corroborate one another's testimony. Here were seven together, to attest what follows. One of these was Thomas, who is named next to Peter, as if he now kept closer to the meetings of the apostles than ever, in consequence of the rebuke and advice he had received from Christ. Another was Nathanael, whom we have not met with since we considered the first chapter of this gospel. Some, however, think he was the same with Bartholomew, one of the twelve. The two not named are supposed to be Philip of Bethsaida, and Andrew of Capernaum.

Verses 3–6. *Simon Peter saith, I go a fishing*—They were now waiting for Christ's promised appearance to them, and it was certainly commendable in Peter that he wished to redeem the time and not be idle; but endeavour to make some provision for his own support, and for the entertainment of his friends. *They say, We also go with thee*—They

A. M. 4037. thee. They went forth, and entered
A. D. 33. into a ship immediately; and that
night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples
• knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then ^d Jesus saith unto them, ¹ Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, • Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore ^f that disciple whom Jesus loved

• Chap. xx. 14.—^d Luke xxiv. 41.—¹ Or, sirs.—^f Luke

were as willing as he to labour for a maintenance, and not to eat the bread of idleness. *They went forth, therefore, and entered into a ship immediately*—A small vessel on the lake or sea of Tiberias; and that night—Though it was the properest time for fishing, and they were diligent in throwing their nets; *they caught nothing*—The providence of God so ordering it that the subsequent miracle might be the more illustrious. *But when the morning was now come*—After they had been toiling all night to no purpose; Jesus appeared and stood on the shore over against them; *but the disciples*—Who had no expectation of seeing him there, and also being at some distance from him, and it not being yet perfectly light; *knew not that it was Jesus*—They observed a person upon the shore, but knew not who he was. *Then*—As they approached within call; *Jesus saith, Children, have ye any meat?*—Have you taken fish enough to furnish out a meal? *They answered him, No*—We have been toiling here this whole night in vain. *And he said, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find*—Reader, whether we would cast the temporal net with success, and gain a maintenance for ourselves, and those dependant upon us, or the spiritual net, so as to be successful fishers of men, we have need of the direction of Jesus, and ought to apply to him for it; which if we do aright we shall not do in vain; the direction we need shall certainly be granted us. *They*—Willing to try, at least, whether this stranger conjectured right, *cast the net therefore* as he had directed them; *and now*—To their great astonishment; *they were not able to draw it*—Into the ship again; *for the multitude of fishes*—Which they had enclosed in it. This was not only a demonstration of the power of our Lord, but a kind supply for them and their families. It was, likewise, an emblem of the great success which should attend them as *fishers of men*.

Verses 7, 8. *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved*—Seeing such astonishing success after their preceding fruitless toil and disappointment; *saith unto Peter, It is the Lord*—Who has, on this occa-

saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now ^{A. M. 4037}
when Simon Peter heard that it was ^{A. D. 33.}
the Lord, he girt *his fisher's coat unto him*,
(for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were ²two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

v. 4, 6, 7.—^f Chap. xiii. 23; xx. 2.—² Or, one hundred yards.

sion, renewed that miracle which he wrought in thy ship some years ago, when he first called us to attend him. *Now when Peter heard, and saw, that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him*—Or upper garment, as *ενεδυνης* properly signifies, reverencing the presence of the Lord. *For he was naked*—Or rather, *was stripped of it*; for the word *γυμνος*, here used, does not always, like the English word *naked*, signify having no clothes on, or being totally uncovered, but not having all the clothes usually worn. In this sense the word seems to be used Acts xix. 16, and in several passages of the Old Testament. *And did cast himself into the sea*—To swim to him immediately. The love of Christ draws men through fire and water. *And the other disciples*—Making the best of their way; *came in a little ship*—That is, in their small fishing vessel; *dragging the net with fishes*—Which doubtless considerably impeded their progress.

Verses 9–14. *As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals*—The effect of Christ's wonder-working power; *and fish laid thereon, and bread*—Which also he had prepared by a miracle, that they might see how easily he could make provision for them, when they were destitute of the ordinary means of supply. We need not be curious in inquiring whence this fire, fish, and bread came, any more than whence the meat came which the ravens brought Elijah. He that could multiply the loaves and fishes that were, could make new ones if he pleased, or turn stones into bread, fish, or flesh. We may take comfort from this instance of Christ's care of his disciples; persuaded he has wherewith to supply all our wants, and knows what things we have need of. It is especially encouraging to Christ's ministers, whom he hath made fishers of men, to learn, by such an instance, that they may depend upon him who employs them to provide for them what he sees to be needful. *Jesus saith, Bring of the fish ye have now caught*—Christ gave this order either because the fish already broiling on the fire was not sufficient for the company, or rather, perhaps, to show them the reality and greatness of the

A. M. 4037. 11 Simon Peter went up, and drew
A. D. 33. the net to land full of great fishes,
a hundred and fifty and three: and for all
there were so many, yet was not the net
broken.

12 ¶ Jesus saith unto them, "Come and
dine. And none of the disciples durst ask
him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the
Lord.

¶ Acts x. 41.

miracle, by making them attend to the number and largeness of the fish which they had caught, and to the circumstance of the net's not being broken. *Simon Peter went up, and—*With the help of his brethren; *drew the net to land—*As Peter in the former instance had showed a more zealous affection to his Master's person than any of them, so in this he showed a more ready obedience to his Master's commands. *Full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three—*These were many more than they needed for their present supply; but they might sell them, and the money would serve to bear their expenses on their journey back to Jerusalem, whither they were shortly to return, and to support them while they waited there. *And for all there were so many—*And great fishes too; *yet was not the net broken—*So that they witnessed miracle upon miracle wrought for them. *Jesus saith, Come and dine—*Or, *come and eat*; for the word *αρισθατε*, here used, signifies sometimes to take meat in the morning, which is the meaning of it here. Dr. Doddridge reads, *Come and refresh yourselves*; and Bishop Pearce, *Come and breakfast*. "The ancients used regularly but two meals in a day; we use three. As of our three, dinner and supper have been regarded as the two principal, it has obtained, not only with us, but all over Europe, to call the first meal of the ancients by the first of these two, which is *dinner*; and the second by the latter, which is *supper*. It is the order which has fixed the names of these meals, and not the precise time of the day at which they were eaten, which is commonly variable."—Campbell. *None of the disciples durst—*Or rather, *presumed, or ventured to ask him, Who art thou?*—For, as the last-mentioned divine justly observes, "the verb *ερωτα*, which our translators render *durst*, does not always, in the use of Greek authors, sacred or profane, express the boldness or courage implied in the English verb *to dare*, by which it is commonly rendered. When joined with a negative, as in this place, it often expresses merely a disinclination, arising from modesty, delicacy, respect, or an averseness to be troublesome in putting unnecessary questions. And it may here be properly translated *presumed, or ventured*; an interpretation confirmed by the words immediately following. The sense then will be, They knew him to be the Lord, and therefore did not presume to ask him a needless question. To say they *durst not*

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh A. M. 4037.
bread, and giveth them, and fish like- A. D. 33.
wise.

14 This is now ^h the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son of Jonas*, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea,

^h Chap. xx. 19, 26.

ask him, tends to convey the notion that our Lord's manner of conversing with his disciples was harsh and forbidding, than which nothing can be more contrary to truth. It is not said by the evangelist here, that Jesus now ate with them; but his invitation to them in this verse implies it. Besides, Peter testifies, (Acts x. 41,) that his apostles *did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead*; meaning to tell Cornelius that that was one of the many infallible proofs by which he *showed himself alive after his passion*. It is reasonable, therefore, to think that he ate with his apostles on this occasion. Thus Jesus proved to his disciples anew the reality of his resurrection, not only by eating with them, but by working a miracle like that which, at the beginning of his ministry, made such an impression upon them as disposed them to be his constant followers. *This is the third time Jesus showed himself to his disciples, &c.*—The evangelist does not say that it was the third time Jesus appeared, but the third time that he appeared to his disciples; that is, to his apostles in a body; for in reality it was his seventh appearance. Besides, John himself has taken notice of three appearances before this.

Verse 15. *When they had dined—*On the kind provision wherewith Jesus had supplied them, and, it is likely, had been edified with such discourse as Jesus had generally used when eating with them; *Jesus said to Simon Peter—*Who, by his late denial of him, had given him great reason to call in question the sincerity of his love; *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?*—He speaks to him by name, the more to affect him, as he did (Luke xxii. 31) when he warned him of a great approaching trial. He doth not call him Cephass, or Peter, a name signifying strength or stability, for he had lost the credit of that; but gives him his original name, *Simon*, adding, however, *son of Jonas*, as he had called him when he pronounced him blessed, Matt. xvi. 17. And the question he asked him is, of all others, one of the most important, and on which we should frequently and especially ask ourselves: for, on the one hand, *if any man love not the Lord Jesus he is anathema*, that is, exposed to the wrath and curse of God, 1 Cor. xvi. 22; whereas the grace and blessing of God is the portion of all those who love him in sincerity, Eph. vi. 24. Observe, reader, the question is not, *Dost thou know me? Dost thou believe in me? Dost thou admire, honour, or fear me?* but,

A. M. 4037. Lord: thou knowest that I love thee.
A. D. 33.

He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. ¹He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

¹ Acts xx. 28; Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 25; v. 2, 4.

Dost thou *love me*? Give me but proof of that, as if Jesus had said, and I will acknowledge that thy repentance is sincere; that thy backslidings are healed, and that thou art recovered from thy fall. Peter had professed himself a penitent, had wept bitterly for his sin, had returned to the society of the disciples, and had taken great interest in the death and resurrection of Christ; deeply mourning for the former, and greatly rejoicing at being assured of the latter: but still this is not sufficient: the question is, *Lovest thou me*? Nay, further, *Lovest thou me more than these*?—More than thou lovest these persons, James or John, thy intimate friends, or Andrew, thy own brother and companion? Those do not love Christ aright, who do not love him better than the best friend they have in the world, and make it appear so whenever there is a comparison or competition between these objects of their love. Or, *more than thou lovest these things*, these boats and nets, and the other implements of fishing, by which thou earnest a livelihood: that is, more than thou lovest thy occupation and the gains of it. So Dr. Whitby. And the question, thus interpreted, “is neither so cold nor so foreign,” says Dr. Campbell, “as some have represented it. This was probably the last time that Peter exercised his profession as a fisherman. Jesus was about to employ him as an apostle; but as he disdained all forced obedience, and would accept no service that did not spring from choice, and originate in love, he put this question to give Peter an opportunity of professing openly his love, (which his late transgression had rendered questionable,) and consequently his preference of the work in which Jesus was to employ him, with whatever difficulties and perils it might be accompanied, to any worldly occupation, however gainful.” The sense, however, in which the words are more commonly taken is, *Lovest thou me more than these men* [thy fellow-disciples] *love me*? Thus interpreted, the question must be considered as having a reference to the declaration formerly made by Peter, (Matt. xxvi. 33,) when he seemed to arrogate a superiority to the rest, in zeal for his Master and steadiness in his service; *Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended*. This gives a peculiar propriety to Peter’s reply here. “Convinced, at length, that his Master knew his heart better than he himself; conscious, at the same time, of the affection which he bore him, he dares make the declaration, [as to the sincerity of his love,] appealing to the infallible Judge, before whom he stood, as the voucher of his

17 He saith unto him the third time, A. M. 4037.
Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? A. D. 33.

Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, *Lovest thou me*? And he said unto him, Lord, ¹thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

¹ Chap. ii. 21, 25; xvi. 30.

truth. But as to his fellow-disciples, he is now taught not to assume any thing. He dares not utter a single word which would lead to a comparison with those to whom he knew his woful defection had made him appear so much inferior.” He only says, *Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee*—“And his silence on this part of the question speaks strongly the shame he had on recollecting his former presumption, in boasting superior zeal and firmness, and shows, that the lesson of humility and self-knowledge he had so lately received, had not been lost.”

He saith unto him, Feed my lambs—Manifest thy love to me in a way which will be peculiarly acceptable; administer spiritual food to my people, even to the weakest and feeblest of my flock; give milk to babes, explain the first principles of my doctrine to those who, having but lately believed in me, are not yet thoroughly instructed in the truths, or established in the grace of the gospel. It may be worth observing here, that the original word *apua*, being the diminutive of *apva*, signifies the *least of my lambs*; and if, says Dr. Doddridge, “we interpret it as an intimation of the care which Peter, as a minister of Christ, was to take of little children, it seems perfectly congruous to the wisdom and tenderness of the great Shepherd of the sheep, to give so particular an injunction concerning it.”

Verses 16, 17. *He saith unto him again the second (and even the third) time, Simon, &c., lovest thou me?*—Doubtless with a view to impress the importance of the question with the greater force on his mind; and perhaps, also, to remind Peter of his having thrice denied him, and thereby given him cause to question the sincerity of his love. But at these two latter times, Christ leaves out the words *more than these*: because Peter, in his answer, had modestly left them out. Observe, reader, though we cannot say we love Christ more than others do, yet we shall be accepted if we can say we love him indeed. This Peter professes to do again and again, confidently affirming, *Yea, or surely, Lord, I love thee*. He had a high esteem and value for his Lord; a grateful sense of his kindness; and was entirely devoted to his honour and interest; his desire was toward him, as one he should be undone without; and his delight in him, as one he should be unspeakably happy in. And let it be remembered, those who can truly say that they love the Lord Jesus, may take to themselves the comfort arising from an assurance of their having an interest in him, notwithstanding their daily infirmities. It deserves

A. M. 4037. 18 ¹ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, A. D. 33. When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird

thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

19 * This spake he, signifying ^m by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

¹ Ch. xiii. 36; Acts xii. 3, 4.—* St. John the Evangelist's

Day, gospel, verse 19 to the end.—^m 2 Peter i. 14.

our notice here, that Peter could appeal to Christ himself for the proof of his love, saying once and again, *Thou knowest that I love thee*; and the third time, speaking yet more emphatically, *Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee*. He doth not vouch his fellow-disciples to witness for him; they might be deceived in him; nor doth he think his own word might be taken; the credit of that was more than shaken already: but he calls Christ himself to witness. Happy they that, on good grounds, can do the same! *He saith unto him, Feed my sheep*—The word rendered *feed* in the preceding verse, and in verse 17th *βοσκε*, properly means to *give food*; but the word here used, *ποιμαίνε*, implies more largely to do all the offices of a shepherd, namely, to *guide, watch, and defend* the sheep, as well as to feed them. "From our Lord's asking Peter if he loved him, before he gave him commission to feed his lambs and his sheep, it is justly inferred, that to render men duly qualified for the ministerial function, they must prefer the interest and honour of Christ to every other consideration whatever. This is the great qualification by which alone a minister can be animated to go through the labours and difficulties of his office, and be fortified against the dangers which may attend it. Moreover, Christ's exhortation to Peter to feed his lambs and sheep, being the reply which he made to Peter's declaration that he loved him, shows us that ministers best testify their love to Christ by their singular care and diligence in feeding his flock. Our Lord's three-fold repetition of his commission to Peter, was probably in allusion to Peter's three denials; and as it contains an oblique intimation that his repentance should bear some proportion to his sin, so it seems to have been intended by our Lord to convince the rest of the disciples of the sincerity of Peter's conversion, and to prevent any slight which he might be exposed to from their suspecting the contrary. However, we are told that *Peter was grieved* at this repeated application to him: 1st, Because it seemed to him an intimation that Christ doubted the sincerity of his repentance; and to a person of his sanguine temper, nothing could have afforded a more sensible anguish than such a suggestion. 2d, It recalled his crime, with all its aggravating circumstances, into his mind; it renewed his grief for having offended, and it increased that grief from a consideration that he had given sufficient grounds for suspecting his fidelity, even after his conversion. 3d, It put him in fear lest his Master foresaw some further misconduct of his, which would be as great a contradiction to his professions of love to him as the former was. One would wonder that

from circumstances so evidently humiliating to the mind of Peter, the Papists could have inferred a grant to him of supreme dominion over the church, clergy as well as laity; as if a charge to serve the sheep, gave a power to lord it over all the shepherds. The passage has doubtless a quite different meaning; for Peter, by his late cowardice and perfidy, having, as it were, abdicated the apostleship, was hereby no more than formally restored to his office, through the indulgence of his kind and merciful Master; and not raised to any new dignity above his brethren." See Macknight, and Tillotson's Works.

Verses 18, 19. *Verily I say unto thee, When thou wast young, &c.*—Peter being thus restored to the apostolical office and dignity, from which he had fallen by openly denying his Master three several times, Jesus proceeded to forewarn him of the persecutions to which he in particular would be exposed in the execution of his office; intending thereby to inspire him with courage and constancy. *When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, &c.*—Our Lord seems to speak thus in allusion to the strength and activity which he had now showed in swimming ashore after he had girded his fisher's coat upon him. *But when thou shalt be old*—He lived about thirty-six years after this; *thou shalt stretch forth thy hands*—To be nailed to the cross; *and another shall gird thee*—Such as were condemned to be crucified, were tied to the cross till the nails were driven in; *and shall carry thee*—With the cross; *whither thou wouldst not*—According to nature: to the place where the cross was to be set up. In other words, Instead of that liberty which in thy youth thou enjoyedst, thou shalt in thine old age be bound and carried to prison and to death. Accordingly, the evangelist adds, *This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God*—Namely, that he should suffer martyrdom, and die with his hands stretched out on a cross. Observe, reader, 1st, It is not only by *acting*, but also and especially by *suffering*, that the saints glorify God. 2d, That with regard to death, which we must all suffer, it is the great concern of every good man, whatever death he dies, to glorify God in it. And when we die patiently, submitting to the will of God; die cheerfully, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God; and die usefully, witnessing to the truth and goodness of religion, and encouraging others, we glorify God in dying. 3d, That the death of the martyrs was, in a special manner, for the glorifying of God. The truths of God, which they died in defence of, were hereby confirmed; the grace of God, which carried them with so much constancy through their suffer-

A. M. 4037. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth
A. D. 33. the disciple ^a whom Jesus loved, follow-
ing; (which also leaned on his breast at supper,
and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?)

21 Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord,
and what *shall* this man *do*?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry
• till I come, what *is that* to thee? Follow thou me.

• Ch. xiii. 23, 25; xx. 2.—Matt. xvi. 27, 28; xxv. 31; 1 Cor. iv. 5;

ings, was hereby magnified; and the consolations of God, which abounded toward them in their sufferings, and his promises, the springs of their consolations, have been hereby recommended to the faith and joy of all the saints. *When he had spoken this, he saith, Follow me*—That is, as I now walk along, and show thereby that thou art willing to conform to my example, and to follow me, even to the death of the cross. Agreeably to this, the unanimous testimony of antiquity assures us that Peter was crucified.

Verses 20, 21. *Then Peter, turning about*—Namely, as he followed Jesus; *seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following*—Silently, and in humble token of his readiness likewise to suffer the greatest extremities in the service of so gracious a Master. Peter, seeing him follow Jesus in the same manner as he himself did, though he was not called to it, saith to Jesus, *Lord, what shall this man do*—What is to become of him? must he, who is now following with me, partake of the like sufferings, and in like manner testify his love by dying for thee? “There is a peculiar spirit and tenderness in this plain passage. Christ orders Peter to follow him, in token of his readiness to be crucified in his cause. 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 the 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.”—Doddridge.

Verses 22, 23. *Jesus saith, If I will that he tarry*—Without dying; *till I come*—With power and great glory, to execute the judgment I have threatened on mine enemies. Till then he certainly did tarry, and who can say when or how he died? *What is that to thee*—Or to any one else? *Follow thou me*—Mind thou thine own duty, and endeavour to prepare for thine own sufferings, and pry not, with a vain curiosity, into the secret events which may befall him or any other of thy brethren. *Then*—As this answer was not rightly understood; *went this saying abroad among the brethren*—That is, among the other followers of Christ; (our Lord himself taught them to use that appellation, chap. xx. 17;) *that that disciple should not die*; and the advanced

23 Then went this saying abroad A. M. 4037.
among the brethren, that that disciple A. D. 33.
should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him,
He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till
I come, what *is that* to thee?

24 ¶ This is the disciple which testifieth of
these things, and wrote these things: and ^a we
know that his testimony is true.

xi. 26; Rev. ii. 25; iii. 11; xxii. 7, 20.—Ch. xix. 35; 3 John 12.

age to which he lived gave some further colour for it; *yet Jesus said not unto him*—Or of him; *He shall 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; *but, If I will, &c.*—He only said the words expressed before, which, if St. John understood, he did not think proper to explain.

Verse 24. *This is the disciple which testifieth these things*—Being still alive after he had written them. From this verse Grotius and some others infer, that the Ephesian bishops added this whole chapter to St. John's gospel, after his death. But, as Dr. Macknight observes, it evidently proves the contrary, for it assures us that John wrote the things contained in this chapter. *And we know that his testimony is true*—The church probably added these words to this gospel, as Tertius did those to St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, chap. xvi. 23. Further, though the evangelist seems to conclude his gospel, (chap. xx. 31,) it is no unusual thing with the sacred writers to add new matter after such conclusions. See the epistle to the Romans, and that to the Hebrews, at the end. As to the writer of this gospel being spoken of in the third person, it is agreeable to John's manner; (see chap. xix. 35;) who likewise speaks of himself in the plural number, 1 Epistle v. 18-20. To conclude, the verse under consideration is shown to be genuine, by a similar passage in the conclusion of the third epistle, verse 12.

In detailing the events subsequent to the crucifixion, the reader may readily observe, that much matter is recorded in a small compass; and that though each evangelist has given his particular and connected narration, much new matter is introduced by each one, unnoticed by the others. To frame a general narrative by a combination of the whole, and to dispose the various circumstances in the order they are supposed to have occurred, have been objects of difficulty to harmonists. On these accounts, the following concise summary of the events, in the order they may rationally be supposed to have happened, is introduced, as arranged by Dr. Benson, and afterward adopted by Archbishop Newcome.

On the morning of the first day of the week, Jesus rises from the dead; a great earthquake happens about the time of his resurrection; and an angel appears, who rolls away the stone that closed the mouth of the sepulchre, sits upon it, and strikes the

A. M. 4037. 25 ^a And there are also many
A. D. 23. other things which Jesus did, the
which, if they should be written every one,

^c Chap. xx. 30.

keepers with great fear; thus causing them to remove to such a distance, as to remain unnoticed by the women and others hereafter, Matt. xxviii. 2-4. After his resurrection, many bodies of the saints rise from their graves, and are seen by many in Jerusalem, Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and other women, (Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1,) go very early to the sepulchre, intending to embalm the body of Jesus, (having bought spices the preceding evening for that purpose.) In their way they consult about removing the stone from the door of the sepulchre. Perceiving it already taken away, they enter into the sepulchre, yet find not the body of the Lord Jesus, Mark xvi. 3-5; Luke xxiv. 2, 3; John xx. 1. Mary Magdalene, hastily returning to Jerusalem, relates to Peter and John that they had taken the Lord out of the sepulchre, John xx. 2. The other women remaining in the sepulchre, two angels appear unto them, and one of them requests the women to inform the disciples, and Peter in particular, that Jesus was risen, &c., Matt. xxviii. 5-7; Mark xvi. 4-7; Luke xxiv. 4-8. The women return from the sepulchre, relate these things to the apostles, and are discredited, Matt. xxviii. 8; Mark xvi. 8; Luke xxiv. 8-11. Peter and John having heard Mary Magdalene's report of his having been taken away, and the women's of his having risen, run to the sepulchre, and find the body removed according to their information, and wondering at what was come to pass, return home, Luke xxiv. 12; John xx. 3-10. The resurrection having been stated to the disciples at Jerusalem at this period, (Luke xxiv. 22-24,) Cleophas and his companion leave their brethren to go to Emmaus. Mary Magdalene goes again to the sepulchre, carries there after the apostles, (John xx. 11,) and converses with the two angels who had before appeared to the women. Turning herself back, she perceives Jesus, who gradually makes himself known unto her; she consequently hastens to the city, and announces this his first appearance to the disciples, but they believe not, Mark xvi. 9-11; John xx. 11-18. The other women, having told the disciples of his resurrection, continue in the city, while Peter and John visit, and Mary Magdalene revisits, the sepulchre: they then go back again, and upon finding it deserted, return toward Jerusalem. On their way, Jesus meets and requests them to direct his disciples to depart into Galilee, Matt. xxviii. 9, 10. This is his second appearance. The guards about this time leave the neighbourhood of the sepulchre, and inform the Jewish rulers of what had occurred within their knowledge, Matt. xxviii. 11-15. According to Paul, (1 Cor. xv. 5,) the third appearance is to Cephas; and the fourth, to the two who some time prior to this left their brethren to proceed to Em-

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^r I suppose that even the world A. M. 4037.
itself could not contain the books A. D. 33.
that should be written. Amen.

^r Amos vii. 10.

maus; who, immediately returning to Jerusalem, relate it to the other disciples, and are not credited, Matt. xvi. 12, 13; Luke xxiv. 13-36. The last time of his being seen on the day of his resurrection, being the fifth, was by the apostles as they sat at meat in the absence of Thomas, 1 Cor. xv. 5; Mark xvi. 14-18; Luke xxiv. 36-49; John xx. 19-23. This concludes the great and glorious transactions of the important day on which Jesus rose from the dead. About the eighth day after his resurrection, he again, the sixth time, appears to his disciples, when Thomas was present, John xx. 24-29. His seventh appearance occurs between the eighth and fortieth day, at the sea of Tiberias, to his disciples, (Matt. xxviii. 16; John xxi. 1-24,) and his eighth, to them upon the mountain in Galilee, Matt. xxviii. 16-20. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 6) relates his having been seen of above five hundred brethren at once, many of whom, at the time of his writing this epistle, were living witnesses to this the ninth appearance. His tenth is to James; and his final appearance, being the eleventh, is to the apostles, on the ascension, 1 Cor. xv. 7; Acts i. 3-12; Mark xvi. 19, 20; Luke xxiv. 50-53.

Verse 25. *And there are also many other things which Jesus did*—Many which none of the evangelists have recorded; *which, if they should be written every one*—Every fact, and all the circumstances thereof; *I suppose*—This expression, which softens the hyperbole, (if this be one,) shows that John wrote this verse; *the world itself could not contain the books that should be written*—The construction of this verse, in our present translation, is fully justified by adducing from the Old Testament expressions equally hyperbolic. Thus Exod. iii. 8, the land of Canaan is said to *flow with milk and honey*. Num. xiii. 33, the spies, who returned from searching the land of Canaan, say they saw giants there of such a prodigious size, that they were, *in their own sight, as grasshoppers*. Judges vii. 12, the Midianites, &c., are said to lie along in the valley *like grasshoppers, and their camels to be as the sand by the sea-shore for multitude*. 1 Kings x. 27, Solomon is said to make *silver be in Jerusalem as stones*. The reader may find more examples of such hyperboles, both in sacred and profane authors, in a note of Bishop Pearce on this text. Such expressions are not unusual in the magnificent luxuriance of the oriental style, though rarely occurring in the simple, artless narrations of the apostles. Thus understood, the clause simply means, that Jesus performed a prodigious number of miracles. The text may, nevertheless, be considered in a sense somewhat different. This evangelist frequently uses the word world in a general sense, to denote its inhabitants, as chap. viii. 26, and in other places, (see chap. xv. 18,) as signifying the carnal and unbelieving part of mankind. The Greek word *χορσω*, here translated

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contain, is not only used in that sense, but, when applied to the mind, denotes the reception and understanding of any thing, and is rendered to this purpose, Matt. xix. 11, 12; and Philemon 15. By adopting these observations the text may be understood to mean, *I am persuaded the world itself would not receive the books that should be written*; which is Doddridge's translation. Whitby, Chandler, and many others, have supported this construction. According to it John informs us, that if all the miracles which Jesus performed were written, the world itself could not receive the books, could not believe them, because they would appear absolutely incredible. But to this interpretation it may be objected, that the phrase, *αυτον τον κοσμον, the world itself*, cannot mean the men of the world, for which reason the first sense, it seems, is to be preferred. "I agree perfectly," says Dr. Campbell, "with those interpreters who think that the hyperbole contained in this verse is much more tolerable than the torture to which some critics have put the words, in order to make them speak a different sense."

"Perhaps," says the pious Dr. Doddridge, referring to what St. John here declares respecting the many other things done by Jesus, which have not been recorded, "it may be a most delightful part of

the entertainment of the heavenly world, to learn from our blessed Lord himself, or from those who conversed with him on earth, a multitude of such particulars of his life as will be well worthy our everlasting admiration. In the mean time, let us praise God for what is recorded, and let us study the sacred records which contain such authentic and exact accounts of those important facts, in which we are all so nearly concerned; records incomparably more valuable than the writings of our private estates, or the charters of our public liberties. Let us earnestly pray, that their great design may be answered in us; and make it our importunate request to Him, who is the giver of all grace, that through the operations of that Holy Spirit, (without the influence of which, even the Scripture itself, with all our advantages for understanding and improving it, will be but a sealed book, or a dead letter,) our faith may be nourished and confirmed by every portion of it which we read. And let us, above all, be concerned that our hearts may be so influenced by his word, and, as it were, delivered into the mould of it, that, believing in Christ, under all the characters he bears, we may *have life through his name*, and may at length *receive the end of our faith in the complete salvation of our souls.*" Amen! So may it be to the author of this work, and to all that do or may peruse it!

CONCLUSION OF THE GOSPELS.

Thus endeth the History of the Life of Christ; a life, the greatest and best that ever was led by man, or ever was the subject of any history. The human character of Jesus, as it results from the accounts which the evangelists have given of him, (for they have not formally drawn it,) is entirely different from that of all other men whatsoever. For whereas they have the selfish passions deeply rooted in their breasts, and are wont to be more or less influenced by them in most of their actions, Jesus was so entirely free from them, that the narrowest scrutiny cannot furnish one single action in the whole course of his life, wherein he consulted his own honour or interest. The glory of God and happiness of mankind were what he had only at heart. And while his cotemporaries followed, some one kind of occupation, and some another, Jesus had no other business but that of promoting these great ends of living. *He went about doing good.* He did not wait till he was solicited, but sought opportunities of conferring benefits on such as stood in need of them, and always *reckoned it more blessed to give than to receive*; in which respect he differed exceedingly from the rest

of mankind, and was much more like to God than man. In the next place, whereas it is common, even for persons of the most exalted faculties, on the one hand, to be elated with success and applause, and on the other, to be dejected with great disappointments, it was not so with Jesus. He was never more courageous than when he met with the greatest opposition and the worst treatment, nor more humble than when men fell down and worshipped him. He came into the world inspired with the grandest purpose that ever was or will be formed, even that of saving, not a single nation only, but the whole world; and in the execution of it went through the heaviest train of labours that ever was sustained, and that with a constancy of resolution on which no disadvantageous impression could be made by any accident whatever; calumny, threatenings, opposition, with the other evils befalling him, served only to quicken his endeavours in this glorious enterprise, which he pursued unweariedly till he finished it by his death. In the third place, whereas most men are prone to retaliate the injuries that are done them, and all seem to take a satisfaction in complaining of

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the injuries of those who oppress them, the whole of Christ's behaviour breathed nothing but meekness, patience, and forgiveness, even to his bitterest enemies, and in the midst of extreme sufferings. The words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, uttered by him when his enemies were nailing him to the cross, fitly express the temper which he maintained through the whole course of his life, even when assaulted by the heaviest provocations. The truth is, on no occasion did he ever signify the least resentment by speech or action, nor indeed any emotion of mind whatever, except such as flowed from piety and charity, consequently such only as expressed the deepest concern for the welfare of mankind. To conclude, the greatest and best men have had failings which darkened the lustre of their virtues, and showed them to have been men. This was the case with Noah, Abraham, Moses, Job, Solomon, Paul, and the other eminent men celebrated in history. The same thing may be said of all the greatest geniuses in the heathen world, who undertook to instruct and inform mankind; for, omitting the narrowness of their knowledge, and the obscurity with which they spake upon the most important subjects, there was not one of them who did not fall into some gross error or other, which dishonoured his character as a teacher. The accounts we have in history of the most renowned sages of antiquity, and the writings of the philosophers still remaining, are proofs of this. It was otherwise with Jesus in every respect. For he was superior to all the men that ever lived, both in the sublimity of his doctrine, and in the purity of his manners. *He was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners.* Whether you consider him as a teacher or a man, *he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* His whole life was perfectly free from spot or weakness, at the same time that it was remarkable for the greatest and most extensive exercises of virtue.

Such was the person who is the subject of the evangelical history. If the reader, by viewing his life, doctrine, and miracles, as they are here presented to him in the gospels, has obtained a clearer notion of these things than before; if he feels him-

self touched with the character of Jesus in general, or with any of his sermons and actions in particular, thus simply delineated in writings whose principal charms are the beauties of truth;—above all, if Christ's dying so generously for men strikes him with admiration, or fills him with joy, in the assurance or prospect of that pardon which is thereby purchased for the world,—let him seriously consider with himself what improvement he ought to make of the divine goodness.

Jesus, by his death, has set open the gates of immortality to men; and by his word, Spirit, and example, graciously offers to make them meet for, and conduct them into, the inheritance of the saints in light. Wherefore, being born under the dispensation of his gospel, we have, from our earliest years, enjoyed the best means of acquiring wisdom, holiness, and happiness, the lineaments of the image of God. We have been called to aspire after an exaltation to the nature and felicity of God, set before mortal eyes in the man Jesus Christ, to fire us with the noblest ambition. His gospel teaches us that we are made for eternity; and that our present life is to our after existence, what childhood is to man's estate. But, as in childhood, many things are to be learned, many hardships to be endured, many habits to be acquired, and that by a tedious course of exercises, which in themselves, though painful, and, it may be, useless to the child, yet are necessary to fit him for the business and enjoyments of manhood: just so, while we remain in this infancy of human life, things are to be learned, hardships to be endured, and a conformity to God, and a participation of the divine nature to be attained, to fit us for the employments and pleasures of our riper existence above. Our Father, ever mindful of us, sent down Jesus, the express image of his own person, to initiate us into, and carry us through, this course of education for eternity. Inflamed, therefore, with the love of immortality and its joys, let us submit ourselves to our heavenly Teacher, and learn of him those graces which alone can make life pleasant, death desirable, and fill eternity with ecstatic joys. See Mac-knight.

PREFACE

TO THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THIS book, containing a history of Christ's infant church, and connecting the gospels and the epistles, according to the testimony of the most ancient Christian writers, was composed by the Evangelist Luke: indeed, it is a second part of, or supplement to, his gospel, as appears from the beginning of it, being addressed to his friend Theophilus, as his former work had been. The exact time when it was written cannot be fully ascertained: but, as the narrative is continued to the end of the second year of Paul's imprisonment at Rome, at whatever time it was begun, it could not have been finished earlier than A. D. 63; and, if it had been written much later, it is probable it would have carried the story further, and have recorded events subsequent to that period, and in particular would have informed us of the issue of Paul's imprisonment, a subject in which every Christian reader cannot but find himself greatly interested. But though this history comprehends only a period of about thirty years, it contains satisfactory information concerning a variety of most important matters. After a brief recapitulation of the evangelical history, and a continuation of the history of Christ, it shows us the event of his predictions, and gives us a kind of supplement to what he had before spoken to his disciples. We here see the accomplishment of several of the promises which he had made them; his ascension; the descent of the Holy Ghost in his miraculous gifts; the first preaching of the apostles, and the miracles whereby their doctrines were confirmed; an admirable picture of the manners of the primitive Christians; and, in short, every thing that passed in the church till the dispersion of the apostles, who separated themselves in order to propagate the gospel throughout the world. 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; and delineate his doctrine and example, attest his miracles, and describe his labours and sufferings:—this book exhibits the faith and practice, the labours and sufferings, of the members of his mystical body, animated by his Spirit, persecuted by the world, as he was, but defended and exalted by God.

It must not be supposed, however, that Luke intended this to be a complete history of the Christian Church, even during that short period of time comprehended in his narrative. For, though it is entitled THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, it gives no further account of the acts of most of them than what preceded or immediately followed the day of pentecost. It is almost wholly confined to the acts, or rather the labours and sufferings, of two of them, namely, of Peter and Paul. And the history of the former, even of these, is pursued no further than the time of his imprisonment by Herod, his miraculous deliverance out of prison, and the death of that monarch. The apostles having about that time departed from Judea, and gone forth to carry the gospel into different countries, Luke quits their history, even that of Peter, who was then at too great a distance from him, and confines himself more particularly to that of Paul, of the extraordinary circumstances attending whose conversion he has given a most striking and interesting account. He records, however, some particulars of the history of Stephen, the first martyr, of Philip, Barnabas, Silas, and some other apostolic men, who, though not of the twelve, yet were endued with the same spirit, and successfully employed in the same work, of evangelizing the world. But the history of Paul is pursued at a much greater length than that of any other servant of Christ mentioned in this narrative; the author being his fellow-traveller and attendant in most of his missions, journeys, and voyages, having even accompanied him when he carried the collections, made in various places, to the saints in Judea, where he abode during the apostle's two years' imprisonment at Jerusalem and Cesarea, and no doubt was present at his trials

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before Felix and Festus, and heard the speeches which he has recorded in this history. And when the apostle was sent a prisoner to Italy, Luke accompanied him in the voyage, and remained with him in Rome till he was released. Lastly, he was with the apostle also during his second imprisonment in the same city; and, when his other assistants deserted him through fear, this excellent person abode with him and ministered to him, 2 Tim. iv. 11; during which time it is probable he composed this narrative. See the preface to Luke's gospel. As a further proof that Luke did not intend this to be a complete history of the Christian Church, we may observe, that he is silent concerning all the transactions of the church at Jerusalem, after the dispersion of the apostles and the conversion of St. Paul; that he omits to record some of that apostle's journeys, as for instance that into Arabia, mentioned Gal. i. 17; several of his voyages; his suffering shipwreck thrice, as mentioned in the second epistle to the Corinthians; and many of his other sufferings, spoken of in his epistles. Nor does he give us any account of the propagation of the gospel and establishment of Christianity in Egypt, Babylonia, Parthia, or in any other country where the Greek or Latin language was not spoken.

In this invaluable book, however, the gospel is fully confirmed, the true Christian doctrine set forth, and the proper method of applying it to Jews, heathen, and believers, that is, to those who are to be converted, and those who are converted, is shown: the hinderances of it in particular men, in several kinds of men, in different ranks and nations, are manifested: the propagation of the gospel, and the grand revolution consequent thereon, among both Jews and heathen, are attested and displayed; as also 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, heathen, magistrates, generals, soldiers, eunuchs, captives, slaves, women, children, sailors; to Athens, and at length to Rome.

It appears from all this, that, setting aside the consideration of its divine inspiration, this history of the Acts of the Apostles, as a history of the first planting of the Christian religion in the world, is a most valuable work, were it only on account of the variety and importance of the transactions recorded in it, and its certain authenticity;—the effect of the perfect integrity of the author, and the thorough knowledge which he had of the facts that he relates, as being an eye-witness of at least the greater part of them. But it is valuable, also, on account of the manner in which they are related: "For the circumstances of each transaction are selected with judgment, and told in a simplicity and elegance of language truly admirable. And the whole is comprised in a short, but perspicuous narration, which cannot fail to give pleasure to every reader who is a judge of elegant writing. Further, the Acts being a history of persons who travelled through the most civilized and best-known provinces of the Roman empire, for the purpose of preaching the gospel, the historian was naturally led to mention a variety of particulars relating to the geography of those countries, to their political state at that time, to the persons who governed them, and to the manners of their inhabitants. The learned, therefore, from the time of the publication of this history, have had an opportunity of examining all these particulars; and, on the most accurate investigation, they have found them confirmed by the contemporary heathen writers of the best credit, whose writings still remain. Nor is this all. In the Acts there are speeches recorded, said to have been pronounced by persons of the highest character and rank; which are not, like the speeches in most other ancient histories, the production of the historian's own imagination, but the real speeches of the persons to whom they are attributed; such as the speeches delivered by the Apostle Peter on different occasions; by Gamaliel, an eminent Jewish doctor; by the protomartyr, Stephen, when arraigned before the sanhedrim; by the Apostle Paul, in the synagogue of Antioch, and to the Lystrians, and to the senate of the Areopagus at Athens, and to the sanhedrim: also, a letter of Claudius Lysias to the governor Felix, and a speech of the orator Tertullus, in accusation of Paul before the same Felix; Paul's answer to that accusation; Festus the governor's speech to King Agrippa, the chief captains, and the principal men of Cesarea, assembled to hear Paul; Paul's defence, pronounced in the hearing of that august assembly: in all which, the characters, and sentiments, and style of the different speakers are so distinctly marked, that no one who reads them, and is capable to judge of such matters, can doubt of their being genuine. These circumstances united form a convincing proof that the history of the Acts was written, as it professeth to be, by a person who was present at most of the transactions which he hath recorded. And with respect to such of the speeches as he had not an opportunity of hearing, they may have been made known to him by those who heard them, or by

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inspiration. However, not to insist on this, Luke's history of the Acts of the Apostles contains more internal marks of authenticity than any ancient heathen history extant. So that, considering it merely as a human composition, it is by far the most valuable ancient monument of the kind which the world is at present in possession of."—Macknight.

As to the style of this work, which was originally composed in Greek, it is much purer than that of the other canonical writers; and it is observable that Luke, who was much better acquainted with the Greek than the Hebrew language, always, in his quotations from the Old Testament, makes use of the Septuagint version. "Luke," says Mr. Blackwall, in his *Sacred Classics*, "is pure, copious, and flowing in his language, and has a wonderful and most entertaining variety of select circumstances in his narration. Both in his gospel and apostolical acts he is accurate and neat, clear and flowing, with a natural and easy grace; his style is admirably accommodated to the design of history. The narrative of the Acts is perspicuous and noble; the discourses inserted emphatical, eloquent, and sublime. He is justly applauded for his politeness and elegance by some critics, who seem to magnify him in order to depreciate the rest of the evangelists, when yet it is plain he has as many Hebraisms and peculiarities as any one of them."

THE
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

CHAPTER I.

In this chapter, (1.) Luke connects this history with his gospel by a more particular account of the ascension of Christ than he had there given, 1-11. (2.) Speaks of the return of the disciples to Jerusalem, of their being assembled together, and employed in social prayer, 12-14. (3.) Represents Peter as relating the history of Judas's wickedness and ruin, in consequence of which Matthias is chosen by lot to be an apostle in his stead, 15-26.

A. M. 4037. **THE** * former treatise have I made,
A. D. 33. **O** * Theophilus, of all that Jesus
began both to do and teach,
2 ^b Until the day in which he was taken up,
after that he through the Holy Ghost ^o had

given commandments unto the apos- A. M. 4037.
tles whom he had chosen: A. D. 33.

3 ^d To whom also he showed himself alive
after his passion, by many infallible proofs,
being seen of them forty days, and speaking

* Ascension Day, epistle, verse 1 to verse 12.—^a Luke i. 3.
^b Mark xvi. 19; Luke ix. 51; xxiv. 51; Verse 9; 1 Timothy
iii. 16.

^c Matt. xxviii. 29; Mark xvi. 15; John xx. 21; Chap. x. 41, 42.
^d Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 36; John xx. 19, 26; xxi. 1, 14;
1 Cor. xv. 5.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1-3. *The former treatise have I made, &c.*—The treatise here referred to is undoubtedly the gospel, which was written by Luke, and dedicated by him to Theophilus. See note on Luke i. 1, 2. That treatise ends, and this begins, in that important season, which reached from the resurrection of Christ to his ascension; this describing the acts of the Holy Ghost, (by the apostles,) as that does the acts of Jesus Christ; *of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach*—That is, of all things, in a summary manner, or of the most considerable things which Jesus did and taught from the beginning of his ministry. The reader will readily allow, that *all*, in this verse, cannot mean every single one of the miracles and sermons which Jesus wrought and preached. For to suppose Luke asserted that, would be to make him contradict the testimony of John. See his gospel, chap. xx. 30, 31; xxi. 25. By *all*, here, we must understand, only all that was necessary or expedient to be related, in order to establish the divine mission of Christ, to convince mankind thereof, and to awaken their minds to a deep sense of the importance of it, in order to their salvation, that it might be duly improved, and so answer its intended end upon them. *Until the day in which he was taken up*—This implies, that Luke considered himself as having given, in his former treatise, an account of the manner in which Christ had opened the gospel, and confirmed it, from his first appear-

ance on earth, to the last period of his abode upon it; including also an account both of his life and doctrine; *after that he through the Holy Ghost*—With which, as man, he was endowed without measure, to qualify him for the important offices he had to sustain, and the work he had to perform, in order to the redemption and salvation of mankind; *had given commandments to*—Greek, *εντειλαμενος*, had solemnly charged; *the apostles whom he had chosen*—To be the prime ministers of his kingdom, and the chief instruments of extending it in the world. *To whom also*—In order to fit them more completely for the discharge of their important office, and to enable them to bear witness to his resurrection from their own certain knowledge of its being a fact; *he showed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs*—Proofs that amounted to a demonstration, and could not possibly deceive them; for, “by speaking to, by walking, and by eating with them, he gave them a certain indication that he lived; his being seen and handled by them was a sure evidence that he had a true and natural body; and his permitting Thomas to view the scars of his feet and hands, and put his hand into his side, was a certain token that the body, which was raised, was the same that was crucified and pierced by the soldier's lance.” *Being seen of them forty days*—That is, many times during that space. He continued on earth forty days after he rose, and in the several interviews which he had with his disciples during that

A. M. 4037. of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God :
A. D. 33.

4 * And ¹being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, ^fwhich, *saith he*, ye have heard of me.

* Luke xxiv. 43, 49.—¹ Or, *eating together with them.*
^f Luke xxiv. 49; John xiv. 16, 26, 27; xv. 26; xvi. 7; Chap. ii. 33.—^g Matt. iii. 11; Chap. xi. 16; xix. 4.

period, he gave them convincing proofs of his resurrection; and *speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*—Discoursing to them from time to time concerning that divine kingdom, or dispensation of religion, which he was going to erect in the world by their ministry. He discoursed to them, doubtless, “of teaching the doctrine of this kingdom to all nations, and receiving them into it by baptism who believed and professed to own it; of the benefits which were promised to them who cordially believed their doctrine; and the condemnation which belonged to them who would not believe it; of the encouragements and assistances he would afford them in the propagation of it by his continual presence with them, and the assistance of his Spirit; and by the miracles by which their doctrine should be confirmed by them and others who believed it.”—Whitby.

Verses 4, 5. *Being assembled together with them*—Namely, at Jerusalem, to which place they had gone to prepare themselves for the feast of pentecost, or rather, in obedience to Christ's command, who, after he had met them in Galilee, had appointed them to meet him there, that he might spend his last days on earth in that once holy city, doing this last honour to the place where God had chosen to dwell, and where the most solemn ordinances of his worship had been administered. He *commanded that they should wait for the promise of the Father*—That is, for the accomplishment of the promise made by the Father, to send his Holy Spirit upon the disciples of the Messiah. See note on Luke xxiv. 49. *Which, saith he, ye have heard of me*—Often and lately. See John xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7. *For John baptized with water only*, when he was sent to call men to repentance; *but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*—There is a nobler baptism prepared for you, and which you shall receive from me, to furnish you for the great work to which I have commissioned you, of preaching repentance and remission of sins in my name; and which baptism *you shall receive not many days hence*—He does not tell them how many, because he would have them to keep themselves every day in a state of mind fit to receive it, a disposition of humility, desire, and expectation of the blessing. It was a great honour which Christ did John now, in not only quoting his words, but making this great blessing of the Spirit, soon to be given, to be the accomplishment of them. *Thus he confirmed the word of his servants, Isa.*

5 ^gFor John truly baptized with A. M. 4037. water; ^hbut ye shall be baptized ^{A. D. 33.} with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, ⁱLord, wilt thou at this time ^krestore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, ^lIt is not for you

^h Joel iii. 18; Chap. ii. 4; xi. 15.—ⁱ Matt. xxiv. 3.—^k Isa. i. 26; Dan. vii. 27; Am. ix. 11.—^l Matt. xxiv. 36; Mark xiii. 32; 1 Thess. v. 1.

xliv. 26: but Christ can do more than any of his ministers. It is an honour to them to be employed in dispensing the means of grace, but it is his prerogative to give the Spirit of grace. Now this gift of the Holy Ghost, thus promised, thus prophesied of, thus waited for, is that which the apostles received ten days after, namely, at the approaching pentecost, as is recorded in the next chapter. Several other scriptures speak of the gift of the Holy Ghost to ordinary believers; this speaks of that particular power which, by the Holy Ghost, the first preachers of the gospel, and planters of the church, were endowed with, enabling them infallibly to relate to that age, and record to posterity, the doctrine of Christ, and the proofs of it: so that by virtue of this promise, and the performance of it, we receive the New Testament as of divine inspiration, and venture our souls upon it.

Verses 6–8. *When they, therefore, were come together*—That is, after he had led them out of the town to the mount of Olives, and was come to that part of the mountain which was above Bethany, (see Luke xxiv. 50,) being full of expectation, that he had brought them thither with a view to some remarkable transaction; *they asked him, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*—Wilt thou now break the Roman yoke from off our necks, and immediately erect the kingdom of the Messiah? Their minds were still full of a temporal kingdom to be erected by Christ, in which the Jews should have dominion over all nations; and “they seem to have expected, that when the Spirit was in so extraordinary a manner poured out, and the world, according to Christ's prediction, (John xvi. 8,) convinced of *sin, of righteousness, and of judgment*, the whole nation of the Jews would own him for their Messiah, and not only shake off its subjection to the Romans, but itself rise to very extensive, and, perhaps, universal dominion. The word *ἀποκαθίσταεις*, [here rendered *wilt thou restore*,] intimates the shattered and weakened state in which Israel now was. And I cannot but think,” says Dr. Doddridge, “our Lord's answer may intimate, it should at length be restored, though not immediately, or with all the circumstances they imagined.” *And he*—Waving a direct answer to this curious question, and leaving it to the Spirit of truth and wisdom, which was shortly to be given, to rectify the mistaken notions on which they proceeded in it; *said, It is not for you, &c.*—It will

A. M. 4037. to know the times or the seasons
A. D. 33. which the Father hath put in his
own power.

8 ^m But ye shall receive ^a power ^a after that
the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ^o ye
shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem,
and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the
uttermost part of the earth.

9 ^p And when he had spoken these things,
while they beheld, ^q he was taken up; and

^m Chap. ii. 1, 4.—^a Or, the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you.—^o Luke xxiv. 49.—^p Luke xxiv. 48; John xv. 27; Verse 22; Chap. ii. 32.—^q Luke xxiv. 51; John vi. 62. Verse 2.

not be of any use to you, in your work; to know the times or the seasons—Of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. Besides, this is one of the things which the Father hath thought fit to conceal from mortals, in the abyss of his own omniscience. This only is of importance for you to know, that you shall receive power—Fortitude, strength, and ability; after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you—in his various gifts and graces; and by these aids ye shall be witnesses unto me—Both by word and deed, by preaching and suffering, and by various miracles, which you shall be enabled to perform; both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, &c.—1st, You must begin at Jerusalem, where the Holy Spirit shall be poured out upon you in his extraordinary gifts, in the presence of multitudes of its inhabitants, and of strangers assembled there to celebrate the feast of pentecost; where you shall be enabled to do many miracles, and where many will receive your testimony, and they that do not will be left without excuse. 2d, Your light shall from thence shine through all Judea; where before you laboured in vain. 3d, Thence you shall proceed to Samaria, though at your first mission you were forbidden to preach in any of the cities of the Samaritans. 4th, Your usefulness shall not be confined to these countries, but shall be extended to the utmost part of the earth, and you shall be blessings to the whole world.

Verses 9-11. And when he had spoken these things—Had given them these instructions; while they beheld—And had their eyes fixed upon him, with great earnestness and high expectation of some extraordinary event, consequent on this solemn preparation, and while they were receiving his blessing, (Luke xxiv. 51.) he was taken up—Was lifted up from the ground, in a miraculous manner, gradually rising higher and higher, till at length a cloud—Conducted probably by the ministry of angels; received him out of their sight—That is, covered him about, and carried him into heaven; not in a sudden, but leisurely manner, that they might behold him departing, and see the proof of his having come down from heaven. He did not grant his disciples the privilege of seeing him come out of the grave, because they might see him after he was risen, which would be a satisfaction sufficient; but as they could

a cloud received him out of their A. M. 4037.
sight. A. D. 33.

10 ¶ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them ^r in white apparel;

11 Which also said, ^s Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, ^t shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

^r Matt. xxviii. 3; Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 4; John xx. 12; Chap. x. 3, 30.—^s Chap. ii. 7; xiii. 31.—^t Dan. vii. 13; Matt. xxiv. 30; Mark xiii. 26; Luke xxi. 27; John xiv. 3; 1 Thess. i. 10; iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 10; Rev. i. 7.

not see him in heaven while they continued on earth, he granted them the favour of seeing him go up toward heaven, and of having their eyes fixed upon him with so much care and intention of mind, that they could not be deceived. Observe, reader, our Lord ascended into heaven from the mount of Olives, at or near the place where he had been apprehended and bound, and from whence he had been led away like a felon to be tried for his life, insulted, scourged, and condemned to crucifixion! He now goes off in triumph from the same mountain, into a place and state worthy of his innocence and dignity. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven—That is, continued with their eyes fixed the way that he was gone; as he went up—in his triumphant ascent; behold two men—Two angels in the form of men; stood by them—Unexpectedly. Though they had assumed the form and garb of men, they were, by the majesty and splendour of their appearance, known of the apostles to be angels. And, indeed, as his resurrection had been honoured with the appearance of angels, it was natural to think that his ascension into heaven would be so likewise; in white apparel—Emblematical of their holiness and happiness; which also said, Ye men of Galilee—So they call them, to put them in mind of the meanness of their original condition: Christ had put a great honour upon them, in making them his ambassadors; but they must remember they are men of Galilee, illiterate and despised by the wise and learned of the world. Why stand ye here, gazing up into heaven—With so much surprise and amazement? It seems, they looked up steadfastly after he was gone out of sight, expecting, perhaps, to see him come down again immediately. This same Jesus, which is taken up into heaven—Who is gone to that world from whence he came, and in which he is to make his final abode; shall so come as you have seen him go into heaven—He shall come in like manner, that is, visible, in a cloud, in his own person, with the same body, and with such majesty and glory as you have now seen him ascend with. “The angels spake of his coming to judge the world at the last day, a description of which Jesus had given in his lifetime, saying, (Matt. xvi. 27.) The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, &c. We may therefore infer

A. M. 4037. 12 ¶ Then returned they unto Jerusalem, from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem³ a sabbath day's journey.

13 And when they were come in, they went up^a into an upper room, where abode both^b Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son of Alphaeus*, and^c Simon

^a Luke xxiv. 52.—^b Or, *about a mile*.—^c Ch. ix. 37, 39; xx. 8. ^d Matt. x. 2-4.—^e Luke vi. 15.—^f Jude 1.—^g Ch. ii. 1, 46.

that the cloud whereon he now ascended, being like that in which he is to come again, was more bright and pure than the clearest lambent flame; for it was *the glory of the Father*, that is, *the shechinah*, or visible symbol of the divine presence, which appeared to the patriarchs in ancient times; which filled the temple at its dedication, (2 Chron. vii. 3,) and which, in its greatest splendour, cannot be beheld with mortal eyes, and so, for that reason, is called *the light inaccessible*, in which God dwells, 1 Tim. vi. 16. It was on this occasion, probably, that our Lord's body was changed, acquiring the glories of immortality, perhaps, in the view of his disciples; for flesh and blood, such as he rose with, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Accordingly, the body which he now has is called *a glorious body*, and declared to be of the same nature with that which the saints shall have after their resurrection, Phil. iii. 21. Wherefore, though the Scripture is silent as to the time when this change passed upon Christ's body, we must suppose that it happened either immediately before his ascension, or in the time of it, or soon after it. As he ascended up into the skies, the flaming cloud which surrounded him, leaving a tract of light behind it, marked his passage through the air, but gradually lost its magnitude in the eyes of them who stood below, till, soaring high, he and it vanished out of their sight.

"In this illustrious manner did the Saviour depart, after having finished the grand work which he came down upon earth to execute; a work which God himself, in the remotest eternity, contemplated with pleasure; which angels anciently with joy described as to happen; and which, through all eternity to come, shall, at periods the most immensely distant from the time of its execution, be looked back upon with inexpressible delight by every inhabitant of heaven. For though the little affairs of time may vanish altogether and be lost, when they are removed far back by the endless progression of duration, this object is such, that no distance, however great, can lessen it. The kingdom of God is erected upon the incarnation and sufferings of the Son of God, the kingdom and city of God comprehending all the virtuous beings that are in the universe, made happy by goodness and love; and therefore none of them can ever forget the foundation on which their happiness stands firmly established. In particular, the human species, recovered by this labour of the

Zelotes, and^a Judas *the brother of James*.

14^b These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with^c the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with^d his brethren.

15 ¶ And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number^e of the names together were about a hundred and twenty,)

^a Luke xxiii. 49, 55; xxiv. 10.—^b Matt. xiii. 55.—^c St. Matthias's Day, epistle, verse 15 to the end.—^d Rev. iii. 4.

Son of God, will view their deliverer, and look back on his stupendous undertaking with high rapture, while they are feasting without interruption on its sweet fruits, ever growing more delicious. The rest of the members likewise of the city of God will contemplate it with perpetual pleasure, as the happy means of recovering their kindred that were lost; and, it may be, as the grand confirmation of the whole rational system, in their subjection to him who liveth and reigneth for ever, and whose favour is better than life."—Macknight.

Verse 12. *Then returned they unto Jerusalem*—According to their Master's appointment, having first worshipped him, Luke xxiv. 52. Here they were in the midst of enemies; but it seems, though immediately after Christ's resurrection they were watched, and were in fear of the Jews, yet after it was known that they were gone into Galilee, no notice was taken of their return to the city, nor any further search made for them. In Jerusalem they employed themselves in a daily course of public and private devotion, rejoicing in what they had seen and heard, and firmly believing some extraordinary event was at hand, whereby they should be more fully qualified for the great work assigned them; which, whatever the hazard of it might be, they were firmly determined to undertake and prosecute.

Verses 13, 14. *When they were come, they went up into an upper room*.—Where they usually held their meetings. The upper rooms, so frequently mentioned in Scripture, were chambers in the highest part of the houses, 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. Here all the eleven were assembled, who *all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication*—And that with great intensity and ardour of soul; *with the women*—Who were formerly mentioned as attending the cross of their Lord, and being early at the sepulchre on the day in which he arose; *and Mary the mother of Jesus*—Mentioned here the last time in the Scriptures; *and with his brethren*—His near kinsmen, who for some time did not believe; probably not till near, or even after, the time of his death.

Verse 15. *In those days*—While they were waiting for the promise of the Spirit; *Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples*—Probably being under a peculiar divine influence on this occasion. *The*

A. M. 4037. 16 Men and brethren, this scrip-
A. D. 33.

ture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong,

^f Psa. xli. 9; John xiii. 18.—^f Luke xxii. 47; John xviii. 3. ^h Mat. x. 4; Luke vi. 16.—^l Verse 25; Chap. xii. 25; xx. 24; xxi. 19.

he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and, His bishopric let another take.

^h Matthew xxvii. 5, 7, 8.—^l Matthew xxvi. 15; 2 Peter ii. 15.—^m Psalm lxxix. 25.—ⁿ Psalm cix. 8.—^o Or, office, or, charge.

number of the names, or persons, together—That is, who were together in the upper room; were a hundred and twenty—It seems the greater part of the five hundred to whom Christ had appeared (see 1 Cor. xv. 6) continued in Galilee during this interval between the feast of the passover and that of pentecost. Dr. Lightfoot reckons that the eleven apostles, the seventy disciples, and about thirty-nine more, all of Christ's own kindred, country, and company, made up this one hundred and twenty; and that these were a sort of synod, or congregation of ministers, a standing presbytery, (chap. iv. 23,) to whom none of the rest durst join themselves, chap. v. 13; and that they continued together till the persecution at Stephen's death dispersed them all but the apostles, chap. viii. 1. But he thinks that, besides these, there were many hundreds, if not thousands, in Jerusalem at this time who believed; and indeed we read of many who believed on him there, but durst not confess him. Here was the beginning of the Christian Church; this one hundred and twenty was the grain of mustard-seed that was to grow into a tree, the leaven that was to leaven the whole lump.

Verses 16, 17. Men and brethren—Though our Lord never addressed the people thus, (perhaps because it would have implied an equality not suitable to the dignity of his character,) yet the apostles frequently did, when they spoke to Jews or Christians, but never when speaking to the Gentiles. This implies, that they recognised a two-fold relation to their own countrymen, "as men of the same nature, descended from Adam; and as brethren of the same favoured family, as descended from Abraham."—Scott. This scripture must needs have been fulfilled—Two prophecies are afterward quoted for this purpose, verse 20, from Psalm lxxix. 25, and cix. 8; (on which passages see the notes;) and it has been matter of much debate, whether they do, in their original sense, refer to Judas or to the enemies of David. It is certain the sixty-ninth Psalm is not to be confined to Judas; for Paul (Rom. xi. 9, 10) has quoted the 22d and 23d verses of it as applicable to the unbelieving Jews in general: and "there are so many passages in both these psalms more applicable to David than to Christ, that I was very inclinable," says Dr. Doddridge, "to render the words before us thus: The scripture which the Holy Ghost spake

before, by the mouth of David, must necessarily have been fulfilled concerning Judas, &c.; and to have explained them as if the apostle had said, 'That vengeance which David foretold, as to be executed on his enemies, must much more fall on Judas, whose perfidious and cruel attack on Christ himself rendered him so much more criminal.' But it is certain, the order of the Greek words will not naturally admit this interpretation. I therefore conclude that, while David prophesied of the calamities which should befall his persecutors, it was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, that the enemies and murderers of the Messiah should inherit those curses in all their terror, and be yet more miserable than the persons on whom they were more immediately to fall. This fact I take to be asserted in these words, as what was revealed by the same Spirit to the Apostle Peter:" an interpretation "which may serve as a key to many other passages of the New Testament."

Verses 18-20. This man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity—That is, a field was purchased therewith: for that reward, being restored by him to the chief priests, had been paid by them for the purchase of a field, which, in some sense, he might be said to have purchased, having supplied the money that paid for it. See note on Matt. xxvii. 3-10, where the next clause also, namely, his falling headlong, and bursting asunder, (in consequence, probably, of the rope breaking wherewith he hanged himself,) so that his bowels gushed out, is explained at large. It is justly observed by Dr. Doddridge, that an action is sometimes said in Scripture to be done by a person who was the occasion of doing it. See Gen. xlii. 38; Exod. xxiii. 8; Rom. xiv. 15; 1 Cor. vii. 16; 1 Tim. iv. 16. And it was known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem—The fact was public and notorious, and, the circumstance being extraordinary, it was so much noticed as to become the subject of general conversation; insomuch as that field—Which was so purchased; is called in their proper tongue, (Chaldaio-Syriac,) Aceldama, the field of blood—As being bought with money which was, in more senses than one, the price of blood; having been the cursed hire for which Judas sold the blood of his Master, and, in effect, his own. We must either suppose that Luke added the expression, that is, the field of blood, to the words of Peter, for the

A. M. 4037. 21 Wherefore of these men which
A. D. 33. have companied with us, all the time
that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,
22 °Beginning from the baptism of John,
unto that same day that ° he was taken up
from us, must one be ordained ° to be a wit-
ness with us of his resurrection.
23 And they appointed two, Joseph called

• Mark i. 1.— Verse 9.— John xv. 27; Verse 8; Chap.
iv. 33.— Chap. xv. 22.

use of Theophilus and other readers who did not understand the language of Palestine, or that the whole verse is to be considered as Luke's words, and to be read in a parenthesis. It may not be improper to observe here, that Aringhnius (in his *Rom. Subterr.*, p. 436) mentions a funeral inscription dug up in the Via Nomentana, in Italy, by which it appears that the fate of Judas became a proverbial form of cursing. *For it is written in the book of Psalms*—See note on verse 16.

Verses 21-23. *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us*—Who have associated and conversed intimately with us, and attended *all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out, &c.*—That is, exercised his ministry *among us*, and presided over us, and so can testify of all he did and said; *beginning from the baptism of John*—When he first entered on his ministry; *unto that same day that he was taken up*—Into heaven; *must one be ordained to be a witness*—To make up the number twelve, the number first chosen by Christ, answering to the twelve tribes of Israel. They might reasonably suppose that that number of the apostles, appointed by Christ, should be kept up; *to be a witness with us of his resurrection*—That great and fundamental fact upon which the proof of his being the Messiah evidently rests, and of the circumstances which preceded and followed it. *And they appointed two*—It is impossible, as well as quite unnecessary, that we should, at this distance of time, be able to assign a reason why the two that are afterward mentioned, and no more, were proposed as candidates. Perhaps a longer and more intimate acquaintance with our Lord than the other disciples present had enjoyed, might entitle them to a preference on this occasion. *Joseph called Barsabas*—Some manuscripts read, Barnabas, but Dr. Benson seems to have assigned solid reasons for concluding this was not Barnabas the Cyprian, (Acts iv. 36,) of whom we read so often in this history, whose name was also Joses, or Joseph, (which are both the same,) but rather the Joseph mentioned Matt. xxvii. 56; and Mark vi. 3; the son of Cleophas, or Alpheus, and brother to, at least, two of the apostles, James the Less, and Jude.

Verses 24, 25. *And they prayed*—With great seriousness and solemnity, and in faith, persuaded their prayer would be answered; *Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men*—With all the counsels, the designs, and desires thereof, with every secret sentiment of the soul, and all the future circum-

stances of every one's life; *show whether of these two thou hast chosen*—They do not say, which of the seventy, for in the opinion of all present, none could stand in competition with these; but, which of these two, for they were persuaded Christ would appoint one of them, and it was determined to acquiesce entirely in his choice. It is fit God should choose his own servants, and so far as, by the disposals of his providence, the gifts of his Spirit, or in any other way, he shows whom he hath chosen, or what he hath chosen for us, we ought readily to comply with him, and to be perfectly satisfied. It is a comfort to us to be assured, in all our prayers for the welfare of the church and its ministers, that the God we pray to knows the hearts of all men, and hath them not only under his eye, but in his hand, and can turn them which way soever he will; can make them fit for his purpose if he do not find them so, by giving them another spirit. *That he may take part of this ministry*—The ministry of the gospel, the apostleship; may join with us in the work of serving Christ and his church; and glorifying God in saving the souls of men, and may share with us in the honour and happiness thereof; *from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place*—*His own*, that is, says Grotius, "qui ipsi melius conveniebat quam apostolica functio," which was more suitable for him than the apostolic office. The expression evidently means a place worthy of him, and which he had deserved by his sin. Hence some manuscripts, instead of *ιδιον*, *his own*, read *δικαιον*, *just*; that he might go to his just or proper place, a place agreeable to his actions, and therefore assigned him by the righteous judgment of God; namely, a place of punishment in hell. But it is objected, that it belonged not to Peter to pass sentence on Judas, or to affirm any thing of God's secret counsels, such as Judas's being consigned to future punishment. "This," says Dr. Whitby, "is wonderful; that when Christ had pronounced him a *devil*; (John vi. 71;) a *son of perdition*; (John xvii. 12;) and declared that *it had been better for him that he had never been born*; (Matt. xxvi. 24;) it should be thought a diving into God's secrets, to say he went into a place prepared for, or due to, such miscreants. Moreover, doth not our Saviour say, this fall of the son of perdition was foretold in the Scripture? John xvii. 12. Does not Peter here apply those Scriptures to him, which foretel the most dreadful things? And does not Luke show the dreadful issue of his iniquity upon

Barsabas, who was surnamed Jus- A. M. 4037.
tus, and Matthias. A. D. 33.

24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord,
° which knowest the hearts of all men, show
whether of these two thou hast chosen.
25 ° That he may take part of this ministry
and apostleship, from which Judas by transgres-
sion fell, that he might go to his own place.

• 1 Samuel xvi. 7; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; xxix. 17; Jer. xi. 30;
xvii. 10; Chap. xv. 8; Rev. ii. 23.— Verse 17.

stances of every one's life; *show whether of these two thou hast chosen*—They do not say, which of the seventy, for in the opinion of all present, none could stand in competition with these; but, which of these two, for they were persuaded Christ would appoint one of them, and it was determined to acquiesce entirely in his choice. It is fit God should choose his own servants, and so far as, by the disposals of his providence, the gifts of his Spirit, or in any other way, he shows whom he hath chosen, or what he hath chosen for us, we ought readily to comply with him, and to be perfectly satisfied. It is a comfort to us to be assured, in all our prayers for the welfare of the church and its ministers, that the God we pray to knows the hearts of all men, and hath them not only under his eye, but in his hand, and can turn them which way soever he will; can make them fit for his purpose if he do not find them so, by giving them another spirit. *That he may take part of this ministry*—The ministry of the gospel, the apostleship; may join with us in the work of serving Christ and his church; and glorifying God in saving the souls of men, and may share with us in the honour and happiness thereof; *from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place*—*His own*, that is, says Grotius, "qui ipsi melius conveniebat quam apostolica functio," which was more suitable for him than the apostolic office. The expression evidently means a place worthy of him, and which he had deserved by his sin. Hence some manuscripts, instead of *ιδιον*, *his own*, read *δικαιον*, *just*; that he might go to his just or proper place, a place agreeable to his actions, and therefore assigned him by the righteous judgment of God; namely, a place of punishment in hell. But it is objected, that it belonged not to Peter to pass sentence on Judas, or to affirm any thing of God's secret counsels, such as Judas's being consigned to future punishment. "This," says Dr. Whitby, "is wonderful; that when Christ had pronounced him a *devil*; (John vi. 71;) a *son of perdition*; (John xvii. 12;) and declared that *it had been better for him that he had never been born*; (Matt. xxvi. 24;) it should be thought a diving into God's secrets, to say he went into a place prepared for, or due to, such miscreants. Moreover, doth not our Saviour say, this fall of the son of perdition was foretold in the Scripture? John xvii. 12. Does not Peter here apply those Scriptures to him, which foretel the most dreadful things? And does not Luke show the dreadful issue of his iniquity upon

A. M. 4037. 26 And they gave forth their lots;
A. D. 33. and the lot fell upon Matthias; and

he was numbered with the eleven A. M. 4037.
apostles. A. D. 33.

his body? And after all this, might he not say, he went to a place proper for him? *Whosoever betrays an Israelite into the hands of the Gentiles, say the Jews, hath no part in the world to come; how much less he who betrays the Messiah, the king of Israel, into the hands of the Gentiles, or of his enemies? Matt. xx. 19; and xxvi. 24.*"

Verse 26. *And they gave forth their lots*—That is, saith Grotius, they put two lots into two urns, the one containing the two names of Joseph and Matthias, the other a blank and the word *apostle*: and then drawing forth the name of Joseph and the blank, they knew that the lot containing the name of an *apostle* belonged to Matthias. This being in answer to their prayers, they concluded that Matthias was

the man whom the Lord had chosen to the apostleship. The honour God had conferred on inquiries by lot, (Josh. vii. 14, 15; 1 Sam. x. 20, 21,) and the custom of fixing the offices of the priests in the temple, while in waiting there, by lot, (1 Chron. xxiv. 5; Luke i. 9,) might lead them to take this method of knowing the will of God. Here, therefore, commenced in the Christian Church 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. *And he was numbered with the eleven apostles*—The rest of the apostles gave him the right hand of fellowship, so that for the future he made the twelfth of that venerable society of men.

CHAPTER II.

Here (1.) *The day of pentecost being come, and the apostles and other disciples assembled, the Holy Spirit descends on them with the sound as of a mighty wind, and cloven or distinct tongues, as of fire, rest upon each of them, an emblem of the gift of tongues now conferred on them, 1-4.* (2.) *Multitudes of people, now collected at Jerusalem from different countries, come together on the occasion, and are astonished to hear the apostles, whom they understood to be Galileans, declare the works of God in their respective languages, 5-12.* (3.) *Some deride, and are confuted by Peter, who shows that this was the effusion of the Spirit promised by Joel, and now bestowed in consequence of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, 13-36.* (4.) *By his sermon three thousand are convinced of the truth, converted to Christ, and united to the gospel church, 37-41.* (5.) *These converts continue steadfast in the faith, and are remarkable for their piety and mutual affection, through which, and the many miracles of the apostles, a further increase of the church is produced, 42-47.*

A. M. 4037. **AND*** when ^a the day of pence-
A. D. 33. cost was fully come, ^b they

were all with one accord in one A. M. 4037.
place. A. D. 33.

* Whitsunday, epistle, verse 1 to verse 12.

^a Lev. xxiii. 15; Deut. xvi. 9; Chap. xx. 16.—^b Chap. i. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *When the day of pentecost was fully come*—Of this feast, which had its name from πεντηκοστή, *pentecostee*, (which signifies the fiftieth day,) because it was celebrated fifty days after the passover, see notes on Lev. xxiii. 15, 16. As our Lord was crucified at one of the great Jewish feasts, it was fit that he should be glorified at another. And this of pentecost was chosen with peculiar propriety, as next succeeding that of the passover, at which he suffered; and also as it was celebrated in commemoration of the giving of the law from mount Sinai, and as the first-fruits were then offered and anointed, Exod. xix. 1, 11; Lev. xxiii. 17. To these answered the fuller discovery of the gospel on this occasion, and the anointing of the first-fruits of the Christian Church by the effusion of the Spirit. At the pentecost of Sinai, in the Old Testament, and the pentecost of Jerusalem, in the New, were 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. And as the Jewish Church was constituted at the former of these

periods, it was fit that the incorporation of the Christian Church should be dated from the latter. As further reasons why it was peculiarly proper that this time should be chosen for effecting this wonderful miracle, it may be observed, 1st, That as great multitudes of people were wont to assemble at Jerusalem at all the Jewish feasts, so it is probable that the peculiar solemnity of this feast, the general expectation of the Messiah that now prevailed among them, and the length of the days, as it was about the middle of summer, would bring greater numbers thither on this occasion than usually attended at the festivals. This would make the miracle the more public, and cause the fame of it to be spread the sooner and farther, which would contribute much to the propagation of the gospel among all nations, and make way for greater regard to the apostles, when they came to the countries where the people lived who had been spectators of this great event, and upon returning home, reported it to their friends and neighbours. 2d, As this feast of pentecost happened on the first day of the week, by the effusion of the Holy Spirit on this day, added to the resurrection of Christ

A. M. 4037. 2 And suddenly there came a sound
A. D. 33. from heaven, as of a rushing mighty
wind, and ^e it filled all the house where they
were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven

^c Chap. iv. 31.—^d Chap. i. 5.—^e Mark xvi. 17; Chap.

taking place on it, still greater honour was put on the day, and it was more manifestly confirmed to be the Christian sabbath, the day which the Lord had appointed to be a standing memorial in his church of those two wonderful events. This not only justifies us in observing that day, under the title of *the Lord's day*, but directs us, in observing it, to give God praise, particularly for those two great blessings. *They were all with one accord in one place*—In what place we are not told, whether in the temple, where they attended at public times, (Luke xxiv. 53,) or whether in their own upper room, where they met at other times; but it was at Jerusalem, because it had been the place which God had chosen to put his name there, and the prophets had foretold that from thence the word of the Lord should go forth to all nations; (Isa. ii. 3; Mic. iv. 2;) and it was now the place of the general rendezvous of all devout people, where God had promised to meet and bless them; and here, therefore, he meets them with this blessing of blessings. It is probable that the ALL here mentioned, included the whole one hundred and twenty who were together when Matthias was chosen. The word *ομοθυμαδον*, rendered *with one accord*, implies that they were united in their views, intentions, and affections, and that there was no discord or strife among them, as there sometimes had been while their Master was with them. Doubtless, they were also united in their desire and expectation of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, *the power from on high*, which Christ had promised them; and in praying earnestly and importunately for it whenever they met together, which it appears they were in the habit of doing daily.

Verses 2, 3. *And suddenly*—That is, unexpectedly and in a moment, not gradually, as winds generally rise; *there came a sound from heaven*—Not, as some have supposed, like a clap of thunder; but *as of a rushing mighty wind*—A wind strong and violent, coming not only with a loud noise, but with great force, as if it would bear down all before it; this was to signify the powerful influences and operations of the Spirit of God upon the minds of men; *and it filled all the house where they were sitting*—As their doctrine was afterward to fill the whole earth. "When Moses had finished all things respecting the tabernacle, a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, Exod. xl. 34, 35; and when Solomon had finished building the temple, *the cloud, &c., filled the house of the Lord*, 1 Kings viii. 10, 11. In like manner, when Isaiah saw the Lord *sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up*, it is said, *his train filled the temple*, Isa. vi. 1. But now the divine presence had left the temple, and the glory of the Lord rested

tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

4 And ^d they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began ^e to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

x. 46; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 30; xiii. 1; xiv. 2, &c.

upon mount Zion, the gospel church, and filled the house where the apostles were assembled." *And there appeared unto them cloven*—Or, as some render *διακεριλωμεναι*, *distinct, tongues of fire*—That is, small flames, which is all that the phrase, *tongues of fire*, means in the language of the Seventy. Probably, however, those small flames were *cloven*, or divided, either in that part of them which was next the heads of those on whom they rested, as Dr. Hammond supposes; or, as most commentators think, and as seems much more probable, at the tip of them. They were "bright flames," says Dr. Doddridge, "in a pyramidal form, which were so parted as to terminate in several points, and thereby to afford a proper emblem of the marvellous effects attending the appearance, by which they were endowed with a miraculous diversity of languages." *And it sat* (*εκαθισα*, not *they sat*), *upon each of them*—That is, the fire, or one of these tongues, or flames, sat upon each: for it appears there were as many flames as there were persons, and they sat upon them for some time, to show the constant residence of the Holy Ghost with them. The extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were conferred sparingly of old, and but at some times; but the disciples of Christ had these gifts always with them; though the sign, we may suppose, presently disappeared. By these appearances resembling flaming fire, was probably signified, also, God's touching their tongues, as it were (*together with their hearts*) with *divine fire*; his enabling them to speak with irresistible force and energy; his giving them such words as were active and penetrating, even as flaming fire.

Verse 4. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost*—That is, all the one hundred and twenty, as appears from verse 1. At the time of this wonderful appearance, this whole company were abundantly replenished with both the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, not only in order to their own salvation, but also and especially to qualify them to be Christ's witnesses to mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, according to his promise, chap. i. 1, 8. They were filled with the *graces* of the Spirit, and were more than ever under its sanctifying influences; were now holy, and heavenly, and spiritual; more weaned from this world, and better acquainted with the other. They were more filled with the comforts of the Spirit, rejoiced more than ever in the love of Christ, and the hope of heaven, and in it all their griefs and fears were swallowed up. They were also, 2d, in proof of this, filled with the *gifts* of the Holy Ghost, which is especially meant here: they were endued with miraculous powers for the furtherance of the gospel. It seems evident that not the twelve apostles only, but all the one hundred and

A. M. 4037. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now ¹when this was noised abroad,

¹ Gr. when this voice was made.

twenty disciples were endowed with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost at this time; all the seventy disciples, who were apostolical men, and employed in the same work, and all the rest that were to preach the gospel; for it is said expressly, (Eph. iv. 8, 11,) *that when Christ ascended on high, (which refers to this here, verse 33,) he gave gifts unto men, not only some apostles, such were the twelve; but some prophets, and some evangelists, many of the seventy disciples, itinerant preachers; and some pastors and teachers, settled in particular churches, as we may suppose some of these afterward were. And began to speak with other tongues—To speak languages of which they had before been entirely ignorant. For this miracle was not in the ears of the hearers, as some have unaccountably supposed, but in the mouths of the speakers. The meaning is not, that one was enabled to speak one language, and another another, as it was with the several families that were dispersed from Babel; but every one was enabled to speak divers languages as he should have occasion to use them. And we may suppose that they not only understood what they themselves said, but understood one another too, which the builders at Babel did not, Gen. xi. 7. They did not speak now and then a word of another tongue, or stammer out some broken sentences, but spoke each language which they spoke as readily, properly, and elegantly, as if it had been their mother tongue: for whatever was produced by miracle was the best of the kind. They spake not from any previous thought, but as the Spirit gave them utterance—He furnished them with the matter, as well as the language. 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. Now observe here, reader, 1st, This was a very great and stupendous miracle, a miracle upon men's minds: for in the mind ideas are conceived, and words are framed: a miracle, with regard to every individual, and every language, thus communicated to that individual, equal to that of giving speech to persons born deaf and dumb, concerning which, see the note on Matt. xv. 30. These disciples had not only never learned any of these languages, but had never learned any foreign tongue, which if they had done, the acquisition of these might have been thereby facilitated. Nay, for aught that appears to the contrary, most of them had never so much as heard any of these languages spoken, or had any idea of them. 2d, It was a peculiarly proper, needful, and useful miracle. The language these disciples spoke was Syriac, or rather Chaldaio-Syriac, a dialect of the Hebrew; so that their being endued with this gift was necessary, even for their understanding both the Hebrew,*

the multitude came together, and were ²confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

² Or, troubled in mind.

in which the Old Testament was originally written, and the Greek, in which the New Testament was to be written. But that was not all: they were commissioned to preach the gospel to every creature, to disciple all nations. But here an insuperable difficulty meets them at the very threshold: how shall they be made acquainted with the several languages of the nations to which they are sent, so as to speak intelligibly to them all. It would be the work of the life of any of them to learn their languages. Hence, to prove that Christ would give authority to preach to the nations, he gives ability to his servants to preach to them in their own languages. And it should seem that this was, at least in part, the accomplishment of the promise which Christ made to his disciples, John xiv. 12. *Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto the Father; for this gift of tongues may well be reckoned, all things considered, a greater work than any of the miraculous cures which Christ wrought. It is observed by Dr. Lightfoot, that as the division of tongues at Babel once introduced confusion, and was the means of casting off the Gentiles from the knowledge of the true God; so now, there was a remedy provided by the gift of tongues at Zion, to bring the Gentiles out of darkness into light, and to destroy the veil which had been spread over all nations. And Archbishop Tillotson thought it probable, if the conversion of infidels to Christianity were sincerely and vigorously attempted by men of honest and disinterested minds, God would, in an extraordinary way, countenance such attempts by giving all proper assistance, as he did to the first preachers of the gospel.*

Verses 5-13. *And there were dwelling—Or sojourning; in Jerusalem, Jews—Now gathered from all parts, by the peculiar providence of God; derout—Greek, εὐλαβεῖς, pious men, from every nation under heaven—Should this be taken for an hyperbole, we have other instances in Scripture of the like way of speaking; as where we read of cities walled up to heaven, Deut. i. 28; and of the dread of the Jews falling upon every nation under the whole heaven, Deut. ii. 25. But, not to insist upon it, that the Jews were then so numerous as to have spread through all countries, so that, as we read in Josephus, (Bell., ii. 16.) "there was not a people upon earth who had not Jews inhabiting among them;" the expression here can signify no more than that there were some at Jerusalem, at that time, from all the several nations among whom the Jews were dispersed. Now when this was noised abroad—When this strange report came to be circulated, as it presently was; the multitude came together—From all parts of Jerusalem; and were confounded—Were utterly astonished; because that every man—Of this large and various assembly; heard one or other of them*

A. M. 4037. 7 And they were all amazed, and
A. D. 33. marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak, Galileans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them

[†] Chap.

—As they addressed themselves by turns to people of a different language; *speaking in his own language*—The language he had known from a child. *And they marvelled*—At this wonderful event; *saying one to another*—As they conversed upon it; *Behold*—How unaccountable is this! *are not all these which speak, Galileans?*—By birth and country? *and how hear we every man*—While they direct their speech to so many different people, who are here come together out of so many nations, speaking to each of us *in our own tongue?* *Parthians, &c.*—The reader, who is acquainted with ancient history, needs little or no information respecting the nations here mentioned. We may observe, however, that by the *Elamites*, the Persians are meant, and, by the *dwellers in Mesopotamia*, Bishop Cumberland thinks the remainder of the Jews are intended, who had been carried captive into Assyria, first by Tiglath-Pileser, (2 Kings xv. 29,) and afterward by Shalmaneser, and placed in the cities of the Medes, 2 Kings xvii. 6. *And in Judea*—The dialect of which greatly differed from that of Galilee: *Asia*—The country strictly so called, Asia Minor: *strangers of Rome*—Greek, *οικητηντες Ρωμαιοι*, *Roman sojourners*, persons 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. *Cretes*—The inhabitants of one island seem to be mentioned for those of all. *We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God*—Meaning, probably, those which related to the incarnation, life, doctrine, and especially 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: or, the surprising testimonies God had given to the divine mission of Jesus, and to his being the true Messiah, the Son of God. It seems, while the apostles and other disciples were discoursing on these marvellous events, they spoke to different classes of people there assembled in such a great variety of languages, and with so much readiness and propriety, as were perfectly astonishing and unexampled, even among the most learned of mankind. *And they were all amazed and in doubt*

A. M. 4037. speak in our tongues the wonderful
A. D. 33. works of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.

14 ¶ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

i. 11.

—That is, the pious, or well disposed were; *saying one to another, What meaneth this?*—What can possibly be intended by this unaccountable appearance; but *others mocking*—The unbelievers begin with *mocking*, thence proceed to *carivilling*, chap. iv. 7; to *threats*, verse 17; to *imprisoning*, chap. v. 18; to *blows*, verse 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 apostles immediately directing their discourse to them in the next verse. *These men are full of new wine*—Greek, *γλυκας*, *sweet wine*, as the word properly signifies. There was no *new wine*, or *must*, so early in the year as pentecost; as Beza and many others have observed. 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. We are informed by Plutarch, that the ancients had ways of preserving their wine sweet a great while, and such wines are known to be very intoxicating.

Verses 14, 15. *But Peter, standing up with the eleven*—Who were then in company with him, and who, doubtless, also all, or at least most of them, addressed the people on this occasion, some in one language, and others in another, speaking by turns, or even altogether, in different parts of the assembly, to those who understood the languages in which they spoke, and therefore flocked about them. Peter, however, it appears, spoke first, and addressing himself to the native Jews, undoubtedly spoke in the language of the country, the Chaldaio-Syriac, which they all understood. It is probable that the others, who discoursed in other languages, uttered truths similar to those declared by Peter; and certainly it was not by Peter's preaching only, but that of all, or most of the rest of the hundred and twenty, that the three thousand souls were that day converted and added to the church. But Peter's sermon is recorded, to be an evidence for him, that he was thoroughly recovered from his fall, and thoroughly restored to the divine favour. He that had in a timid, cowardly manner, denied Christ, now as courageously confesses him. Peter, by *standing up*, showed that he was not drunk; and by the regular, consistent, and conclusive manner in which he rea-

A. M. 4037. 15 For these are not drunken, as ye
A. D. 33. suppose, ^s seeing it is *but* the third
hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the
Prophet Joel,

17 ^h And it shall come to pass in the last days,
saith God, ⁱ I will pour out of my Spirit upon
all flesh: and your sons and ^k your daughters
shall prophesy, and your young men shall see
visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

^s 1 Thess. v. 7.—^h Isa. xlv. 3; Ezra xi. 19; xxxvi. 27;
Joel ii. 28, 29; Zech. xii. 10; John vii. 38.—ⁱ Chap. x. 45.
^k Chap. xxi. 9.

soned, he manifested the utmost sobriety, and most perfect recollection. He *lifted up his voice*—As one that was both well assured of, and much affected with, what he said; and was neither afraid nor ashamed to avow it; and in order that those who had been reproaching them might hear him; and *said, Ye men of Judea*—*Ἀνδρες Ἰουδαίαι, ye men that are Jews; and you especially that dwell at Jerusalem*—Who were accessory to the death of Jesus; *be this known unto you*—Which ye did not know before, and which it infinitely concerns you to know now; and *hearken to my words*—With an attention becoming the importance of the subject on which I address you. My Master is gone, whose words you often heard in vain, and shall hear no more as you have done; but he speaks to you by us: hearken now to our words. For *these are not drunken, as ye suppose*—These disciples of Christ, that now speak with other tongues, speak good sense, and know what they say, as do those to whom they speak; who are led by their discourses into the knowledge of the *wonderful works of God*; and, indeed, it is very unreasonable and uncharitable for you to imagine that they are men intoxicated; *seeing it is but the third hour of the day*—That is, nine in the morning. The hour of morning sacrifice, before which, you know, none, who have any regard for their character, will allow themselves so much as to taste wine, and much less to drink any large quantity of it, whereby they would be rendered incapable of attending the service of the temple, and especially would not do it on such a solemn festival as this. Josephus tells us, that on feast-days the Jews seldom ate or drank any thing till noon; a circumstance which, if true, as there is reason to suppose it was, rendered this calumny still the more incredible. Peter's discourse has three parts, each of which (see verses 14, 22, 29) begins with the same appellation, *men*: only to the last part he also prefixes, with more familiarity, the additional word *brethren*.

Verses 18–21. *But this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel*—But there is another and better way of accounting for what you see and hear. It is the accomplishment of a remarkable prophecy, in its primary and literal sense intended of these times, and this event. Of this whole paragraph see the

18 And on my servants, and on ^{A. M. 4037.}
^{A. D. 33.} my handmaidens, I will pour out in
those days of my Spirit; ¹ and they shall pro-
phesy:

19 ^a And I will show wonders in heaven
above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood,
and fire, and vapour of smoke.

20 ^a The sun shall be turned into darkness,
and the moon into blood, before that great
and notable day of the Lord come.

¹ Chapter xxi. 4, 9, 10; 1 Corinthians xii. 10, 28; xiv. 1, &c.
^a Joel ii. 30, 31.—^a Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24; Luke
xxi. 25.

notes on Joel ii. 28–32, where it is explained at large. *It shall come to pass in the last days*—So the times of the Messiah are frequently called, 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 senses are most vigorous, 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 vigorous, suited to divine *dreams*. Not that the old are wholly excluded from the former, or the young from the latter. *And upon my servants*—On those who are literally in a state of servitude. *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, verse 20. *On earth*—Described in this verse. Such signs were those mentioned verse 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 intrenchments 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*—Burning of houses and towns, involving all in clouds of smoke. See the notes on Isa. lxvi. 6; Luke xxi. 11. *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

A. M. 4037. 21 And it shall come to pass, *that*
A. D. 33. °whosoever shall call on the name
of the Lord, shall be saved.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus
of Nazareth, a man approved of God among
you ^p by miracles, and wonders, and signs,
which God did by him in the midst of you, as
ye yourselves also know:

• Rom. x. 13.—^p John iii. 2; xiv. 10, 11; Chap. x. 38; Heb.
ii. 4.—^A Matt. xxvi. 24; Luke xxiii. 22; xxiv. 44; Chap. iii.
18; iv. 28.—^{Chap. v. 30.} Verse 32; Chap. iii. 15; iv.

season, wherein the Lord shall manifest his glory,
in taking vengeance on his adversaries. But *whoso-*
ever shall call on the name of the Lord—This ex-
pression implies the whole of religion, and particu-
larly prayer uttered in faith; *shall be saved*—From all
those plagues: from sin and hell. See on Joel ii. 32.

Verse 22. *Ye men of Israel, hear these words*—
Let me charge it upon you, as a most important
duty, to pay attention to these remarkable words of
the prophet, which I have now repeated in your
hearing; and a part of which is this day evidently
fulfilled, and the rest shall be fulfilled in their season.
Jesus of Nazareth—So I call him, because he was
generally known among you by that name, though
he was not born there, nor, properly speaking,
was a Nazarene; *a man approved of God among*
you—Censured, indeed, and condemned by men,
but *approved of God*, who testified his approbation
of his life, doctrine, and of the whole of his proceed-
ings, by the miraculous powers he gave him; a man,
marked out by God, as Dr. Hammond translates *απο*
τε θεου αποδεικνυμενον, signalized and made remarkable
among you that now hear me; for you yourselves are
witnesses how remarkable he was rendered by the
miracles, wonders, and signs, works above the power
of nature, out of its ordinary course, and contrary to
it, *which God did by him*—That is, which he did by
that divine power with which he was clothed, and
in which God plainly co-operated with him; for no
man could do such works, unless God were with
him. Observe, reader, the amazing stress Peter
lays upon Christ's miracles: 1st, The matter of fact
was not to be denied; they were done, says he, *in*
the midst of you—In the midst of your country, your
city, your solemn assemblies; *as ye yourselves also*
know—You have been eye-witnesses of his mira-
cles, and I appeal to yourselves whether you have
any thing to object against them, or can offer any
thing to disprove them. 2d, The inference from
them cannot be disputed; the reasoning is as strong
as the evidence; if he did those miracles, certainly
God approved of him, showed him to be what he
declared himself to be, the Son of God and the Sa-
viour of the world: for the God of truth would never
set his seal to a lie.

Verses 23, 24. *Him, being delivered*—Unto death,
by God his heavenly Father, who not only permitted
him to be put to death, but *delivered him up for us*
all, Rom. viii. 32; devoted and gave him up; and

23 Him, ^a being delivered by the A. M. 4037.
determinate counsel and foreknow- A. D. 33.

ledge of God, ^r ye have taken, and by wicked
hands have crucified and slain:

24 ° Whom God hath raised up, having
loosed the pains of death: because it
was not possible that he should be holden
of it.

10; x. 40; xiii. 30, 34; xvii. 31; Rom. iv. 24; viii. 11; 1 Cor.
vi. 14; xv. 15; 2 Cor. iv. 14; Gal. i. 1; Eph. i. 20; Col. ii. 12;
1 Thess. i. 10; Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. i. 21.

yet he was approved of God: and there was nothing
in this that implied, in any degree, the disapproving
of him. For it was done by *the determinate counsel*
and foreknowledge of God—In infinite wisdom, and
for holy ends, in which, and in the means leading to
them, Jesus himself freely and fully concurred. For
it was necessary that thus divine justice should be
satisfied, God and man reconciled, sinners saved,
and Christ himself glorified. It must be observed,
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 mo-
ment. But he did not exert that power, because he
so loved the world! Because it was the determinate
counsel of his love to redeem mankind from eternal
death, by the death of his only-begotten Son.
Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have cruci-
fied, &c.—Thus the apostle speaks, because neither
God's foreknowing what they would do, nor his de-
signing that his Son should be offered as a sacrifice
to expiate the sins of mankind, nor his bringing un-
speakable and everlasting good out of this fact, could
in the least excuse their sin who were agents in it;
for it was their voluntary act and deed, proceeding
from a principle morally evil, and therefore they
are justly said to have perpetrated it with wicked
hands. It is probable some of those who had cried,
Crucify him, crucify him, or who had been other-
wise aiding and abetting in the murder, were here
present, and that Peter knew it. Be this as it may,
it was justly looked upon as a national act, because
done by the vote of the great council, and by the
voice of the great crowd, clamouring for his blood.
He charges it particularly upon them, as a part
of the nation on which it would be peculiarly visited,
the more effectually to bring them to repentance
and faith, because that was the only way to distin-
guish themselves from the guilty that were about
to perish in their sins, and to discharge themselves
from the guilt of so dreadful a crime, and save
themselves from the coming vengeance due to it.
Whom God hath raised up—Whose honour God
hath abundantly vindicated, and to whose inno-
cence, truth, and dignity he hath borne a most glo-
rious testimony; *having loosed the pains of death*
—Or the bonds in which he lay, when the pains of

A. M. 4037. 25 For David speaketh concerning
A. D. 33. him, 'I foresaw the Lord always before

my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover, also, my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways

¹ Psalm xvi. 8.—² Or, *I may*.—³ 1 Kings ii. 10; Chapter xiii. 36.

death had done their work upon him; *because it was not possible that he*—The Prince of life, and a person who had never sinned, and therefore was not liable to the penalty of death, only due to sinners; *should be finally holden of it*—Or detained under its power. The word *odivas*, here rendered *pains*, properly means, the pains of a woman in travail, an expression which seems to be here used to signify the agony which Christ suffered in his soul before he was nailed to the cross, and the extreme anguish he afterward endured, before he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. The word, however, seems to be used by the LXX. for *cords* and *bands*, Psa. xviii. 4; and Dr. Hammond thinks, that from them the apostle here used it in the same sense, to which, indeed, the metaphor of being *held* and *loosing* best agrees. Christ was imprisoned for our debt, was thrown into the bonds of death; but divine justice being satisfied, it was not possible he should be detained there, either by right or by force, for he had life in himself, and in his own power, and had conquered the prince of death.

Verses 25–28. *For David speaketh concerning him*—Namely, Psa. xvi. 8–11, where see the notes. *I foresaw the Lord always before my face*—In the Psalm, according to the Hebrew, it is, *I have set the Lord always before me*. Our Lord Jesus had a constant regard to his Father in his whole undertaking. He set his Father's glory before him as his end, and his Father's will as his rule, in every part of it. And he foresaw that his sufferings would rebound abundantly to the honour of God, and would issue in his own everlasting joy and felicity. These things were set before him, and these he had an eye to in all he did and suffered; and with the prospect of these he was supported and carried on. *He is on my right hand*—The instrument of action, strengthening, upholding, and guiding it; *that I should not be moved*—Shaken in, or driven from, my undertaking, by the hardships I must undergo. *Therefore, &c.*—On account of the firm confidence I had in him, that I should be supported in, and carried through all my labours and sufferings, and that they should have a glorious issue; *my heart rejoiced* in the midst of them; *and my tongue was glad*—Praised God in a joyful manner. In the Psalm it

of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before, spake of the resur-

² 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13; Psa. cxxxii. 11; Luke i. 32, 69; Rom. i. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 8.

is, *My glory rejoiceth*: for our tongue is our glory; the faculty of speech is an honour to us; and never more so than when it is employed in praising God. *Moreover my flesh shall rest in hope*—The grave shall be to my body a bed of repose, and I shall cheerfully deliver it up to be laid there, in hope of a blessed resurrection. *Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*—*Eis ade*, in the invisible world. For it does not appear that ever our Lord's soul went into what we call hell. On the contrary, when it was separated from the body, it went to paradise, Luke xxiii. 43. The meaning is, Thou wilt not leave my soul in its state of separation from the body, nor suffer my body to be corrupted. See note on Psa. xvi. 10. *Thou hast made known to me the ways of life*—To which thou wilt assuredly conduct me; and after all my sufferings here, thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance—With manifestations of thy love and favour, in those upper and more glorious regions to which thou wilt raise me.

Verses 29–31. *Men and brethren*—Thus he addresses himself to them, with a title of respect; *let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David*—Let it be no offence to you, if I tell you that David cannot be understood here as speaking of himself, but of the Messiah to come. David is here called a *patriarch*, a more honourable title than king, because he was the father of the royal family, and a man of great note and eminence in his generation; *that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us*—And as no one ever pretended that he had risen, therefore he could not say of himself, that he should not see, or suffer corruption; it being evident he did suffer it. St. Paul urges this same argument, chap. xiii. 35–37. *Therefore, being a prophet, &c.*—He therefore spoke it as a prophet, with an eye to the Messiah, to whose sufferings the prophets bore testimony beforehand, as also to the glory that should follow; *knowing that God had sworn with an oath*—In a special revelation from heaven; *that of the fruit of his loins*—Or, out of his descendants; *he would raise up Christ*—That is, the promised Messiah; *to sit on his throne*—That is, promised him a son; *the throne of whose kingdom should be established for ever*, 2. Sam. vii. 12. *He*

A. M. 4037. rection of Christ, ^r that his soul was
A. D. 33. not left in hell, neither his flesh did

see corruption.

32 ^r This Jesus hath God raised up, ^a whereof
we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore ^b being by the right hand of
God exalted, and ^c having received of the Fa-
ther the promise of the Holy Ghost, he ^d hath
shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the hea-
vens; but he saith himself, ^e The LORD said

^r Psa. xvi. 10; Chap. xiii. 35.—^a Verse 24.—^b Chap. i. 8;
^c Chap. v. 31; Phil. ii. 9; Heb. x. 12.—^d John xiv. 26; xv.
26; xvi. 7, 13; Chap. i. 4.—^e Chap. x. 45; Eph. iv. 8.

seeing this before—With a firm reliance on the faith-
fulness of God, spake of the resurrection of Christ
in the words just now repeated; not meaning them
of himself, or intending they should be taken in any
lower sense. But how does that promise of a king-
dom imply Christ's resurrection? Because he did
not receive it before he died, and because his king-
dom was to endure for ever, 2 Sam. vii. 13.

Verses 32-36. *This Jesus*—Whom we assert to
be the true Messiah; *hath God raised up*—Accord-
ing to the tenor of his promise; *whereof*—Of which
resurrection; *we all are witnesses*—On our personal
and certain knowledge; having seen him with our
eyes, and examined into the truth of the matter with
all possible care. *Therefore, being by the right
hand of God*—That is, by God's almighty power,
exalted from the grave to heaven; or, as some read
the clause, *Being exalted to the right hand of God*,
to supreme power, majesty, and glory; *and having
received of the Father*—As the great anointed one
of the Lord; *the promise of the Holy Ghost*—The
Holy Ghost promised to his disciples; *he hath*—
Agreeably to the notices he gave us before his as-
cension; *shed forth this* miraculous effusion of it, the
effects of which *ye now see and hear*. *For David
himself*—Who has not yet been raised from the
dead; *is not*—With respect to his body; *ascended
into heaven*—To be advanced there to the highest
dignity and power: *but he saith*—In another Psalm,
(where he plainly shows that he spoke of another
person, and such another as was superior to himself,
even his Lord;) *The Lord*—Namely, Jehovah, (the
word here used;) *said unto my Lord*—That is, God
the Father said unto the Messiah, (whom, though in
one sense David's son, he honoured as his Lord;) *Sit
thou on my right hand*—Be thou invested with the
highest power and glory; *until I make thy foes*
—All that are so presumptuous as to persist in hos-
tility to thee; *thy footstool*—Until I lay them pro-
strate at thy feet, so that thou mayest trample upon
them at pleasure, as entirely subdued. See note on
Psa. cx. 1. This text is here quoted with the great-
est 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.
It may be proper to observe here, that in these two

unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right
A. M. 4037. hand, A. D. 33.

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know
assuredly, that God ^f hath made that same Jesus
whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37 ¶ Now when they heard *this*, ^g they were
pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and
to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren,
what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, ^h Repent, and

^f Psa. cx. 1; Matt. xxii. 44; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Eph. i. 20;
Heb. i. 13.—^g Chap. v. 31.—^h Zech. xii. 10; Luke iii. 10;
Chap. ix. 6; xvi. 30.—ⁱ Luke xxiv. 47; Chap. iii. 19.

verses there is an allusion to two ancient customs:
one, to that of kings placing those persons on their
right hands to whom they intended the highest
honour; 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. *There-
fore*—Upon the whole, from this concurrent evi-
dence, both of prophecy and miracle, and from the
testimony God has given to that Jesus whom we
preach, not only by his resurrection from the dead,
but by the effusion of the Holy Spirit on his fol-
lowers; *let all the house of Israel know assuredly*
—How contrary soever it may be to their former
apprehensions and rooted prejudices; *that God hath
made that same Jesus, whom ye have rejected and
crucified, both Lord and Christ*—Hath demonstrated
him to be the expected Messiah, and hath con-
stituted him the King of his people, and Lord of all:
let them know certainly that this truth has now re-
ceived its full confirmation, and we our full commis-
sion to publish it. Thus Peter shows, in a striking
light, what aggravated wickedness they had been
guilty of, in that they had crucified one whom God
designed to glorify, and had put him to death as a
deceiver, who had given such pregnant proofs of a
divine mission.

Verses 37-39. *Now when they heard this*—Having
patiently heard Peter out, and not given him the in-
terruption they had been used to give Christ in his
discourses; (which was an important point gained;) *they
were pricked in their heart*—Or, *were pierced
to the heart*, with deep and lively sorrow, and felt
such a sense of their enormous guilt, in the injuries
and indignities which they had offered to this glo-
rious, this divine person, that, with the utmost eger-
ness and solicitude, they cried out *to Peter, &c.,
Men and brethren*—See how their language is alter-
ed: they did not style them so before! *what shall
we do?*—Is that Jesus, whom we crucified, both Lord
and Christ? Then what will become of us who cru-
cified him? How shall we free ourselves from that
guilt and danger in which our own folly and wick-
edness have involved us? *Then Peter said, Re-
pent*—Of this aggravated crime, and let a sense of

A. M. 4037. be baptized every one of you in the
A. D. 33. name of Jesus Christ, for the remis-
sion of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of
the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and ¹ to your
children, and ² to all that are afar off, *even* as
many as the Lord our God shall call.

¹ Joel ii. 28; Chap. iii. 25.—² Chap. x. 45;

the horrid guilt which you have thereby contracted, awaken you to a penitent reflection upon all your other sins, and to bitter remorse and sorrow for them. This was the same doctrine that John the Baptist and Christ had preached, and, now the Spirit is poured out, it is still insisted on. See notes on Matt. iii. 2; Mark i. 15; Luke iii. 8-14. *And be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ*—That is, believe in Jesus Christ, not only as a teacher come from God, but as the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world: believe in his doctrine as infallibly true and infinitely momentous, and make it the rule of your faith and practice: rely on his mediation for reconciliation with God: submit to his grace and government: and make an open and solemn profession of this by submitting to the ordinance of baptism. See notes on Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 16. This is pressed on each particular person; *every one of you*, says the apostle. Even those of you that have been the greatest sinners, if they comply with these terms, shall find mercy through this Jesus: and those that think they have been the greatest saints, yet have need to comply with them; repentance, faith, and new obedience being necessary for all. *For the remission of sins*—Which you may obtain through Christ crucified, in this way, and can obtain in no other. Repent of your sins and they shall not be your ruin; believe in Jesus, and be baptized in that faith, and you shall be justified. Yea, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost—By which he will own and attest the work of his grace in your hearts, and will qualify you for serving that Lord, whom you have crucified. Some of you shall receive even these external and extraordinary gifts, and every one of you, if you be sincere in your repentance and faith, shall receive his internal graces and comforts; shall be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Observe, reader, all that receive the remission of sins, and are adopted into God's family, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, as a spirit of adoption and regeneration; to assure them of their sonship, and renew them after God's image. *For*, says the apostle, *the promise is unto you*—To any and all of you here present; and to your children—Your posterity to the latest generation; and to all that are afar off—To the Gentiles in the most remote countries, whom God is ready to admit to the same privileges with you. It appears evidently from the manner in which St. Peter here expresses himself, that *the gift of the Holy Ghost* does not, in this place, mean merely the power of speaking with tongues, and working mira-

40 And with many other words did A. M. 4037.
he testify and exhort, saying, Save A. D. 33.
yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 ¶ Then they that gladly received his
word, were baptized: and the same day
there were added unto them about three thou-
sand souls.

xi. 15, 18; xiv. 27; xv. 3, 8, 14; Eph. ii. 13, 17.

cles, for the promise of this was not given to all the Jews there present, and their posterity, much less to all that were afar off, in distant ages and nations; but it rather signifies, the ordinary graces of the Spirit, living faith and its fruits, even righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which certainly are free for all that earnestly desire, and will seek them in the way God hath appointed. See Luke xi. 13; John iv. 10; and vii. 37. *Whomsoever the Lord our God shall call*—Namely, by his word and Spirit, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, and who are not disobedient to the heavenly calling. It is observable, that Peter did not now understand the very words he spoke: for he knew nothing, as yet, of the intended calling of the Gentiles. He could only mean, therefore, by what he now said, that the gospel should be preached to all the dispersed of Israel, and their posterity, in distant nations; but the Holy Spirit had doubtless a further view.

Verse 40. *And with many other words*—To the same purpose; *did he testify*—Gospel truths; and *exhort*—To gospel duties. In such an accepted time, when the power of the word is felt, and good impressions appear to be made on men's minds, we should add line upon line, and extend our discourses to a greater length than usual, in order that, if possible, they may be not only almost, but altogether persuaded to be Christians. *Saying, Save yourselves*—Greek, *σωθητε*, be ye saved, namely, by complying with the exhortation given; *from this untoward*—Greek, *της ακολιας ταυτης*, this perverse, generation—Many of whom were probably mocking still. Observe, reader, those that repent of their sins, and give themselves up to Jesus Christ, must evidence their sincerity by breaking off all intimate society with the carnal and wicked. *Depart from me, ye evil doers*, must be the language of every one that determines to keep the commandments of his God, Psa. cxix. 115. To separate ourselves from such, is the only way to save ourselves from them.

Verse 41. *Then they that gladly received his word, &c.*—The apostle's exhortation was not given in vain; many were awakened and savingly brought to God by it; for the influence of the Holy Spirit accompanied it, and wrought wonders thereby. Many of the same persons that had been eye-witnesses of the death of Christ, and of the prodigies that had attended it, and were not at all influenced by them, were now effectually wrought upon by the preaching of the word, and found it the power of God to their salvation. *Such were baptized*—Gladly receiving the word, believing with the heart, they

A. M. 4037. 42 ¹ And they continued steadfastly
A. D. 33. in the apostles' doctrine and fellow-
ship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and ^m many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

¹ Verse 46; Chap. i. 14; Rom. xii. 12; Eph. vi. 18; Col. iv. 2; Heb. x. 25.

made confession with the mouth, and enrolled themselves among the disciples of Christ, by that sacred rite and ceremony which he had instituted. Hereby there were added to the hundred and twenty disciples of Christ about three thousand souls that same day; the conversion of whom, by the word now spoken, was a greater work than the feeding of four or five thousand with a few loaves and fishes. Let it be observed here, they who are joined to Christ, ought to join themselves to the disciples of Christ, and be united with them: when we take God for our God, we must take his people for our people. Is it commonly said, that all these were converted by one sermon, but, as has been intimated on verse 14, it is probable, that while Peter was preaching in the Chaldaio-Syriac language, the other apostles were preaching at some small distance, much to the same purpose, in other languages; and it is not surely to be imagined, that none of them but Peter should be blessed as the means of converting any souls; not to insist upon it that he himself might deliver several discourses that day (and it was *τη ημερα εκεινη, in that day*, that the number here spoken of was added) to different auditories, when the concourse of people was so great, and their languages so various.

Verses 42, 43. *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine*—Notwithstanding all the apparent danger to which they were exposed, they regularly attended on the word which the apostles preached, and resolutely adhered to their doctrine. And they all lived in the most endearing communion and intimate friendship one with another, and especially expressed their mutual affection in *breaking of bread*—Together, and joining in the exercise of social prayer. Though we have great reason to believe that the eucharist was often celebrated among these primitive converts to Christianity, perhaps much oftener than every Lord's day, yet there seems no sufficient reason to conclude with Lightfoot, Pearson, and many others, that this phrase must here refer to it, since it may undoubtedly signify common meals, as Grotius, Wolfius, and several others have shown; in which sense the same phrase is used, Luke xxiv. 35, for there, it is plain, the eucharist could not be intended. *And fear came upon every soul*—Many who were not converted and did not join with the Christians, when they observed how the testimony of the apostles, concerning the resurrection of Jesus, was confirmed by the gift of tongues and other miracles, and saw the wonderful effect of their preaching, were so mightily struck and impressed thereby, that a reverential fear and inward dread fell upon them, and gradually spread itself over the whole city and neighbourhood; for

44 And all that believed were to- A. M. 4037.
gether, and ^a had all things com- A. D. 33.
mon;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and ^o parted them to all men, as every man had need.

^a Mark xvi. 17; Chap. iv. 33; v. 12.—^o Chap. iv. 32, 34.
• Isa. lviii. 7.

they apprehended such unexampled events might be the forerunners of some public calamities on those who had slain Jesus, it being declared by his disciples, that these extraordinary things were all effected by his power. And the consternation was still further increased, by the *many wonders and signs* which continued to be daily wrought in his name by his apostles, all which plainly showed an extraordinary divine interposition, and proved incontestably that they spoke and acted by God's authority.

Verses 44, 45. *And all that believed were together*—Meeting as frequently as possible, even in the same place, and at the same time. Or, if this was impracticable, (their number being already, at least, three thousand one hundred and twenty, and in a few days several thousands more,) they probably assembled, as Dr. Lightfoot explains it, in several distinct companies, or congregations, according as their languages, nations, or other circumstances, brought and kept them together. *And had all things in common*—That is, such was their mutual affection and love to each other, that they chose rather to part with their property, whatever it was, than that any of their brethren should want; and accordingly they who had estates, or any other valuable possessions, sold them, and parted the price of them to all men—That is, to their brethren; as every man had need—Herein, it is probable, they had an eye to the command which Christ gave to the rich man, as a test of his sincerity; *sell what thou hast, and give to the poor*. Not that this was intended for an example, or to be a constant and binding rule to all Christians, in all places and ages; as if they were bound to sell all their property, and give the money arising from the sale in charity. For St. Paul, in his epistles, after this, often speaks of the *rich and poor*, as distinguished from each other; and Christ said, *The poor you have always with you*; evidently meaning that this always would, more or less, be the case among his followers. Indeed, the New Testament abounds with passages which plainly show that what now took place at Jerusalem, was not intended to be a general practice in the church of Christ. But the case was now extraordinary; and, as Dr. Doddridge observes, "peculiar reasons made this community of goods eligible at this time; not only as so many sojourners, who had come from other parts, would justly be desirous to continue at Jerusalem much longer than they intended, when they came up to the feast, that they might get a thorough knowledge of the gospel; but as the prospect, likewise, of the Roman conquests, which, according to Christ's known prediction, were soon to swallow up all

A. M. 4037. 46 ^p And they, continuing daily with
A. D. 33. one accord ^q in the temple, and ^r break-
ing bread ^s from house to house, did eat their
meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

^p Chap. i. 14.—^q Luke xxiv. 53; Chap. v. 42.—^r Chap. xx. 7.
^s Or, at home.

47 Praising God, and ^t having fa- A. M. 4037.
vour with all the people. And ^u the A. D. 33.
Lord added to the church daily such as should
be saved.

^t Luke ii. 52; Chap. iv. 33; Rom. xiv. 18. ^u Chap. v. 14;
xi. 24.

Jewish property, would of course dispose many more readily to sell their lands." For they who believed Christ to be a divinely-commissioned teacher, must believe that the Jewish nation would shortly be destroyed, and an end put to the possession of goods and estates by the Jews in Judea; and in the belief of that, the converted Jews resident in the country wisely sold theirs for the present service of Christ and his church, before they were snatched from them by the enemy. It does not appear, however, that the apostles enjoined this upon any of them, as an absolute duty; for Peter tells Ananias, (chap. v. 4,) that the possession he had sold was his own property before he had sold it, and that, after he had disposed of it, the price he had received for it was still in his own power, to have given, or not given, the whole or any part of it. But by this conduct, these first Christians manifested in a remarkable manner their firm faith in the declarations and predictions of Christ, respecting the calamities coming on Judea, their deadness to, and contempt of, this world, their assurance of another, their love to their brethren, their compassion for the poor, and their great zeal for the encouraging of Christianity, and the nursing of it in its infancy. The apostles left all to follow Christ, and were to give themselves wholly to the ministry of the word, and prayer; it was necessary, therefore, that something should be done for their maintenance; so that this extraordinary liberality was like that of Israel in the wilderness, toward the building of the tabernacle, which needed to be restrained. It is true the apostles, who wrought so many wonderful miracles, could probably have maintained themselves and the poor that were among them miraculously, as Christ fed thousands with little food; but it was as much for the glory of God that it should be done by a miracle of grace, inclining people to sell their estates to do it, as if it had been done by a miracle in nature. In the mean time, the gospel-word from their mouths did wonders, and God blessed their endeavours for the increase of the number of believers, *adding to the church daily such as should be*, or, as the word *σωζομενος* rather means, *such as were saved*—Namely, from the guilt and power of their sins, by believing in Christ.

Verses 46, 47. *And continuing daily with one accord*—With unanimity and fraternal affection; *in the temple*—At the appointed hours of public service. This was their place of rendezvous: and here they worshipped not only on sabbaths, and solemn feast-days, but *every day*: for to worship God is the daily work of a true Christian, and where there is opportunity, the oftener it is done publicly the better. God loveth the gates of Zion, and so must we: and to

have fellowship with God in his ordinances, is the best fellowship we can have with one another. *And breaking bread from house to house*—For they associated as frequently as they could at other times, each family that was of ability entertaining their brethren, especially those that were sojourners in Jerusalem; *they eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart*—With the greatest joy, on the part of those who made the entertainments; and with disinterested simplicity of heart, in those who received them; and on all sides with the sincerest sentiments of devotion and friendship. Thus did these first Christians carry the same holy and happy temper in which they worshipped God, through all their common actions, eating and working with the same spirit wherewith they prayed, and received the Lord's supper! *Praising God*—For the riches of his grace to them, for the wonderful things he had done for them, in redeeming them by the life, death, and resurrection of his Son, for the assurances he had given them of their justification and regeneration through him, and for the bright prospects he had opened before them, of glory and felicity for ever in his presence and kingdom. *Having favour with all the people*—That is, with the generality of them, particularly the common people. So wonderfully had the *fear*, spoken of verse 43, the signs and wonders wrought by the apostles, and the astonishing events which had taken place, restrained the spirit of persecution; which, however, was soon revived, and broke forth in all its fury: and no wonder; for the carnal mind will still be *enmity against God*, however the outward manifestations of that enmity may, on certain occasions, be checked for a season. In this remarkable passage, then, we have a striking picture of the primitive church, and that in its first days: its state of infancy, indeed, but the state of its greatest innocence. 1st, The members of it were regular in their attendance on holy ordinances, and abounded in all instances of piety and devotion. For Christianity, received in the power of it, will cause men to delight in communion with God in all those ways wherein he has commanded us to meet him, and has promised to meet us. They were, therefore, constant in their attendance on the preaching of the word; frequently received the Lord's supper, celebrating that memorial of their Master's death, as persons who were not ashamed to own their relation to, and dependance upon him, who had been crucified; they continued instant in prayer, social and public, as well as private; and abounded in praise and thanksgiving. 2d, Their charity was as eminent as their piety, their joining together in holy ordinances tending greatly to endear them to one another, and to unite them together

in disinterested friendship and brotherly affection. Hence they were peculiarly loving and kind to one another, had a deep concern for each other's welfare, and were constantly ready to help each other in any way in their power, suffering no one to want what another had. 3d, God owned them for his people, giving daily and signal tokens of his presence with them, and delight in them, bearing testimony to the word of his grace, and causing his power so to attend the ministration of it, that the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified, his kingdom enlarged, and multitudes, both of men and women, were added to the society of the faithful.

O, what an age of golden days!
O, what a choice, peculiar race!

Join'd by the unction from above,
In mystic fellowship of love.
Meek, simple followers of the Lamb,
They lived, and spake, and thought the same ;
They joyfully conspired to raise
Their ceaseless sacrifice of praise.
With grace abundantly endued,
A pure, believing multitude ;
Wash'd in the Lamb's all-cleansing blood
Anointed kings and priests to God!
Ye different sects, who all declare,
Lo, here is Christ! and Christ is there!
Your stronger proofs divinely give,
And show me where the Christians live!

CHAPTER III.

Here, (1.) Quickly after the events recorded in the preceding chapter, Peter and John, going up to the temple, cure a man who had been lame from his birth, as they enter in at one of its gates, 1-8. (2.) The people, having known him to be lame, and seeing him now leaping and walking, and praising God, run together, filled with wonder and amazement at the sight, 9-11. (3.) Peter takes occasion from their astonishment to show them the power and glory of Christ, and their sin and guilt in crucifying him, 12-18. (4.) He exhorts and encourages them to repent and believe in him for remission of sins and salvation, 19-26.

A. M. 4037. **N**OW Peter and John went up together ^ainto the temple, at the hour of prayer, ^bbeing the ninth hour.
2 And ^ca certain man lame from his mother's

womb was carried, whom they laid ^{A. M. 4037.} daily at the gate of the temple which ^{A. D. 33.} is called Beautiful, ^dto ask alms of them that entered into the temple ;

^a Chap. ii. 46.—^b Psa. lv. 17.

^c Chap. xiv. 8.—^d John ix. 8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. Now Peter and John, &c.—We are not informed when the fact here recorded took place ; but it is probable it was during the days of the feast of pentecost, and while the city was still full of people ; *went up to the temple*—Probably to seek an opportunity of preaching to the people, as well as to offer up their prayers and supplications there before God ; *at the ninth hour*—One of the solemn hours of prayer. 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 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.

Verse 2. And a certain man—Well known, it appears, by those who frequented the temple ; *lame from his mother's womb, was carried*—Thither by the help of others, being unable to walk, through a weakness in his ankles ; *whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple, called Beautiful*—This gate, which was between the court of the Gentiles and that of Israel, and is here called *Beautiful*, for the richness of the metal of which it was formed, and its curious workmanship, is termed by Josephus the *Corinthian gate*. About one hundred and eighty years before this, the city of Corinth had been taken and burned by the Romans ; and in the burning of it multitudes of statues and images of brass, gold, and silver, being melted down and running together, made that mixture of metals, which, from that time, was called *Corinthian brass*, and was valued, by the ancients, above gold or silver. This gate, on the east side of the temple, was made of that brass, and exceeded the other gates, as in its dimensions, &c especially in its workmanship and splendour, though most of them were covered over with silver or gold. It was thirty cubits high, and fifteen broad, and was added by Herod the Great.

A. M. 4037. 3 Who, seeing Peter and John about
A. D. 33. to go into the temple, asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: * In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength.

* Chap. iv. 10.—† Isa. xxxv. 6.

Verses 3-8. *Who, seeing Peter and John, asked an alms*—As it seems he did of all who entered in at the gate where he sat begging: an alms was the utmost he expected from them or any others. *And Peter, fastening his eyes on him, with John*—That is, looking steadfastly at him, feeling, doubtless, a strong emotion of soul, which intimated to him that the divine power would be exerted in working an illustrious miracle for the further confirmation of the gospel; *said, Look on us*—This the lame man readily did, *expecting to receive something of them*—Namely, for the relief of his temporal necessities. Little did he suppose that a much greater blessing was prepared for him. *Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none*—How unlike was Peter to his supposed successor! Can the bishop of Rome either say this, or do what Peter now did? This, we may observe, was after the estates were sold, as mentioned chap. ii. 45, and plainly shows how far the apostles were from enriching themselves by the treasures which passed through their hands. *But such as I have give I thee*—What is in my power, I willingly impart; and thou shalt find it not less valuable than money. *In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*—That is, by the power of him who, in contempt, is called, *Jesus of Nazareth*; *rise up and walk*—Be immediately and perfectly healed of thy malady. *And he took him by the hand*—Thereby encouraging him to do as he had said; *and lifted him up*—In the same name in which he had bid him rise. Not that his doing this could contribute any thing to the lame man's cure: it was but a sign, intimating the supernatural help that he should receive, if he exerted himself, as he was commanded. When God by his word enjoins us to rise, and walk in the ways of his commandments, if we mix faith with that word, and rely on the power of it, he will give us his Spirit, to take us by the hand, as it were, and lift us up. If we set ourselves to do what we can in dependance on the divine aid, God has promised us his grace to enable us to do what of ourselves we cannot; and by faith in that promise we receive a new nature productive of a new practice: for the grace of God thus received and used shall not be in vain; as it was not here: *his feet and ankle-bones received*

8 And he, † leaping up, stood, and A. M. 4037.
walked, and entered with them into A. D. 33.
the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 * And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

10 And they knew that it was he which † sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran toge-

† Chap. iv. 16, 21.—‡ John ix. 8.

strength—Which would not have been the case if he had not attempted to rise. *And he, leaping up*—From the place where he lay; *stood*—In an erect posture, which he had never before been able to do; *and walked*—Greek, *περιπατει*, *walked about*, with strength and steadiness; *and entered with them into the temple*—Into the court of Israel, there to offer the first-fruits of his thanksgivings, sometimes *walking*, and sometimes *leaping*, for joy, and to show that he was perfectly healed; *and praising God*—In a rapture of astonishment and thankfulness for so wonderful a mercy bestowed upon him. Thus was the prophecy (Isa. xxxv. 6) remarkably fulfilled, *Then shall the lame man leap as a hart*. This man, being now newly cured, was in this excess of joy and thankfulness: all true converts walk and praise God; but young converts, perhaps, leap more, as it were, in his praises.

Verses 9-11. *And all the people*—Who were there present; *saw him walking*—In the court of the temple; *and heard him praising God*—In this uncommon ecstasy of delight; *and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate, &c.*—He had sat there so long, that they all knew him; and for that reason he was chosen to be a vessel of mercy. Now they were not so perverse as to make any doubt whether he was the same man that had sat begging, as the Pharisees had questioned concerning the blind man that Christ cured, John ix. 18; for they saw him walking and praising God, and probably took notice of a change in his mind, for he was now as loud in praising God, as he had used to be in begging relief. *And they were filled with wonder and amazement*—Greek, *θαυμας και εκστασις*, with astonishment and ecstasy; they felt emotions, resembling those of the person healed; *at that which had happened to him*—At the miracle wrought for him. It is worth observing here, that this effect appears to have been produced by the late effusion of the Spirit; the people, at least those in Jerusalem, were more affected with the miracles which the apostles wrought, than they had been with those of the same kind that had been performed by Christ himself. *And as the lame man held Peter and John*—Full of gratitude for the great blessing he

A. M. 4037. ther unto them in the porch ¹ that is
A. D. 33. called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

12 ¶ And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

13 ^k The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, ¹ hath glori-

fied his Son Jesus; whom ye ^m delivered A. M. 4037.
up, and ⁿ denied him in the presence A. D. 33.
of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go.

14 But ye denied ^o the Holy One, ^p and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

15 And killed the ¹ Prince of life, ^q whom God hath raised from the dead; ^r whereof we are witnesses.

¹ John x. 23; Chap. v. 12.—^k Chap. v. 30.—^l John vii. 39; xii. 16; xvii. 1.—^m Matt. xxvii. 2.—ⁿ Matt. xxvii. 20; Mark xv. 11; Luke xxiii. 18, 20, 21; John xviii. 40; xix. 15;

Chap. xiii. 28.—^o Psa. xvi. 10; Mark i. 24; Luke i. 35; Chap. ii. 27; iv. 27.—^p Chap. vii. 52; xxii. 14.—^q Or, Author, Heb. ii. 10; v. 9; 1 John v. 11.—^r Chap. ii. 24.—^s Chap. ii. 32.

had received through their instrumentality; and while he walked on between them, sometimes, probably, taking hold of them by the hand; and sometimes embracing them as his great benefactors; *all the people*—In the neighbouring parts; *ran together unto them*—Some only to gratify their curiosity with the sight of men that had such power; others, perhaps, with a desire to hear them preach, concluding that the doctrine must needs be of divine original, which had thus a divine confirmation: *in the porch that is called Solomon's*—A spacious and celebrated portico of the temple. See note on John x. 23. Hither the people flocked to see this great sight.

Verses 12–16. *And when Peter saw it*—When he saw a crowd of people collected together, and found that they were exceedingly affected with the miracle that had been wrought, he took that favourable opportunity to preach Christ unto them, especially as the temple was the place of their concourse; thus sowing the seed of the gospel in the ground that was broken up and prepared to receive it. *Ye men of Israel*—To whom miracles surely are not, or at least ought not to be, strange things: having been wrought for you as a nation, in multiplied instances, from age to age, and many very evident and signal ones having, during the last three years, been performed before your eyes; *why marvel ye at this*—As if it were a singular fact, the like of which you had never seen? Why do you wonder at what has now happened, when so much greater miracles have lately been performed among you? The fact was indeed marvellous, and they justly wondered at it, but it was no more than what Christ had done many a time. It was but a little before that Christ had raised Lazarus from the dead: nay, and he had lately risen from the dead himself; why did they not marvel at these facts, and why were they not convinced by them? Observe, reader, stupid and thoughtless people think that strange now which might have been very familiar to them, if they had not been wanting to themselves, and void of consideration. *Or why look ye so earnestly on us*—With that astonishment which your looks express, as though by *our own power* we had effected this cure; or by our own *holiness* had deserved that God should perform it by us. *The God of Abraham,*

OUR

and of Isaac, &c.—This was wisely introduced here 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 Jesus*—Namely, by this miracle, as he also glorified him in his life and in his death, and especially in his resurrection and ascension; *whom*—When God had given him to you, and when you ought to have received him as a most precious treasure, and to have preserved him with all your power; *ye delivered up*—To the Romans as a criminal, and *denied*—Greek, *ἠρῆσασθε*, renounced him; *in the presence of Pilate*—Or, *against the face of Pilate*, as Dr. Hammond renders it; that is, in defiance of his reasonings with you; *when he was determined to let him go*—To release him, being fully satisfied he was innocent of the things laid to his charge. *But ye denied the Holy One*—Whom God had marked out as such; and the *Just One*—Just even in the judgment of Pilate, declaring that you would not own him as your king, nor even be contented to admit his discharge, when it was offered and pressed upon you by the governor: *and desired*—With outrageous clamour, one of the most infamous of mankind, a robber, and a murderer, to be granted unto you—To be spared and released. And while you asked for the deliverance of so vile a wretch, you inhumanly and insolently *killed the Prince of life*—Even him who had life in himself, and was appointed to be the Author of life, spiritual and eternal, and glory, to his followers. Observe the antithesis: You desired a destroyer of life to be released, and Christ the Lord and giver of life to be crucified, as if a murderer had deserved better at your hands than the Saviour! than which a greater affront could not have been put upon him. You did at once a wicked and foolish thing, in taking away *his life*, who would have been your life and Saviour, thus forsaking and rebelling against your own mercies; and in supposing you could conquer and extinguish in death the Prince of life, who, having life in himself, could soon resume the life he had resigned! *Whom God raised*—As we know by the certain and repeated testimony of our own senses; and thereby amply vindicated him; *whereof we are witnesses*—Constituted such by God, in order

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A. M. 4037. 16 * And his name, through faith
A. D. 33. in his name, hath made this man
strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the
faith which is by him, hath given him
this perfect soundness in the presence of
you all.

17 And now, brethren, I wot that ' through
ignorance ye did it, as *did* also your rulers.

* Matt. ix. 22; Chap. iv. 10; xiv. 9.—† Luke xxiii. 34; John
xvi. 3; Chap. xiii. 27; 1 Cor. ii. 8; 1 Tim. i. 13.

to the conviction and salvation of others. *And his name*—He himself, his power and love; *through faith in his name*—A confidence in him, a dependence on him, a believing application to him, and expectation of power to proceed from him; *hath made this man strong*—Hath effected a perfect cure of his lameness. Dr. Lightfoot suggests, that faith is twice named in this verse, because of the apostles' faith in working this miracle, and the cripple's faith in receiving it. But it seems to relate chiefly, if not only, to the former: they that wrought this miracle by faith, derived power from Christ to work it, and, therefore, returned all the glory to him. By this true and just account of the miracle, Peter both confirmed the great gospel truth they were to preach to the world, that Jesus Christ is the fountain of all power and grace, and the great Healer and Saviour; and recommended the great gospel mystery of our salvation by Christ. It is his name that justifies us, that glorious name of his, the Lord our righteousness; but we, in particular, are justified by that name, through faith in it, applying it to ourselves. Thus doth Peter preach unto them Jesus and him crucified, being a faithful friend of the bridegroom, to whose service he devoted all his interest.

Verses 17, 18. *And now, brethren*—A word full of courtesy and compassion; *I wot*—That is, *I know*: here he speaks to their hearts; *that through ignorance ye did it*—Which lessened, though it could not annihilate, the guilt of your conduct; *as did also your rulers*—The prejudice lying from the authority of the chief priests and elders, he here endeavours to remove, 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. This was the language of Peter's charity, and it teaches us to make the best of those whom we desire to make better: not to aggravate, but, as far as may be, to extenuate their faults or sins. Perhaps Peter perceived, by the countenances of his hearers, that they were struck with great horror at being informed that they had murdered the Messiah, the Prince of life, and that they were ready either to sink down in distress, or to fly off; and, therefore, he saw it needful to mitigate the rigour of his charge, that he might prevent their utterly despairing. He had searched the wound to the bottom, and now begins to think of healing it: in

18 But * those things which God A. M. 4037.
before had showed * by the mouth A. D. 33.
of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer,
he hath so fulfilled.

19 † Repent ye therefore, and be converted,
that your sins may be blotted out, when the
times of refreshing shall come from the pre-
sence of the Lord;

† Luke xxiv. 44; Chap. xxvi. 22.—‡ Psa. xxii.; Isa. l. 6; liii.
5, &c.; Dan. ix. 26; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.—§ Chap. ii. 38.

order to which it was necessary to beget in them a good opinion of their physician. And in proceeding thus, he had the example of his Master to justify him, who prayed for his crucifiers, and pleaded in their behalf, that they *knew not what they did*. And it is said of the rulers, that they would not have crucified *the Lord of glory*, if they had *known him*, 1 Cor. ii. 8. Doubtless many of the rulers, and of the people, in crucifying Christ, rebelled against the light and the convictions of their own consciences, influenced by envy and malice; but the generality, probably, were carried down the stream, and acted as they did through ignorance, as Paul persecuted the church ignorantly and in unbelief, 1 Tim. i. 13. *But those things, &c.*—But God permitted this that you have done, and overruled it for wise and gracious purposes; for he hath thus fulfilled what he *had before showed by the mouth of all his prophets*—Had plainly foretold in the various ages of the world; *that Christ should suffer*—As an atoning sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Now, though this was no extenuation at all of their sin, in hating and persecuting Christ unto death, yet it was an encouragement to them to repent, and hope for mercy upon their repentance; not only because, in general, God's gracious designs were carried on by it, and thus it agrees with the encouragement Joseph gave to his brethren, when they thought their offence against him almost unpardonable, (Gen. l. 15, 20,) but because, in particular, the sufferings and death of Christ were for the remission of sins, and the ground of that display of mercy he now encouraged them to hope for.

Verses 19–21. *Repent ye, therefore, &c.*—Let it, therefore, be your principal and immediate care to secure an interest in the benefits procured by his death; and in order thereto, repent of this and all your other iniquities; *and be converted*—That is, be turned from sin and Satan to God, (chap. xxvi. 20,) in the way of sincere and universal obedience. The term, *converted*, so common in modern writings, rarely occurs in Scripture, at least in the sense we now use it, for an entire change of heart and life. *That your sins may be blotted out*—That you may be delivered from the heavy burden of your guilt, and may obtain peace with God through the sacrifice and intercession of him you crucified; *when the times of refreshing shall come*—Rather, that they *may come*; times when God shall largely bestow his refreshing grace; *from the presence of*

A. M. 4037. 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ,
A. D. 33. which before was preached unto you :

21 * Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of * restitution of all things, ^b which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his

* Chap. i. 11.—† Matt. xvii. 11.

the Lord—To you also. To others, those times will assuredly come, whether ye repent or not. Erasmus and Piscator render this clause, *Seeing times of refreshment are come*; but the authorities produced in favour of this version seem not sufficient to justify it. The blotting out of the sins of penitents, however, was not deferred to any distant time, and divine refreshment would, no doubt, immediately follow a sense of pardon to them, attended with a lively hope of eternal felicity to succeed in due time. But “the following clause seems to intimate, that Peter apprehended the conversion of the Jews, as a people, would be attended with some extraordinary scene of prosperity and joy, and would open a speedy way to Christ’s descent from heaven, in order to the restitution of all things.”—Doddridge. *And he shall send*—Greek, *καὶ ἀποσείλη, and that he may send*; *Jesus*—That, in consequence of your complying with this important counsel, you may not only be received to all the joys of a state of pardon and acceptance with God, but he may, at length, send unto you *Christ, which before was preached unto you*—By his disciples, both before and since his resurrection. But Tertullian, and several of the fathers, in quoting this passage, instead of *προκεκηρυγμενον, before preached*, read, *προκεχειρισμενον, before appointed*; that is, exhibited and set forth in a variety of types, and other symbols, namely, under the Old Testament dispensation, as the great Saviour of lost sinners. 1st, You shall have Christ in his spiritual presence; he that was sent into the world shall be sent to you, in and by his Spirit accompanying his word. The apostle meant, 2d, That God would send Christ to destroy the unbelieving and persecuting Jews, the enemies of God and his truth and cause, and so would deliver his true servants, both ministers and people, and give them a quiet possession of the gospel, with its privileges and blessings, which would be a time of refreshing to all that received it. *For then had the churches rest*, chap. ix. 31. So Dr. Hammond. There is also, 3dly, A reference in these words to the general conversion of the Jews, to take place after the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, of which there are many express predictions and promises in the writings of the prophets, which, when it takes place, will be a time of refreshment indeed, both to them and the whole Church of Christ through all the world. *Whom the heavens must receive*—Whom you must not expect to appear immediately in person among you, for as he has ascended to heaven, he must remain there, *until the times of restitution of all things*—The long-expected happy times, when God will rectify all the

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holy prophets, since the world be- A. M. 4037.
gan. A. D. 33.

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, ^c A Prophet shall the ^d Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him

^b Luke i. 70.—^c Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19; Chap. vii. 37.

seeming irregularities of his present dispensations, and make the cause of righteousness and truth for ever triumphant and glorious: *which God hath spoken of, &c.*—That is, concerning which great events (namely, that such a Saviour should be raised up, and should at length extend his righteous reign over all the world) *God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets*—That is, by the mouth of the generality of them; for the word *παντων, all*, is not found in some of the best MSS. and versions; *since the world began*—Since the beginning of time. See note on Luke i. 70, where the same original phrase, *απ’ αιωνος, occurs*. In these times of restitution, the apostle here comprises at once the whole course of the time of the New Testament between our Lord’s ascension and his coming to glory. The most eminent of these times 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. It is well known that Dr. Thos. Burnet, Mr. Whiston, and some other learned writers, have urged this text in proof of a restoration of a paradisaical state of the earth, which they have endeavoured to show will take place, but certainly without any clear warrant from Scripture; and this passage, in particular, may be so well explained of *regulating* the present disorders of the moral world, and the seeming inequalities of God’s providential dispensations, that it can with no propriety be pleaded in vindication of such an hypothesis.

Verses 22, 23. *For Moses*—The first of these prophets, whose writings have come down to us; *truly said unto the fathers*—In his early days; *A prophet shall the Lord raise up unto you*—Namely, in after times; *of your brethren*—Of the posterity of Jacob; (see the note on Deut. xviii. 15;) *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 commanded him: so did Christ. Some other instances of similarity between Moses and Jesus, mentioned by the late Mr. Fletcher, in his letters to Dr. Priestley, are as follows: “Was the son of Amram saved in his infancy from the cruelty of a jealous tyrant, who had doomed him to die with a multitude of other children? So was the son of Mary. Was Moses the lawgiver of the Jews? So is Christ

A. M. 4037. shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, *that every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.*

24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

^a Chap. ii. 39; Rom. ix. 4, 8; xv. 8; Gal. iii. 26.—^a Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 18; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 14; Gal. iii. 8.

the legislator of the Christians. Was Moses remarkable for his meekness? So was He who says, *Learn of me, for I am meek in heart.* Both, being appointed as mediating prophets, stood in the gap to turn away the wrath of Heaven from a guilty people. Both, as shepherds of the Lord, led his straying sheep through a wilderness to a delightful land. Did Moses smite Pharaoh, king of Egypt; Sihon, king of the Amorites; and Og, king of Bashan? so will Christ *wound kings in the day of his wrath.* Did Moses heal the dying Israelites, by lifting up the serpent in the wilderness? so Christ heals believers, by being lifted up on the cross. Did Moses fast forty days, and receive the law on mount Sinai? so did Jesus fast forty days, and deliver his law on a mountain of Galilee. Was Moses rejected and almost stoned by the Israelites? so was Christ, by the Jews. Did Moses despise the glory of Egypt, that he might suffer for, and with, the people of God? so did our Lord despise all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, that he might suffer for, and with, his people. In a word, Is Moses the great prophet of the Old Testament? so is Christ of the New." But, though Christ was like Moses in these respects, yet was he infinitely superior to him in person as well as in office: *he was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, as the author of the epistle to the Hebrews asserts, (chap. iii. 3-6,) especially on two capital accounts: "1st, Moses was faithful as a servant in the house of him who had appointed him: but Christ was faithful as a Son over his own house. 2d, Moses was worthy of glory, inasmuch as he was a fundamental stone in the house of God; but Christ is worthy of more glory, inasmuch as he who builded the house hath more honour than the house, or any part of it; for every house is built by some man, but he who builded the Jewish Church, and all things, which Christ did, (John i. 3; Col i. 16,) is God."* See Fletcher's Works, vol. iv. pp. 517, 518, Amer. 8vo. edit. *Him shall ye hear*—Him shall ye regard with obedient reverence; *in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you*—Persuaded of the certain truth and infinite importance of his doctrine; *and every soul that will not hear that Prophet*—And be directed by his words; *shall be destroyed from among the people*—Shall be made an example of the severest punishment, due to so much aggravated and ungrateful rebellion. One cannot imagine a more masterly address than this, to warn the Jews of the dreadful consequence of their infidelity, in the very

25 ^d Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, ^e And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 ^f Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, ^g sent him to bless you, ^h in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

^f Matt. x. 5; xv. 24; Luke xxiv. 47; Chap. xiii. 32, 33, 46 & Verse 22.—^h Matt. i. 21.

words of their favourite prophet, out of a pretended zeal for whom they had rejected Christ.

Verses 24-26. *Yea, and all the prophets*—That succeeded Moses, particularly *from Samuel, have likewise foretold these days*—The days of the Messiah, which, by the singular favour of God to you, ye are now so happy as to see. *Ye are the children of the prophets*—You are the descendants of that people, among whom the prophets were raised up, and to whom the prophets were sent. Those of the latter ages of the Jewish Church, when prophecy had ceased, yet might be fitly, in general, called the children of the prophets, because they heard, though they did not know, the voices of the prophets, which were read in their synagogues every sabbath day, chap. xiii. 27. Now this ought to have quickened them to embrace Christ, their own prophets having foretold that this grace should be brought unto them in his days, (1 Pet. i. 10,) and therefore ought not to be neglected by them. *And of the covenant which God made with our fathers*—As children in the family. God's covenant was made with *Abraham and his seed*; and they were that seed, and on them, therefore, the blessings of the covenant were entailed. As if the apostle had said, The promise of the Messiah was made to you, and therefore, if you forsake not your own mercies, and do not, by obstinate infidelity, lay an insuperable obstruction in your own way, you may confidently hope to be put in possession of them: *saying to Abraham, In thy seed, &c.*—This promise, though referring principally to Christ, (Gal. iii. 16,) yet respects the church also, which is his body, even all believers, that are the spiritual seed of Abraham. *Unto you first*—You Jews, though not to you only; *God having raised up his Son Jesus*—From the loins of that pious patriarch, or having appointed and authorized him to be a Prince and a Saviour; and in confirmation thereof, having raised him from the dead; *sent him to bless you*—With the greatest of all blessings; *in turning every one of you from his iniquities*—In saving you from the guilt and power of your sins, and from the misery consequent thereon. To explain this more fully: 1st, God raised up his Son Jesus, when he constituted him a prophet, owned him by a voice from heaven, filled him with his Spirit without measure, and then sent him to bear witness to the truth, and to seek and save lost souls. He raised him up more especially when he brought him back from the dead by a glorious resurrection, which was the first step toward his ex-

altation, and, as it were, the renewing of his commission. And though, having thus raised him up, he seemed presently to take him from his people, yet he did really send him afresh to them, in his gospel and Spirit. 2d, The apostle says, God sent him to the Jews first, because the personal ministry of Christ, as that of the prophets, was confined to them; and after his resurrection, though he was to be preached, indeed, by his apostles to all nations, yet they were to begin at Jerusalem, Luke xxiv. 47; and when they went to other nations, they always first preached to the Jews they found there. The Jews, therefore, were so far from being excluded for having crucified Christ, that when he was risen he was first sent to them, and they were primarily intended to have benefit by his death. Indeed, had not the gospel been everywhere first offered to them, their prejudices would have been so heightened and confirmed, that, in all probability, many, who were converted in this method, would have been exasperated and lost. It must be observed, however, that when the apostle says to these Jews, God sent his Son to bless you, he speaks conditionally, as the event showed with respect to many of them, on whom the divine wrath and curse came, and not the blessing here spoken of; namely, because they rejected the counsel of God against themselves. Many commentators, therefore, give this sentence a different turn, rendering the last clause, *upon your turning every one of you, &c.*, or, *every one of you turning, &c.* That is, "all those of you who turn from sin shall be entitled to his blessing." And this is agreeable to the Syriac rendering, *if you are converted, and repent of your sins.* But the former seems the

preferable reading, as the great gospel blessing is, to be turned from our iniquities, or to be converted from sin to righteousness. Nor can it be any reasonable objection to say, that Christ did not in fact turn every one of the Jews from their iniquities, since it must be allowed that he did every thing that was necessary in order thereto; yea, every thing except depriving them of their liberty of choice and action, and turning them into mere machines. He procured for them, and offered to them, and that sincerely and repeatedly, yea, continually during his own personal ministry, and afterward by his divinely-commissioned apostles, grace sufficient to enable them to turn from their iniquities; and by the help of that, they might *every one* of them have turned, and so have obtained the blessing here intended. But let us not suppose that this, or any other part of Peter's discourse, was intended only for the Jews. It concerns us also, whom Christ was likewise sent to bless, and that in the same manner, even by turning us from our iniquities, by saving us from our sins. Matt. i. 22. Sin is that which we naturally cleave to, and the design of divine grace is, to turn us from it; nay, to turn us against it, that we may not only forsake it, but hate it, and strive against it. And the gospel has a direct tendency to produce this effect, not only as it requires us to turn, but as it promises us grace to enable us to do so. Therefore let us apply to Christ for this, and by the aid and right use of it, repent and be converted, and so do our part; because he is ready to do his, namely, to give the grace we need, and thereby to save us from our sins, and the consequences thereof, and to bless us effectually, abundantly, and for ever.

CHAPTER IV.

Here begins the history of the apostles' persecution; (1.) Peter and John are taken up and imprisoned by the Jewish rulers; but about five thousand are converted to Christ, 1-4. (2.) Being examined touching the cure of the lame man, they boldly avow that it had been effected by the authority and power of the lately crucified, but now exalted, Jesus, whom they preached to their persecutors, as the only Saviour of mankind, 5-12. (3.) Their persecutors, being unable to answer them, command them to be silent, threatening to punish them if they persisted to preach any more in the name of Jesus, 13-22. (4.) The two apostles, being returned to their brethren, unite with them in solemn prayer to God, for the continued operations of that grace which they had already experienced, and God owns them with manifest tokens of his presence, and a further effusion of the Holy Spirit, 23-31. (5.) Hereby the believers are knit together in love and abound in piety and charity, 32-37.

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. **AND** as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the ¹captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 ^aBeing grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33

¹ Or, ruler, Luke xxii. 4; Chap. v. 24.

^a Matt. xxii. 23; Acts xxiii. 8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1-3. *And as they*—Namely, Peter and John; *spake unto the people*—The multitude, who had assembled in the temple, upon occasion of the miraculous cure of the lame man, as related in the preceding chapter; *the priests, &c., 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. *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

A. M. 4037. 3 And they laid hands on them, and
A. D. 33. put *them* in hold unto the next day ;
for it was now even-tide.

4 Howbeit, many of them which heard the word, believed ; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

¶ Luke iii. 2 ; John xi. 49 ; xviii. 13.

proved him to be the *Just One*, and so brought his blood upon their heads. The priests were grieved, also, 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* was concerned to prevent all sedition and disorder ; and *the Sadducees* were displeased at the overturning of all their doctrines, particularly with regard to the resurrection of the dead, as exemplified and demonstrated in the person of Jesus ; and therefore, that they might prevent their preaching any more, *they laid hands on them*—Under pretence that they were seditious persons, who were labouring to incense the populace against the conduct of their governors ; and *put them in hold*—Committed them into custody, that when the sanhedrim met at the usual hour the next day, they might consult what it was proper to do with them : *for it was now even-tide*—And therefore not a fit season to have them examined. As Peter and John went up to the temple at three in the afternoon, the expression, *it was now even-tide*, makes it probable that some considerable time was spent in preaching to the people, and, consequently, that what we have in the former chapter is only an abstract, or specimen of the discourses they delivered on this occasion, which probably is generally the case as to the speeches recorded by the sacred historians, as well as others.

Verse 4. *Howbeit, many of them which heard the word believed*—For though the preachers were persecuted, the word prevailed. Thus the suffering days of the church have often been her growing days. *And the number of the men*, besides women and children, was *about five thousand*—“The assembly that owned Christianity was increased to above five thousand, and that success grieved the malignants.”—Baxter. Dr. Benson supposes that five thousand were converted on this occasion, besides the three thousand mentioned before, chap. ii. 41. Had it been said, as there, that so many were *added to the church*, it would have determined the sense to be as he and some others understand it ; but the use of the word *εγενθη*, *became*, favours the interpretation, that the whole number, including those who had been converted before, now became about five thousand. It is hardly to be thought (unless it were expressly asserted) that another day should be so much more remarkable for its number of converts than that on which the Spirit descended. However,

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6 And ^b Annas the high-priest, and A. M. 4037.
Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, A. D. 33.
and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, ° By what power, or by what name have ye done this ?

8 ^d Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost,

° Exod. ii. 14 ; Matt. xxi. 23 ; Ch. vii. 27.—^d Luke xii. 11, 12.

supposing only two thousand were now converted, it is a glorious proof of the truth of Christianity, and no example can be given of the philosophers, or any other teachers, succeeding so gloriously in making converts to such holy and self-denying doctrines.

Verses 5-7. *And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, &c., were gathered together*—There was a general assembly held of those who constituted the sanhedrim, and a court formed at Jerusalem. *And Annas the high-priest, and Caiaphas*—The meaning seems to be, Annas, who had been high-priest, and Caiaphas, who was so then ; and *John, and Alexander*—It is very evident that these were persons of great note among the Jews at that time, but who they were, is to us quite uncertain. *And as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest*—Or, as others render it, *of the pontifical family*. Dr. Hammond explains this of the twenty-four members of the Aaronic family, who presided over the twenty-four courses. Others refer it to those who were nearly related to Annas and Caiaphas : but Grotius thinks it includes the kindred of those who had lately been in the office of high-priest, which, he says, made them members of the sanhedrim. *And when they had set them in the midst*—Had ordered them to be brought before them, and set in the midst of the assembly ; (it being the custom of the sanhedrim to sit almost in a circle ;) *they asked, By what power*—“Human or diabolical, angelic or divine, have you cured this man ? *Whose name* have you invoked to the working of this miracle ? Or, from whom had you your authority to preach so publicly unto the people ? From *us* you had it not, though we alone have the authority to give a commission to any man to do so.” It will cast light on this inquiry of the rulers to observe, that Josephus speaks of some of the Jews working cures by invoking the name of Solomon. And the Talmud relates some ridiculous stories of working miracles by the *tetragrammaton*, or the *unutterable name* ; that is, by mentioning the word *Jehovah*. The seven sons of Sheva, mentioned chap. xix. 13-17, had the same opinion of working miracles by the mention of a name, when they pretended to cure a possessed person by invoking the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached.

Verses 8-12. *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost*—That moment, according to the promise of his now glorified Master, (Matt. x. 20 ; Mark xiii. 11,) which was upon this occasion remarkably verified ;

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A. M. 4037. said unto them, Ye rulers of the
A. D. 33. people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, * that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, † whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 † This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

* Chap. iii. 6, 16.—† Chap. ii. 24.—‡ Psa. cxviii. 22; Isa. xxviii. 16; Matt. xxi. 42.

said unto them—With the utmost freedom; *Ye rulers of the people, &c.*—He gives them the honour due to their office. *If we this day be examined*—And called to an account as criminals, about the good deed—Greek, *εὐεργεσία*, the good work, or benefit, done to the impotent man, and you want us to declare by what means he is delivered from his calamitous state, and made whole—*ἰσχύεται*, is cured or saved: *be it known unto you*—Probably the herald of God proclaimed this with a loud voice: *that by the name of Jesus, whom ye lately crucified*—With all the marks of detestation and contempt, as a criminal worthy of the most infamous death, but whom God raised from the dead—These rulers and elders 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 know, dare to plead it before Peter and John. *Even by him*—By his power and goodness; *doth this man*—Cripple though he was from his mother's womb, as you well know; *stand here before you whole*—Perfectly sound and well. *This is the stone set at naught of you builders*—That is, of you, who by your office should have been, and who professed to be, builders of God's church, which, through the power of God, *is become the head of the corner*—To which the whole building owes its strength, its union, and its beauty. See notes on Psa. cxviii. 22. *Neither is there salvation*—Temporal or spiritual; *in any other: for there is no other name, &c., whereby we must be saved*—The apostle, in this passage, 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 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 heavenly things.

Verses 13, 14. *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John*—Observed with what courage and freedom they spoke, and pleaded their Master's cause, and to what a high degree they extolled him

12 † Neither is there salvation in A. M. 4037. any other: for there is none other A. D. 33. name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

13 ¶ Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, † and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed † standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

† Matt. i. 21; Chap. x. 43; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.—‡ Matt. xi. 25; 1 Cor. i. 27.—‡ Chap. iii. 11.

in the very presence of those magistrates who had so lately condemned him to the most shameful death; and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant—Or rather, illiterate and uneducated men, or men in private stations in life, as Dr. Doddridge renders the latter word, *ιδιωται*, observing, that the expressions literally signify, “that they were not scholars, nor in any public rank of life, as the priests and magistrates were; but that they import no want of natural good sense, or any ignorance of what was then the subject of debate: so that our translation seems very unhappy here.” *They marvelled*—Were greatly astonished; and took knowledge of them—Greek, *επειγυωσκον*, they knew, or were persuaded, namely, upon further recollection or consideration; *that they had been with Jesus*—Had been his disciples, and from him had received their knowledge and their courage. They themselves, it is probable, had seen these two disciples with him in the temple, or on the night when he was taken, led to the house of Caiaphas, and examined: and they now recollected that they had seen them with him. Or some of the servants of these rulers, or those about them, informed them of it. And when they understood that they had been with Jesus, had been conversant with him, attendant on him, and trained up under him, they knew what to impute their boldness to; nay, their boldness in divine things was enough to show with whom they had associated, and from whom they had had their education. Observe, reader, those that have been with Jesus, that have had converse and communion with him, should conduct themselves in every thing so that those who converse with them may take knowledge of them that they have been with him; and, therefore, are made so holy and heavenly, spiritual and cheerful; so raised above this world, and inspired with hopes of, and desires after, another. And, beholding the man who was healed—As they were obliged to acknowledge he was; *standing with them*—With Peter and John, perfectly recovered; *they could say nothing against it*—Against the fact, though they were unwilling to own the doctrine which it tended so strongly to prove.

A. M. 4037. 15 But when they had command-
A. D. 33. ed them to go aside out of the coun-
cil, they conferred among themselves,

16 Saying, 'What shall we do to these men?
for that indeed a notable miracle hath been
done by them, is ^m manifest to all them that
dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

17 But that it spread no further among the
people, let us straitly threaten them, that they

¹ John xi. 47.—^m Chap. iii. 9, 10.

Verses 15-18. *But when they had commanded them to go aside*—To withdraw, not being willing they should hear the acknowledgments that were extorted from them; *they conferred among themselves*—Privately. Now the scripture was fulfilled which foretold that *the rulers would take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed*, Psa. ii. 2; *saying, What shall we do to these men?*—If they would have yielded to the convincing, commanding power of truth, it would have been easy to say what they should do to them. They should have placed them at the head of their council, received their doctrine, been baptized by them, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and joined in fellowship with them. But, when men will not be persuaded to do what they ought to do, it is no marvel that they are continually at a loss what to do. The truths of Christ, if men would but entertain them as they should, would give them no manner of trouble and uneasiness; but if they hold, or imprison them in unrighteousness, (Rom. i. 18,) they will find them a burlesome stone, that they will not know what to do with, Zech. xii. 4. *For that a notable miracle*, —*Γνωστον*, a signal and well-known miracle: it was known that they had done it in Christ's name, and that Christ himself had often done similar miracles: this was a known instance of the power of Christ, and a proof of his doctrine. That it was a great miracle, and wrought for the confirmation of the doctrine they preached, being *σημειον*, a sign, was manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem—The miracle being wrought at the gate of the temple, universal notice was taken of it; and they themselves, with all the craft, and all the effrontery they had, could not deny it to be a true miracle. Hence they concluded that it would be neither reasonable nor safe to punish these men now. Nevertheless, on the other hand, they judged that both their credit and their interest required them to suppress the rumour of it as far as they could, and therefore, said they, *that it spread no further among the people*—And be a means of raising discontent, and, perhaps, of occasioning some dangerous insurrection among them; *let us straitly threaten them*—*Απειλη απειλησμεθα αυτοις*, *Let us threaten them with threatening*: the expression is a Hebraism, being, it seems, St. Luke's translation of the very words of the council into Greek; *that they speak henceforth to no man*—To no individual whatever; *in this obnoxious name*—They could not prove that they had said or done

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speak henceforth to no man in this A. M. 4037.
name. A. D. 33.

18 ^a And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, ^o Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

^a Chap. v. 40.—^o Chap. v. 29.

any thing amiss, any thing but what was proper, yea, necessary to be said and done; and yet they must no more say or do the like! All the care of these rulers, &c., is, that the doctrine of Christ should spread no further among the people; as if the healing and saving institutions of the gospel were a plague begun, the contagion of which must be stopped immediately. See how the malice of hell fights against the counsels of heaven! God will have the knowledge of Christ to spread all over the world; but the chief priests would have it spread no farther: at which He that sits in heaven laughs. *And they called them*—The whole council having agreed to this proposal, as the most proper they could now think of, they called in Peter and John, and, telling them how much they were offended at the liberty they took; *commanded them*—In a very strict and severe manner; *not to speak at all*, privately, *nor teach*, publicly, *in the name of Jesus*—We do not find that they gave them any reason why the doctrine of Christ must be suppressed; they did not say it was either false or dangerous, or of any ill tendency; and they were ashamed to own the true reason, namely, that it testified against their hypocrisy and wickedness, and shook their tyranny.

Verses 19, 20. *Peter and John*—Feeling themselves animated in this arduous circumstance with a courageous zeal, which would not permit them to be silent, lest that silence should be interpreted as a promise to quit the ministry; *answered, Whether it be right*—A righteous thing; *in the sight of God*—To whom we are all accountable; *to hearken unto you*—That is, to obey you; *more than God, judge ye*—Ye cannot but know in your own consciences on which side the superior obligation lies; and you must therefore expect that we shall act accordingly. As these rulers professed to believe the being and infinite perfections of God, they must, on their own principles, easily see the absurdity of expecting obedience to their commands from good men, who believed themselves divinely commissioned. 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." *For we cannot but speak, &c.*—For though we respect you as our civil rulers, and are heartily willing to obey you, as

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a

A. M. 4037. 20 ^p For we cannot but speak the
A. D. 33. things which ^q we have seen and
heard.

21 So, when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, ^r because of the people: for all *men* glorified God for ^s that which was done.

22 For the man was above forty years old on whom this miracle of healing was showed.

23 ¶ And being let go, ^t they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said,

^p Chapter i. 8; ii. 32.—^q Chapter xxiii. 15; 1 John i. 1, 3.
^r Matt. xxi. 26; Luke xx. 6, 19; xxiii. 2; Chap. v. 26.—^s Chap. iii. 7, 8.—^t Chap. xii. 12.

far as we lawfully can, yet, since God hath charged us with the publication of this important message, on which the eternal salvation of men depends, we dare not be silent; and therefore are free to tell you, that we must speak *the things which we have seen and heard*—Which God hath manifested in so miraculous a manner, and which he hath commissioned us to declare.

Verses 21, 22. *So when they had further threatened them*—Namely, in severer terms than before; *they let them go*—Not thinking it proper, all circumstances considered, to proceed to any further extremities at that time; since they could find nothing in their conduct for which they could punish them with any show of reason; *because of the people*—Whose resentment they feared. *For all men glorified God for that which was done*—So much wiser were they than those who ruled over them. *For the man*—Who had been a cripple from his birth; *was above forty years old*—So that hardly any thing could have appeared to human judgment to be a more desperate case, than so inveterate and confirmed a lameness.

Verses 23–28. *And being let go*—Being dismissed from their examination by the rulers; *they went to their own company*—Who, probably, were at this time met together, praying for them; *and reported all that the chief priests had said*—Adding, no doubt, what they were enabled by the grace of God to reply to them, and how their trial issued. *And when they heard that*—A divine inspiration coming upon all that were present in an extraordinary manner; *they lifted up their voice to God with one accord*—All unanimously joining in the following petition, as being all influenced by the same spirit, though, perhaps, only one speaking in the name of the rest: or, as Dr. Doddridge supposes, all their voices joining by immediate inspiration, a circumstance which he thinks was graciously adapted to encourage them to suffer the greatest extremities in this cause. *And said, Lord, thou art God, &c.*—The sense is, Lord,

Lord, ^u thou art God, which hast ^v made heaven, and earth, and the sea, ^w and all that in them is;

25 Who, by the mouth of thy servant David, hast said, ^x Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

27 For ^y of a truth against ^z thy holy child Jesus, ^a whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

28 ^b For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

^u 2 Kings xix. 15.—^v Psal. ii. 1.—^w Matt. xxvi. 3; Luke xxii. 2; xxiii. 1, 8.—^x Luke i. 35.—^y Luke iv. 18; John x. 36.—^z Chap. ii. 23; iii. 18.

thou hast all power, and thy word is fulfilled: men rage against thee, but it is in vain. See notes on Psal. ii. 1–5. *For of a truth, &c.*—For we now see the prediction of thy servant David truly and literally accomplished; since *against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed*—With the Holy Ghost and with power, to accomplish the glorious work of erecting thy kingdom among men; *both Herod, &c., with the Gentiles*—The idolatrous heathen; *and the people of Israel*—Professing to worship thee, the true God; *were gathered together*—Combined in the impious attempt of opposing thy designs. *For to do whatsoever thy hand, &c., determined before to be done*—That is, says Dr. Hammond, “the Roman governors and Jewish sanhedrim have joined their malicious counsels against thy holy Son; to act in the crucifying of him, and so (though little meaning it) to be the instruments of thy gracious providence and disposal, who didst determine to give thy only Son to die for us.” The sense evidently is, But they (the enemies of God and Christ) 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. Limborch, and some others, contend for a transposition of the words thus: *They have combined against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed to do what thy hand and thy counsel had determined, &c.*; but it is so expressly said elsewhere, (see Matt. xxvi. 24; Luke xxii. 22,) that *the Son of man went* (to suffer and die) *as it was determined*; and it so plainly appears, in fact, that these circumstances were foretold, or marked out, in the prophecies of the Old Testament, that I see not, says Dr. Doddridge, “what end the admission of such a transposition would answer. It is much more rational to explain this determination in such a manner as to make it consistent with the free agency of the persons concerned. When God’s hand and his counsel are said to have determined

A. M. 4037. 29 And now, Lord, behold their
A. D. 33. threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, ° that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

30 By stretching forth thy hand to heal; ° and that signs and wonders may be done ° by the name of ° thy holy child Jesus.

31 ¶ And when they had prayed, ° the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, ° and they spake the word of God with boldness.

° Verses 13, 31; Chap. ix. 27; xiii. 46; xiv. 3; xix. 8; xxvi. 26; xxviii. 31; Eph. vi. 19.—° Chap. ii. 43; v. 12.—° Chap. iii. 6, 16.—° Verse 27.—° Chap. ii. 2, 4; xvi. 26.

these things, it may signify his having pointed out this great event, so wisely concerted in his eternal counsels, and marked beforehand, as it were, all the boundaries of it, (as the word *προωρισε* may well signify,) in the prophetic writings." Certainly the word properly and literally signifies, to define, describe, or mark out beforehand, rather than to decree, or predestinate. "The hand of God," says Dr. Whitby, "most frequently, in the Old Testament, relates not so much to his power, as to his wisdom, and providential dispensations; and being here joined with his counsel, and applied to what was done by Pontius Pilate and the Jews toward the crucifixion of the holy Jesus, to which actions, so highly displeasing to God, his power could not actually concur or effectively incline them, the import of these words will be no more than this, that Jews and Gentiles were assembled to accomplish those sufferings of our Saviour for mankind which God had foretold, and by foretelling had determined should come to pass: according to those words of St. Paul, Acts xiii. 27, *They who dwell at Jerusalem, &c., not knowing the voices of the prophets, have fulfilled them by condemning him, doing all things which were written of him.* As therefore St. Peter and Paul, by calling the Jews to repentance for crucifying the Lord of life, do evidence that their sin was not the less, because they did by it fulfil the counsel of God's holy will, and kind intentions to mankind, so do they consequently evidence, that God's foreknowledge of a thing future, does not impair the liberty of men's wills in the accomplishment of it; as all the ancient fathers have declared in this particular." See this further explained in the note on chap. ii. 23.

Verses 29-31. *And now, Lord*—As to what remains to accomplish this important scheme, of raising thy church on the sure foundation of thy Son's cross; *behold their threatenings*—With which they are endeavouring to discourage the chosen witnesses of his resurrection; *and grant to thy servants, that with all boldness*—Παρηγοιας πασης, all freedom of speech; *they may speak thy word*—In the midst of the most violent opposition that can arise; *by stretching forth thy hand*—Exerting thy

32 And the multitude of them that A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. believed ° were of one heart, and of one soul: ° neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with ° great power gave the apostles ° witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus ° and ° great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: ° for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

° Verse 29.—° Chap. v. 12; Rom. xv. 5, 6; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. i. 27; ii. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 8.—° Chap. ii. 44.—° Chap. i. 8.—° Chap. i. 22.—° Chap. ii. 47.—° Chap. ii. 45.

power; to heal—The most incurable distempers. *And when they had prayed*—Or, while they were praying, as *δεηθεντων αυτων* may be rendered; *the place was shaken*—Thus miraculously was God pleased to declare his gracious acceptance of their petitions; *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*—Were filled afresh with his sacred, especially his sanctifying and comforting influences; *and spake the word with boldness*—Wherever they came, renewing their public testimony without any appearance of fear, on the very day on which they had been so solemnly forbidden by the sanhedrim to preach any more in the name of Jesus.

Verses 32-35. *And the multitude of them that believed*—All the individuals, male and female, that, having believed on Jesus, had joined themselves to the Christian Church, numerous as they were; *were of one heart and one soul*—Were perfectly united in love to God and one another, according to the full meaning of Christ's prayer, John xvii. 20-23. Their desires and designs, their hopes and joys, were the same; *neither said any of them*—Ουδε εις ελεγε, not so much as one of them, in so great a multitude, *said, that aught of the things which he possessed was his own*—A natural consequence this of that union of heart which they had with each other; *but they had all things in common*—Each was as welcome to participate of them as the original proprietor could be, being, in those new bonds of Christian fellowship, as dear to him as himself. *And with great power*—That is, with a divine force of eloquence and of miracles; *gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus*—That main pillar and chief corner-stone of Christianity, supporting and connecting the whole fabric of it in all its parts. *And great grace was upon them all*—A large measure of the inward power of the Holy Ghost, directing and influencing all their tempers, words, and works. *Neither was there any among them that lacked*—Though many of them were far from their habitations, and many others in low circumstances of life. We may observe, this is added as a 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

A. M. 4037. 35 ^p And laid *them* down at the
A. D. 33. apostles' feet: ^q and distribution was
made unto every man according as he had
need.

36 And *Joses*, who by the apostles was sur-

^p Verse 37; Chap. v. 2.—^q Chap. ii. 45; vi. 1.

all ages and nations the same cause, the same degree of grace, could not but, in like circumstances, produce the same effect. *For as many as were possessors of lands, &c., 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. *And brought the prices, and laid them at the apostles' feet*—To be disposed of as they should direct; and *distribution was made*—First by the apostles themselves; afterward by them whom they appointed, with the strictest fidelity; *unto every man according as he had need*—For his present relief; the apostles deeming themselves sufficiently happy, while living in the same plain manner with their brethren, in the opportunity which the divine goodness gave them, of being so helpful to others, both in things temporal and spiritual.

Verses 36, 37. *And Joses*—Among the rest of those primitive converts who so generously contributed of their substance for the relief and subsistence of

named Barnabas, (which is, being in- A. M. 4037.
terpreted, The son of consolation,) a A. D. 33.
Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,
37 ^r Having land, sold *it*, and brought the
money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

^r Verses 34, 35; Chap. v. 1, 2.

the poor believers, in these extraordinary circumstances, there was *one Joses, by the apostles surnamed Barnabas, The 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 exhort. *A Levite*—And yet so far from being prejudiced against this new religion, which might seem to oppose his temporal interest, that he gladly devoted himself to its service; *of the country of Cyprus*—Where, it seems, he was born and brought up. *Having land, sold it*—As he was a Levite, he could not have sold, or alienated, his paternal inheritance; (see Lev. xxv. 34;) but the land or estate here spoken of, might either have been some legacy, or purchased land, in Judea, to which he might have a title till the next jubilee, or, perhaps, some land in Cyprus. And we may suppose it mentioned, either as the first foreign estate sold, or as of some extraordinary value.

CHAPTER V.

Here (1.) *Ananias and Sapphira, attempting fraudulently to impose on the apostles, are struck dead, 1-10.* (2.) *That event, together with other extraordinary miracles, wrought about the same time, promotes the increase of the church more and more, 11-16.* (3.) *The apostles are again apprehended and imprisoned, but delivered by an angel: according to whose order they go on preaching, to the great vexation of their persecutors, 17-25.* (4.) *Being again brought before the Jewish sanhedrim, and examined, they boldly avow the lately crucified Jesus to be the exalted Messiah, 26-33.* (5.) *By the prudent advice of Gamaliel they are dismissed, after being scourged, 34-40.* (6.) *They depart, rejoicing in their honourable persecution, and proceed in their work of preaching Christ, 41, 42.*

A. M. 4037. BUT a certain man named Anani-
A. D. 33. as, with Sapphira his wife, sold a
possession,

^a Chapter

2 And kept back *part* of the price, (his A. M. 4037.
wife also being privy to it,) ^a and brought A. D. 33.
a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

iv. 37.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verses 1, 2. *But a certain man named Ananias*—A professor of the gospel, but certainly not a true believer, for all *that truly believed were of one heart and of one soul*, chap. iv. 32. Probably he was not yet baptized, but intended now to offer himself for baptism; *with Sapphira his wife*—Who concurred with him; *sold a possession*—So the word κτήμα, here used, properly signifies: what sort of a possession it was, we are not informed: for the word χωριον, (used verse 8, and rendered *land*), does not necessarily mean so, but simply, a *place*, of any kind, and might be a house or houses. He

pretended, it seems, to imitate the zeal and liberality of Barnabas, chap. iv. 37; and kept back—Greek, ενοσφισατο, fraudulently secreted, or purloined, *part of the price*—While he brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet—Publicly, as if it had been the whole, perhaps saying it was so. It has been supposed by many, that Ananias and Sapphira had consecrated their estate to God by vow, and that they were guilty of the sin of sacrilege. But this is not probable; 1st, Because in all the sales of lands or houses, mentioned in the preceding chapters and here, there is not the least intimation of any such vow. 2d, Peter neither accuses him nor

A. M. 4037. 3 ^b But Peter said, Ananias, why
A. D. 33. hath ^c Satan filled thy heart ¹ to lie to
the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the
price of the land?

4 While it remained, was it not thine own?
and after it was sold, was it not in thine own
power? why hast thou conceived this thing in

^b Num. xxx. 2; Deut. xxiii. 21; Eccles. v. 4.—^c Luke xxii. 3.

his wife of any such crime, but only of *tempting*, that is, distrusting and making trial of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and attempting to deceive him by an artifice. 3d, The apostle acknowledges (verse 3) that the property was his, and at his disposal, before it was sold, and the whole price of it afterward, which could not have been the case, if he had before consecrated it to religious uses. But yet they were guilty of a double fraud; 1st, In presenting this part of the price to the apostles, as if it had been the whole, when, indeed, it was not. 2d, In tacitly signifying hereby that they had now the same right to be relieved from the common stock which others had, as having nothing of their own, when, indeed, they had money which they had kept back.

Verses 3, 4. *But Peter said*—Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, which immediately suggested to him the fraud; *Why has Satan*—Through thine own wickedness in yielding to his temptations; *filled thy heart*—With such a degree of covetousness, falsehood, folly, and presumption, as to induce thee to lie to, or, as Dr. Waterland renders *ψευσασθαι σε το πνευμα το αγιον*, to put a fallacy, or cheat upon the Holy Ghost; that is, that thou shouldst attempt to impose upon the Spirit of God, namely, the Spirit with which the apostles were endued. Here we see St. Peter, under the infallible guidance of the Spirit of truth, of wisdom, and revelation, acknowledging and bearing testimony to the agency of Satan in exciting men to and promoting wickedness: and what faith then have they in the inspiration of the apostles, who call in question the very existence of the devil, and even venture to give it as their opinion that there is no such being in the universe? *And to keep back part of the price*—When thou pretendest to have brought the whole. *While it remained unsold, was it not thine own?*—It evidently appears from hence, that no Christian converts were obliged to sell their estates. *And when it was sold, was it not still in thine own power*—To have given, or not given, the whole or any part of the price of it into the treasury of the church, as thou shouldst think proper? *Why then hast thou conceived this thing, &c.*—So meanly and profanely to dissemble on this solemn occasion? *Thou hast not lied unto men*—That is, to men alone, whose treasurers we are; but *unto God*—Who resides in us by his Divine Spirit. Hence it is justly inferred, that the Holy Ghost is God; since lying to him is said to be lying to God.

Verses 5, 6. *And Ananias, hearing these words*—While the sound of them was yet in his ears; *fell down and gave up the ghost*—*Εξεψυξε*, expired. It

thy heart? thou hast not lied unto A. M. 4037.
men, but unto God. A. D. 33.

5 And Ananias, hearing these words, ^d fell down, and gave up the ghost. And great fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, ^e wound him up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him*.

¹ Or, to deceive, Verse 9.—^d Verses 10, 11.—^e John xix. 40.

does not appear whether Peter designed or expected this event to follow upon what he said, though it seems probable, from the sentence he denounced on Sapphira, (verse 9,) that he did. It is likely that Ananias's own conscience smote him with such horror and amazement at the sight of his guilt, that he sunk down and died at the sense of it. Or, perhaps, he was struck by an angel, as Herod was, chap. xii. 23. This punishment of his sin may seem severe, but we are sure it was just, considering that complication of vain glory and covetousness, of fraud and impiety, which, as several writers have proved, his action contained. It was also wise and gracious, being designed, 1st, To vindicate the honour of the Holy Spirit, lately poured out, in order to the erecting of Christ's kingdom, and now grossly affronted by an attempt to impose on those who were so eminently endued with his influence. 2d, To deter others from such presumptuous conduct, now at the beginning of this new and divine dispensation. Simon Magus afterward was not thus punished, nor Elymas; but Ananias was made an example now at first, that, with the evident proofs given, what a blessed thing it was to receive the Holy Spirit, there might be also sensible proofs afforded of the awful consequences of resisting or doing despite to the Spirit. Thus the worshipping of the golden calf, and the violation of the sabbath day, were severely punished among the Israelites, when the law of Moses was newly given; as also the offering of strange fire by Nadab and Abihu, and the mutiny of Korah and his company, when the authority of Moses and Aaron was lately established. Add to this, that by this punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, hypocrites and dishonest persons were deterred from joining the Christians, merely for the sake of a present alms, or any temporal advantage, to which, by a fraud like this, many might, on easy terms, have purchased a pretence, who would also, no doubt, have proved a great scandal to a profession taken up on such base motives. This likewise was a very convincing attestation of the apostles' most upright conduct in the management of the sums with which they were intrusted, and indeed, in general, of their divine mission; for none can imagine that Peter would have had the assurance to speak as he did to Ananias, and much less would such an awful sanction have been given to his words, if he had been, at the same time, guilty of a much baser fraud of the like kind, or had been belying the Holy Ghost, in the whole of his pretensions to be under his miraculous influence and direction. *And*

A. M. 4037. 7 And it was about the space of
A. D. 33. three hours after, when his wife, not
knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me
whether ye sold the land for so much? And
she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that
ye have agreed together ^fto tempt the Spirit
of the Lord? behold the feet of them which

have buried thy husband *are* at the A. M. 4037.
door, and shall carry thee out. A. D. 33.

10 ^gThen fell she down straightway at his
feet, and yielded up the ghost. And the young
men came in, and found her dead, and carry-
ing *her* forth, buried *her* by her husband.

11 ^hAnd great fear came upon all the church,
and upon as many as heard these things.

12 ¶ ⁱAnd ^jby the hands of the apostles were

^f Verse 3; Matthew iv. 7.—^g Verse 5.—^h Verse 5; Chapter
ii. 43; xix. 17.

* St. Bartholomew's Day, epistle, verse 12 to verse 17.—ⁱ Chap.
ii. 43; xiv. 3; xix. 11; Rom. xv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12; Heb. ii. 4.

great fear came on all that heard these things—
That heard what Peter said, and saw what followed:
or upon all that heard the story of it: for, doubtless,
it was much spoken of in the city. See on verse 11.
*And the young men—*Some, probably, appointed in
the church to the office of burying the dead; or
some that attended on the apostles, perceiving there
was no room to hope for the recovery of one who
was struck dead by such an immediate act of the
divine power; *bound him up, and carried him out
to burial—*Without any further circumstance of
mourning or delay.

Verses 7-10. *About the space of three hours after*
—How precious a space! *his wife—*Who was
absent when this happened; *not knowing what was
done, came in—*Into the place where the apostles
were, expecting, doubtless, to share in the thanks of
all present, for consenting to the sale of the land,
and becoming, with her husband, so great a bene-
factor to the fund; *Peter said to her, Tell me
whether ye sold the land for so much—*Naming the
sum. *And she said, Yea, for so much—*Ananias and
his wife had agreed to tell the same story; and the
bargain being private, and, by consent, kept to
themselves, so that nobody could disprove their
assertion, they thought they might safely affirm
what they did, and should gain credit to it. It is
lamentable to see those relations, who should quick-
en one another to that which is good, hardening one
another in that which is evil! *Peter said—*By an
immediate impulse of the same Spirit, which had
before so awfully interposed; *How is it that you
have agreed—*Have acted as if you had agreed to-
gether; *to tempt the Spirit of the Lord—*To try
whether he be capable of searching the heart, and
of knowing what is done in secret? Before Peter
passes sentence, he sets before her the greatness of
the crime. *Behold the feet of them which have bur-
ied thy husband—*Whom divine vengeance has al-
ready struck dead on this occasion; *are at the door*
—Upon their return; *and shall carry thee out—*A
breathless corpse. She had not heard till now that
her husband was dead, the notice of which, with the
discovery of her sin, and the sentence of death
passed upon her, struck her as a thunderbolt, so that
she expired in a moment. *And the young men came
in—*And, to their utter astonishment, doubtless,
found her also dead, and carrying her forth imme-
diately, *buried her by her husband!*—Observe,

reader, there are many instances of sudden death,
which are not to be looked upon as the punishment
of gross sin, like these here recorded: we must not
think that all who die suddenly were sinners above
others. It may be intended as a favour to some, that
a quick passage is granted them. Such instances,
however, are intended to be a warning to others to be
always ready: but the deaths here mentioned were,
doubtless, in judgment. Some inquire concerning
the eternal state of Ananias and Sapphira, and in-
cline to think, that the destruction of the flesh was
effected, that the spirit might be saved in the day of
the Lord Jesus. And had there been any space grant-
ed them for repentance, as there was to the incestu-
ous Corinthian, there might have been reason for in-
dulging a hope of this kind. But, as the case was, the
ground for hope concerning them seems small, ac-
cording to the Scriptures. Secret things, however,
belong not to us, and we know the Judge of all the
earth will do only what is perfectly just and holy.

Verse 11. *And great fear came upon all the
church—*All that had joined themselves to it were
struck with a holy awe of God and his judgments,
and with a great veneration of this dispensation of
the Spirit, which they were now under. It did not
damp or check their holy joy, but it taught them to
be serious in the midst of it, and to rejoice with
trembling. And all that laid their money at the
apostles' feet, after this, were afraid of keeping back
any part of the price. *And upon as many as heard
these things—*Who could not but acknowledge that
it was the immediate hand of God by which both
these persons died, and that he was just in this aw-
ful dispensation. Many, no doubt, were put into a
consternation by it, and were ready to say, *Who is
able to stand before this holy Lord God* and his
Spirit in these his servants! As the word *church*
(ἐκκλησία) now occurs a second time in this history,
it may be proper to observe, that we have here a na-
tive specimen of a New Testament church; which
is a company of persons called by the gospel, grafted
into Christ by faith and the Holy Spirit, admitted
into the society of Christians by baptism, animated
by love, united by every kind of fellowship, and dis-
ciplined by the execution of a divine judgment on
two unworthy members.

Verse 12. *And by the hands of the apostles were
many signs, &c., wrought—*Many miracles of mercy
for one of judgment. Now the gospel power re-

A. M. 4037. many signs and wonders wrought
A. D. 33. among the people; (^k and they were
all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

13 And ^l of the rest durst no man join himself to them: ^m but the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women;)

15 Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick ⁿ into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, ^o that at the least the shadow

^k Chapter iii. 11; iv. 32.—^l John ix. 22; xii. 42; xix. 38.
^m Chap. ii. 47; iv. 21.—ⁿ Or, in every street.—^o Matt. ix. 21;

turned to its proper channel, which is that of grace and goodness. These miracles, which were not a few, but *many*, not of one kind merely, but of divers kinds, evidently proved the divine mission of the apostles, for they were *signs and wonders*, such wonders as were confessedly *signs* of the divine presence and power; they were not done in a corner, but *among the people*, who were at liberty to inquire into them, and if there had been any fraud or collusion in them, would have easily discovered it. *And they were all*—All the believers; *with one accord in Solomon's porch*—Frequently meeting there, and conversing together with the most affectionate expressions of mutual endearment, being unanimous in their doctrine, worship, and discipline; and there was no discontent or murmuring about the death of Ananias or Sapphira, as there was against Moses and Aaron, about the death of Korah and his company, Num. xvi. 31. The separation of hypocrites from the society of the faithful, should make those that are sincere cleave so much the closer to each other. It seems strange that the priests, and other rulers of the temple, should suffer the Christians to keep their meetings there; but it was, doubtless, through the providence and grace of God, who inclined the hearts of their enemies to tolerate them there a while, in order to the more convenient spreading of the gospel.

Verses 13, 14. *And of the rest*—Who were not really converted to Christianity; *durst*—Or *presumed*; *no man to join himself to them*—As, had it not been for the late signal judgment, some hypocrites might have attempted to do, in order to obtain a share in the distributions which were made among the Christians from their fund of charity; *but the people magnified them*—Namely, the apostles: had a great veneration for them, and spake of them with the highest expressions of reverence and respect, as persons who were owned by God in a most signal manner. *And believers were the more added*—Though the death of the two above-mentioned unhappy offenders deterred many, who did not sincerely believe in Jesus, and were not awakened to a sense of the importance of things spiritual and eternal, from joining themselves to the church; yet such as truly believed and were brought under a serious concern about their salvation, were united to the Lord in great numbers; *multitudes both of*

of Peter passing by night overshadow ^p some of them. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

16 There came also a multitude *out* of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing ^q sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one.

17 ¶ ^r Then the high-priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with ^s indignation,

xiv. 36; Chapter xix. 12.—^q Mark xvi. 17, 18; John xiv. 12.
^r Chap. iv. 1, 2, 6.—^s Or, envy.

men and women—Becoming his genuine disciples, and making an open profession of their faith, by submitting to the ordinance of baptism: for they wisely inferred, from what had happened, how dangerous it would be to oppose or suppress the inward convictions of their minds, in a matter of such great importance.

Verses 15, 16. *Inasmuch, or so that, they brought the sick into the streets, &c.*—The contents of this and the following verse are evidently connected with the former part of verse 12; the intermediate paragraph being intended to be read in a parenthesis. They brought the sick into the streets, because, as is probable, the priests would not suffer them to bring them into the temple to Solomon's porch; and the apostles had not leisure to come to the houses of them all. *And they laid them on beds and couches*—Because they were so weak that they could neither walk nor stand, and in order that, if they could neither have access to Peter, nor he come to them, at least the shadow of him passing by might overshadow some of them—Though it could not reach them all, and they had faith to believe this would be the means of healing them. And it is probable that they were not disappointed, but that some, at least, were thus healed, as the woman mentioned in the gospel was, by touching Christ's garment. According to their faith it was done unto them. And in this, among other things, the promise of Christ, (John xiv. 12.) *The works that I do, shall ye also do, and greater works than these, &c.*, was eminently fulfilled. And if such miracles were wrought by Peter's shadow, we have reason to think some were wrought in some such way by the other apostles; as by the handkerchiefs from Paul's body, Acts xix. 12. *And there came a multitude out of the cities*—In proportion as the fame of these wonderful works was spread abroad; *bringing sick folks*—That were afflicted in body; *and those vexed with unclean spirits*—Who were troubled in mind; *and they were healed every one*—Distempered bodies and distempered minds were both cured. Thus opportunity was given to the apostles, both of convincing people's judgments, by those miracles, of the heavenly origin of the doctrine they preached, and also of engaging people's affections both to them and it, by giving them specimens of its manifest beneficial tendency.

Verses 17, 18. *Then the high-priest rose up—*

A. M. 4037. 18 ^a And laid their hands on the
A. D. 33. apostles, and put them in the common
prison.

19 But ^r the angel of the Lord by night
opened the prison doors, and brought them
forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the
people ^r all the words of this life.

21 And when they heard *that*, they entered
into the temple early in the morning, and
taught. ^r But the high-priest came, and they

^a Luke xxi. 12. — Chap. xii. 7; xvi. 26.

Never did any good work go on with any hope of success, but it met with opposition; for they that are bent to do evil cannot be reconciled to them who make it their business to do good. Satan, the destroyer of mankind, ever was, and ever will be, an adversary to those who are men's benefactors. And it would have been strange, if the apostles had been suffered to go on thus teaching and healing, and had received no check. In these and the following verses we have the malice of hell and the grace of Heaven struggling about them; the one to make them cease from this good work, the other to animate them in it. The high-priest, Annas or Caiaphas, was the ringleader in the opposition made to them: *he rose up*—As it were, with awakened and renewed fury; *and all they that were with him*—His friends and associates; for they saw their wealth and dignity, their power and tyranny, that is, their all at stake, and inevitably lost, if the spiritual and heavenly doctrine of Christ should gain ground and prevail among the people. *Which is the sect of the Sadducees*—A goodly company for the priest! The Sadducees were most forward to join with the high-priest in this persecution, having a particular enmity to the gospel of Christ, because it attested and confirmed the doctrine of the invisible and eternal world, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the future state, which they denied. *And were filled with indignation*—Greek, ζηλος, with zeal, rather; namely, bitter, persecuting zeal against the cause of Christ: for it is not strange, if men of no religion be bigoted in their opinions against true and pure religion. When they heard and saw how the people flocked to the apostles, and how reputable they were become, they were exasperated to the last degree, and rose up in a passion, as men who could no longer bear such proceedings, and were resolved to oppose them, being vexed at the apostles for preaching the doctrine of Christ, and curing the sick; at the people for hearing them, and bringing the sick to be cured; and at themselves and their own party for suffering this matter to go so far, and not suppressing it at its first rise. Thus are the enemies of Christ and his gospel a torment to themselves! *And laid their hands on the apostles*—Being determined to bring them to another trial before the sanhedrim; *and put them in the common prison*—Where the vilest malefactors were lodged.

that were with him, and called the A. M. 4037.
council together, and all the senate A. D. 33.
of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison
to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came, and found
them not in the prison, they returned, and
told,

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut
with all safety, and the keepers standing with-
out before the doors: but when we had opened,
we found no man within.

^a John vi. 68; xvii. 3; 1 John v. 11. — Chap. iv. 5, 6.

Verses 19–23. *But the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors*—In spite of all the locks and bars that were upon them, and without giving any alarm to the keepers, or any of the other prisoners; *and brought them forth*—Hereby God evidently showed how impotent the rage of the priests and rulers was against those whom he determined to support. *And said, Go, stand and speak to the people*—They must not think they were thus miraculously delivered, in order that they might save their lives by making their escape out of the hands of their enemies; no, it was that they might go on with their work, with so much the more courage and diligence. *Thus recoveries from sickness, deliverances out of trouble, &c., are granted us, not that we may enjoy the comforts of life, but that God may be honoured with our services.* *All the words of this life*—Of the life which God had commissioned them to preach, and which the Sadducees denied; or, the whole doctrine of the gospel, which brings life and immortality to light, and shows the way that leads thereto. This they must preach *in the temple*. We may be ready to think, though they might not quit their work, yet it would have been prudent to proceed with it in a more private place, where it would have given less offence to the priests than in the temple; and so would have the less exposed them. But this was not permitted: they must speak in the temple: for that was the place of concourse, where they would have the greatest number of hearers, and do the greatest good. It is not for the preachers of the gospel to retire into corners, as long as they can have an opportunity of preaching in the great congregations. *And when they heard that*—When they heard that it was the will of God they should continue to preach in the temple, they took the first opportunity of doing it; for very early the next morning, as soon as the gates were open, they entered into the temple, and taught with the same freedom as before, no way discouraged by the fear of persecution. Doubtless it was a great satisfaction to them to receive these fresh orders from Heaven; for if they had not received them, they might have questioned whether, since they had now received their liberty, they should preach as publicly in the temple as they had done, Christ having said, *When they persecute you in one city, flee to another.* But while they were prosecuting their blessed work, in

A. M. 4037. 24 Now when the high-priest, and
A. D. 33. "the captain of the temple, and the
chief priests heard these things, they doubted of
them whereunto this would grow.

25 Then came one and told them, saying,
Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are
standing in the temple, and teaching the peo-
ple.

26 Then went the captain with the officers,
and brought them without violence: * for they

* Luke xxii. 4; Chap. iv. 1.—* Matt. xxi. 26.—† Chap. iv. 18.

obedience to the divine command, *the high-priest came*—Into the room where the council was usually held; *and called together all the senate of Israel*—All the members of the sanhedrim, being solicitous that there should be as full a house as possible on so important an occasion; *and sent proper officers to the prison, to have the apostles brought before them*, that the court might proceed to their examination and punishment. *But when the officers came*—To their great surprise, they found them not in the prison, and yet could discover no way whereby they could have made their escape, considering the circumstances that appeared on inquiry. Returning, therefore, to the council, they made their report accordingly.

Verses 24, 25. *When the high-priest, &c., heard these things*—So perfectly unexpected; *they doubted of them*—They were extremely perplexed, and even at their wit's end, having never been so disappointed before of a thing they were so sure of. *They doubted, τι αυ γενοιτο ταυτο, what this thing might be*—That is, whether they had procured their liberty by corrupting the keepers, or whether there might not be something miraculous in the deliverance of persons, whom such extraordinary circumstances had attended; and in that case, what this affair might import, and what the issue of it might be. Thus the world, in persecuting the children of God, entangle themselves in numberless difficulties. *Then came one*—Who knew their disappointment, and the uneasiness it gave them; *saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison*—And have commanded to be brought to your bar; *are standing in the temple*—Here, however they came thither; *and teaching the people*—With as much freedom and confidence as ever. Now this confounded them more than any thing. Prisoners, who had broken prison, used to abscond for fear of being retaken; but these prisoners, after they had made their escape, durst show their faces even there where their prosecutors had the greatest influence.

Verses 26-28. *Then went the captain with the officers*—By the direction of the sanhedrim; *and brought them*—*Ου υερα βιας, not by violence; for they feared the people, lest*—If they had offered any violence in their presence; *they should have been stoned*—The people were so fully persuaded that a divine power attended the apostles, that they held their persons sacred, and would not have borne any open

A. M. 4037. feared the people, lest they should have
A. D. 33. been stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they
set *them* before the council: and the high-
priest asked them,

28 Saying, † Did not we straitly command you,
that ye should not teach in this name? and be-
hold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine,
* and intend to bring this man's * blood upon us.

29 ¶ Then Peter and the *other* apostles an-

* Chap. ii. 23, 36; iii. 15; vii. 52.—† Matt. xxiii. 35; xxvii. 25.

attack upon them. "This may seem a surprising change in the people, considering the eagerness with which they demanded that Christ should be crucified. But it is exceedingly probable, that seeing the mighty power which wrought in the apostles, they might entertain some hope of obtaining temporal deliverance by their means, (see Acts i. 6,) of which they were so exceedingly fond; and a disappointment in their hope of which had turned their hosannas [addressed to Christ] into the cry, *Crucify him, crucify him.*" *And when they had brought them*—For the apostles made no opposition, but readily and cheerfully obeyed the summons, that they might repeat their testimony to their Divine Master, in the presence of the rulers; *they set them before the council*—In order to their examination. We may think, if God designed that the apostles should be thus seized, and brought before the sanhedrim a second time, why were they rescued from their first imprisonment? But that was intended to humble the pride, and check the fury of these their persecutors. *And the high-priest*—Singling out Peter and John, who had so lately been examined before the council; *asked them*—As the mouth of the court; *saying, Did we not straitly command you*—You two in particular, and so, in effect, all the rest of your company, and on pain of our highest displeasure; *that you should not teach in this name*—But you have disobeyed our commands, and go on to preach, not only without our license, but against our express order. 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 they take occasion thereby to censure and punish the innocent as guilty. *And behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine*—Your false and pernicious doctrine, and thereby have disturbed the public peace; *and intend to bring this man's blood upon us*—An artful and invidious expression. The apostles did not desire to accuse any man; they simply declared the naked truth. Thus these rulers charged them, not only with contumacy, and contempt of the court, but with sedition and faction, and a plot to set the people against them, for having persecuted, even to death, not only so innocent, but so good and great a man as this Jesus.

Verses 29-32. *Then Peter and the other apostles*—Or, Peter, in the name of the others, who, it seems, were all present; *said*—He does not give them the

A. M. 4037. swered and said, ^b We ought to obey
A. D. 33.

God rather than men.

30 ° The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and ^d hanged on a tree :

31 ° Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be ^f a Prince and ^g a Saviour, ^h for to

^b Chap. iv. 19.—^c Chap. iii. 13, 15; xxii. 14.—^d Chap. x. 39; xiii. 29; Gal. iii. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 24.—^e Chap. ii. 33, 36; Phil. ii. 9; Heb. ii. 10; xii. 2.

titles of honour which he did before; (chap. iv. 8;) but enters directly upon the subject, and justifies what he and his brethren had done. This is, as it were, a continuation of that discourse, but with an increase of severity; *We ought to obey God rather than men*—They do not plead the power they had to work miracles; a power which spoke sufficiently for them, and proved their divine mission; and, therefore, they humbly declined mentioning it themselves: but appealed to a maxim universally owned, to which even reason must subscribe, and which was a perfect justification of their conduct; God had commanded them to teach in the name of Christ, and therefore they were in duty bound to do it, though the chief priests forbade them. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus*—Of the seed of David, according to the promises made to our fathers; that is, he qualified him for, and called him to, his great undertaking. It seems to refer to the promise made by Moses. See chap. iii. 22. Or, he may speak of God's raising him from the grave. *Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree*—As if he had been the meanest of slaves, and the vilest of malefactors. You put him to death in the most infamous manner; but God has restored him to life; so that God and you are manifestly contesting about this Jesus, and which must we side with? *Him*—This very person, notwithstanding all the outrage with which you treated him; *hath God exalted with his right hand*—By his almighty power, from the grave to heaven; or, to his right hand. You loaded him with disgrace; but God has crowned him with honour; and ought not we to honour him whom God honours? *A Prince and a Saviour*—To his people, whom he both governs and delivers, and therefore we ought to preach in his name, and make known the laws of his kingdom, as he is a Prince; and the offers of his grace, as he is a Saviour. Observe, reader, we cannot have Christ to be our Saviour, unless we be willing to take him for our Ruler. We cannot be redeemed and healed by him, unless we give up ourselves to be governed by him. His saving us is in order to his ruling us. *To give repentance to Israel*—To give the people of Israel place or room for repentance, notwithstanding their aggravated guilt; and to declare unto them the terms of peace and reconciliation: or, to call them to repentance by the gospel, and give them grace to enable them to obey the call; *and forgiveness of sins*—To all the truly penitent, on whom alone that blessing is bestowed: for there is no remission without repentance; none are freed from the guilt and

give repentance to Israel, and forgive- A. M. 4037.
ness of sins. A. D. 33.

32 And ⁱ we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, ^k whom God hath given to them that obey him.

33 ¶ ^l When they heard *that*, they were cut

^f Ch. iii. 15.—^g Matt. i. 21.—^h Luke xxiv. 47; Chap. iii. 26; xiii. 38; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.—ⁱ John xv. 26, 27.—^k Chap. ii. 4; x. 44.—^l Chap. ii. 37; vii. 54.

punishment of sin, but those who are freed from the power and dominion of it; that are turned from it to God. And on the other hand, wherever repentance takes place, accompanied with fruits worthy of repentance, and faith in Christ, and in the promises of God through him, remission is granted without fail. Some infer from hence, that repentance and faith are as mere gifts of God, as remission of sins. Not so: for man co-operates in the former, but not in the latter. God alone forgives sins. *And we are his witnesses of these things*—How incredible soever they may appear to you, and are appointed by him to publish them to the world: and if we should be silent, as you would have us to be, we should be false to, and betray, a trust of the greatest possible importance; *and so is also the Holy Ghost*—A much greater witness, a witness from heaven; *whom God hath given*—In his gifts, as well as graces, as has been abundantly manifested of late, in the presence of thousands; *to them that obey him*—That obey his gospel, and submit themselves to his government. "The testimony arising from this miraculous communication of the Spirit to Christians at that time, entirely removes the objection from Christ's not appearing in public after his resurrection: for had there been any imposture, it had been easier of the two to have persuaded people at a distance, that he had so appeared to the Jewish rulers, or even to the multitude, and yet had been rejected, than that he had given his servants such extraordinary powers; since, had this assertion been false, every one might have been a witness to the falsehood of such a pretence, without the trouble and expense of a journey to Jerusalem, or any other distant place."—Doddridge.

Verse 33. *When they heard that*—When the high-priest and the Sadducees heard this courageous testimony, and faithful remonstrance; *they were cut to the heart*—Greek, διεπροντο, they were sawn asunder, namely, with anger and indignation. When a sermon was preached to the people to this purpose, they were *pierced to the heart*, chap. ii. 37; namely, with remorse and godly sorrow: these here are cut to the heart with resentment and rage. Thus the same gospel is to some a *savour of life unto life*, and to others *of death unto death*; and its enemies not only deprive themselves of its comforts, but fill themselves with terrors, and are their own tormentors. *And took counsel to slay them*—To put them all to death, either under pretence of blasphemy, or for sedition and rebellion against the supreme council of the state. Thus, while the apostles proceeded in

A. M. 4037. *to the heart*, and took counsel to slay
A. D. 33. them.

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named ^m Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;

35 And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men :

36 For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined

^m Chap. xxii. 3.—ⁿ Or, *believed*.—^p Prov. xxi. 30; Isa. viii.

the service of Christ, with a holy security and serenity of mind, perfectly composed, and in a sweet enjoyment of themselves, their persecutors went on in their opposition to Christ, with constant perplexity and perturbation!

Verses 34-37. *Then stood up one in the council, a Pharisee*—And as such believing the immortality of the soul and the resurrection; *named Gamaliel*—He is said to have been the son of good old Simeon, mentioned Luke ii. 25; and the person at whose feet St. Paul was brought up. He was a man in so great esteem among the Jews, that Onkelos, the author of the Targum, is said to have burned seventy pounds weight of perfumes at his funeral; and the Jews have this saying concerning him: "From the time that Rabban Gamaliel, the old, died, the honour of the law failed, and purity and Pharisaism died." *A doctor*—Or teacher; *of the law*—Who trained up a great number of pupils in the knowledge of it; *had in reputation among all the people*—Except the Sadducees. Thus can God raise up defenders of his servants whensoever and wheresoever he pleases. This man, rising up, *commanded to put the apostles forth a little space*—That he might speak the more freely, and be the more freely answered. *And said, Ye men of Israel*—To whom Divine Providence has committed the guardianship of this people, and the important care of their public affairs; *take heed to yourselves*—Now you are angry at these men; *what ye intend to do*—Lest you meddle to your own hurt. He puts them in mind of the importance of the matter in hand, which, in their heat, they were not capable of considering as they ought. *For before these days rose up Theudas*—He prudently mentions the facts first, and then draws the inference. A person of the name of Theudas is mentioned by Josephus, (*Antiq.*, xx. 5.) under the character of a false prophet, who drew a great number of people after him, with a promise of dividing Jordan before them, but was defeated and beheaded, most of his followers being also slain or imprisoned. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 5. But as this person appeared when Fadus was procurator of Judea, that is, according to Capellus, seven, or, according to Whitby, at least ten years after this was spoken, there can

themselves: who was slain; and all, ^{A. M. 4037.}
as many as ^{A. D. 33.} obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught.

37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, *even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.*

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: ^a for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught:

39 ^o But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow

10; Matthew xv. 13.—^p Luke xxi. 15; 1 Corinthians i. 25.

be no reference to him here. But Theudas being a very common name among the Jews, the person here mentioned, most probably, was one among the many leaders, who, as Josephus informs us, took up arms in defence of the public liberties, when the grand enrolment was made by Cyrenius, in the days of Archelaus. See note on Luke ii. 17. This Theudas seems to have been supported by smaller numbers than the second of the name; and (as the second afterward did) perished in the attempt; but as his followers were dispersed, and not slaughtered like those of the second Theudas, survivors might talk much of him, and Gamaliel might have been particularly informed of his history, though Josephus only mentions it in general. *After this man rose up Judas of Galilee*—Of whom see note on Luke xiii. 1, 2; *in the days of the taxing*—Or, as *εἰς τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀπογραφῆς* signifies, *in the days of the taxation, or enrolment*; meaning those same days, or at the same period of time, when the impostor Theudas appeared; *and drew away much people after him*—Endeavouring, on the principles of sacred liberty, to dissuade the Jews from owning the authority of the Romans in that instance; *he also perished*—Was quickly destroyed; *and as many as obeyed him*—As hearkened to, and followed him; *were dispersed*—And their cause came to nothing.

Verses 38, 39. *And now I say unto you*—I, therefore, with regard to the present affair, give it as my most serious and deliberate advice; *Refrain from these men, and 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 of Gamaliel is proper and eminently useful. *For 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. *If it be of men*—If it be a merely human contrivance, and matter of deceit; *it will come to naught*—It will soon sink, and come to nothing of itself; some incident will arise to discredit

A. M. 4037. it; lest haply ye be found even ^P to
A. D. 33. fight against God.

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had ^v called the apostles, ^r and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

^P Chap. vii. 51; ix. 5; xxiii. 9.—^v Chap. iv. 18.—^r Matt. x. 17; xxiii. 34; Mark xiii. 9.—^r Matt. v. 12; Rom. v. 3;

it, and the whole interest of this Jesus will moulder away, as that of Theudas and of Judas did, both which seem to have been much more strongly supported by human power. *But if it be of God*—If it be really his cause, which does not appear to me impossible, ye cannot overthrow it, whatever power or policy you use; for though even these particular instruments should be taken off, he will, undoubtedly, raise up others: *lest haply ye be found even to fight against God*—Against his almighty power, and infinitely wise and ever watchful providence; an undertaking which must prove dreadfully fatal to all who are so rash and unhappy as to engage in it.

Verse 40. *And to him they agreed*—Acknowledging his advice to be safe and wise. They, therefore, dropped the design of putting the apostles to death; yet they could not forbear giving vent to their rage, (so outrageous was it,) in a most unjust and cruel manner, and as evidently contrary to the conviction of their judgments and consciences, as it was to Gamaliel's counsel, which was *to let them alone*. For when they had called them in, *they beat them*—That is, stripped and scourged them as malefactors. Thus they thought to make them ashamed of preaching, and the people of hearing them; as Pilate scourged our Saviour to expose him to shame, when he declared *he found no fault in him*. And, added to this, they renewed their prohibition of speaking any more *in the name of Jesus*. This they did in order that, if they could find no other fault with their preaching, they might, at least, have this reason for reproaching it, that it was against law; and not only without the permission, but against the express order of their superiors.

Verse 41. *And they departed from the presence of the council*—As soon as they were dismissed, not in the least terrified by the cruel usage they had met with, nor by the threatenings of their adversaries. See the power of the grace of God! These are the men who forsook Christ when the soldiers came to apprehend him, not daring to be seen in his company: yet now they profess his name, and abide by their profession, though they are derided and beaten for it. And we do not find that they said one word by way of reflection upon the court, for the unjust treatment given them: *when reviled they reviled not again, and when they suffered they threatened not*; but committed their cause to him, to whom Gamaliel had referred it, even to *God, who judgeth righteously*. All their care was to preserve the possession of their own souls, and to make full proof of their ministry, both which they were enabled to do in a manner worthy of the imitation of all ministers

41 ¶ And they departed from the pre- A. M. 4037.
sence of the council, ^r rejoicing that they ^{A. D. 33.}
were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

42 And daily ^v in the temple, and in every house, ^r they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. xii. 10; Phil. i. 29; Heb. x. 34; James i. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 13, 16.—^v Chap. ii. 46.—^r Chap. iv. 20, 29.

and people who may, at any time, be in similar circumstances. Nay, they departed, *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame*—Being men in reputation, who had never done any thing to make themselves vile, they could not but have a sense of the shame they suffered, which, it seems, was more grievous to them than the smart caused by the scourges, as uses to be the case with ingenuous minds. But they considered that it was for the name of Christ that they were thus abused, and that their sufferings would be made to contribute to the further advancement of his cause and glory; and, therefore, 1st, They reckoned it an honour to be so treated, to be disgraced, or exposed to infamy for *his name*—His venerable and sacred name; rightly judging that a punishment of this kind, though generally shameful, became a glory to them when borne in so excellent a cause, and for the sake of him who, though so divinely great, and so perfectly happy, had submitted, not only to stripes, but to death for them. 2d, They *rejoiced* in it, remembering what their Master had said to them at their first setting out, *Matt. v. 11, 13; When men shall revile and persecute you, rejoice and be exceeding glad*. They rejoiced not only *though they suffered shame*, their troubles not diminishing their joy, but *that they suffered shame*, for their troubles increased their joy, and added to it. Reader, if we suffer ill for doing well, provided we suffer in a right spirit, and as we should, we ought to rejoice in that grace which enables us so to do.

Verse 42. *And daily in the temple, &c.*—The apostles were punished for preaching, and commanded strictly not to preach: yet they went on with their work with unabated zeal, and indefatigable diligence, omitting no opportunity of doing it. Observe, 1st, They preached *daily*, not only on sabbath days, or on Lord's days, but *every day*, as duly as the day came; not fearing lest they should either injure their health, or cloy their hearers. 2d, They preached both *publicly* in the temple, and *privately* in every house: in promiscuous assemblies, to which all resorted: and in the select assemblies of Christians, appointed for special ordinances. They did not think that either of these would excuse them from the other, knowing they were to *preach the word in season and out of season*. Though in the temple they were more exposed, and were under the eye of their enemies, yet they did not confine themselves to their little oratories in their own houses, but ventured into the post of danger: and though they had the liberty of the temple, a consecrated place, yet they made no difficulty of preaching in houses; *in every house*—Even

the poorest. 3d, We are also told what was the subject of their preaching; they preached *Jesus Christ*; they not only preached concerning him, but they preached him, exhibiting him to those that heard them, as their Prophet, Priest, and King; their Teacher, Mediator, Governor, and Judge; their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption: they preached, *not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord*, as the one Saviour of lost sinners, making it their chief business to advance his honour

and interest, and not their own. This was the preaching that gave most offence to the priests and rulers: they were willing they should preach any thing but Christ; but the apostles would not alter their subject to please them. Observe, reader, it ought to be the constant business of gospel ministers to preach Christ; Christ, and him crucified; Christ, and him glorified; Christ dying for us; Christ living in us; nothing besides this, or what is reducible to it.

CHAPTER VI.

In this chapter we have, (1.) An account of some discontents that arose among the disciples, about the distributing of their charity, 1. (2.) The election and ordination of seven men to superintend that matter, and ease the apostles of the burden of it, 2-6. (3.) The increase of the church, by the addition of many members to it, 7. (4.) A particular account of Stephen, his great activity for Christ and his cause, 8; the opposition he met with from the enemies of Christianity, and his disputes with them, 9, 10: (5.) He is accused to the sanhedrim, and appears before them with an angelic lustre upon his countenance, 11-15.

A. M. 4037. **A**ND in those days, ^a when the
A. D. 33. number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the ^b Gre-

cians against the Hebrews, because ^c in the
A. M. 4037 their widows were neglected ^d in the
A. D. 33. daily ministration.

^a Chap. ii. 41; iv. 4; v. 14; Verse 7.

^b Chap. ix. 29; xi. 20.—^c Chap. iv. 35.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verse 1. *In those days*—Some time after the fact last recorded had taken place; *when the number of the disciples was multiplied*—For it appears their number increased continually and rapidly, notwithstanding the opposition made by the priests and rulers to the preaching of the gospel: indeed that opposition, instead of checking the progress of Christianity, contributed to it: *there arose a murmuring*—The historian's manner of speaking, *πληθυνοντων των μαθητων εγενετο γογγυσμος*, the disciples multiplying, *there arose a murmuring*, seems to imply, that the murmuring was partly, at least, the consequence of the great increase of the disciples. And certainly, 1st, In proportion as the number of Christians increased, the scandal of the cross would be diminished, and many would be inclined to unite themselves to them, who were influenced by motives not perfectly pure, and were not truly converted to God, and made new creatures in Christ. 2d, The accession of a great number of converts to the church, perhaps chiefly from the poor, would render it more difficult than it was before, to afford all the necessitous a proper supply. But, whatever was the cause of the murmuring here spoken of, it 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! How soon was its glory, at least in some measure, eclipsed! *Of the Grecians*—Greek, *of the Hellenists*, that is, the Jews born out of Judea, so called, because they used the Greek

as their native language. These were descendants of such Jews as, in several national calamities, had been forced to flee to Alexandria, and other Gentile countries, or, on account of trade and commerce, had chosen to settle there, and yet kept themselves unmixed with the Gentiles; and, retaining the knowledge of the true God, were wont to come occasionally, especially on the solemn feasts, to worship at Jerusalem. *Against the Hebrews*—Who were natives of Judea, and therefore used a dialect of the Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic tongue; *because their widows were neglected*—In some degree, as they supposed; *in the daily ministration*—Of the charities that were distributed to the poor members of the church. It is justly observed here by Mr. Scott, that “as the greatest part of the public stock must have been contributed by the Hebrews, perhaps they, who acted under the apostles in this business, thought it right to show more favour to the poor widows of that description than the others” It is very probable, however, that the Hellenists suspected more partiality than there really was. Be this as it may, by this real or supposed partiality of the Hebrews, and the murmuring of the Hellenists, there is reason to think the Spirit of God was grieved, and the seeds of a general persecution were sown. For, 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 for it 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?

A. M. 4037. 2 Then the twelve called the multi-
A. D. 33. tude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, ^d It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, ^e look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

^d Exodus xviii. 17.—^e Deut. i. 13; Chapter i. 21; xvi. 2: 1 Timothy iii. 7.

and at the same time a means of purifying and strengthening those whose hearts are still right with God?

Verses 2-4. *Then the twelve*—For such was now again their number, Matthias having supplied the place of Judas; *called the multitude of the disciples unto them*—Not the rest of the one hundred and twenty merely, but the whole body of Christian converts, they being the persons to whom satisfaction was then due. See Whitby. It was of great importance that the apostles should immediately take measures to suppress these rising murmurs and discontents; for had they been suffered to remain and take root, they might have produced dangerous disputes and divisions, and have involved the apostles themselves in suspicion and censure. *It is not reason*—*Οὐκ ἀρεσκον ἐσθι, it is not right, proper, or, pleasing; namely, to God; that we*—Who have an office to discharge of so much greater weight and consequence; *should leave the word of God*—Should be less frequently employed in dispensing it; *and serve tables*—Attend to the distribution of money to relieve the wants of the poor; and yet this we must do, in order to prevent these complaints, unless some further measures be taken by common consent. *Wherefore, brethren*—As you see how inconvenient it would be to suffer this care to lie upon us, and how inevitably it would render us incapable of attending to the proper duties of our office; *look ye out among you seven men*—A number sufficient for the present; *of honest report*—That there may be no room to suspect them of partiality and 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 may appoint 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. It may be proper to observe here, that in the first church, the primary business of apostles, evangelists, and elders, 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 support especially of the poor, the strangers, and the widows. Afterward, as here, the deacons were constituted for this latter business. And whatever time they had to spare from this, they

4 But we ^f will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

5 ¶ And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, ^g a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and ^h Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and ⁱ Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch:

^f Chap. ii. 42.—^g Chap. xi. 24.—^h Chap. viii. 5, 26; xxi. 9. ⁱ Rev. ii. 6, 15.

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*. *But we*—Being thus freed from this great encumbrance; *will give ourselves continually*—Will dedicate our whole time; *to prayer, and to the ministry of the word*—Which is our grand business, and which we would be glad to prosecute without interruption. It is, doubtless, still the proper business of a Christian minister, whether termed a pastor, elder, or bishop, to speak to God in prayer; and to men in preaching his word, as an ambassador for Christ.

Verses 5, 6. *And the saying pleased the multitude*—Who had been called together upon this occasion; *and*—After some little deliberation upon the choice that was to be made; *they chose seven*—It seems all Hellenists, as their names show; a measure which accorded very well with the occasion of their election; *Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*—That is, not only endowed with the ordinary graces of the Holy Spirit, in a high degree, but even with his extraordinary gifts, as appears from the subsequent verses; *and Philip*—Who long continued an ornament and blessing to the church, being afterward raised to a yet higher character, that of an evangelist; *and Nicolas*—Who was not a Jew born, but a *proselyte of Antioch*—That is, one who by circumcision had been incorporated with the Jewish people; for if he had only been what was called a *proselyte of the gate*, he could not at this time have been a member of the Christian Church, no uncircumcised person being yet admitted into it. As he was a proselyte, others that were proselytes would the more readily apply to him for redress in any matter of grievance; and perhaps his peculiar relation to the Grecians might be a special reason why he was chosen to this office, the disciples being willing to cut off from them all cause of complaint. *Whom they set before the apostles*—That is, presented to them, as persons in whom they could put confidence, and whom they wished the apostles to accept, as proper for the intended work. *And when they had prayed*—Supplanted the divine blessing to attend all their ministrations:

A. M. 4037. 6 Whom they set before the apostles :
A. D. 33. and ^k when they had prayed, ^l they
laid *their hands* on them.

7 ¶ And ^m the word of God increased ; and
the number of the disciples multiplied in Jeru-
salem greatly ; and a great company ⁿ of the
priests were obedient to the faith.

8 ¶ And Stephen, full of faith and power,
did great wonders and miracles among the
people.

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue,
which is called *the synagogue* of the Liber-
tines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and

^k Chap. i. 24.—^l Chap. viii. 17 ; ix. 17 ; xiii. 3 ; 1 Tim. iv. 14 ; v. 22 ; 2 Tim. i. 6.—^m Chap. xii. 24 ; xix. 20 ; Col. i. 6.

they laid their hands on them—Both that they might express their solemn appointment of them to the office, and confer upon them such extraordinary gifts as would qualify them yet more abundantly for the full discharge of it.

Verse 7. *And the word of God increased*—The matter of the complaint, and other hinderances being thus removed, and the apostles more entirely at leisure to attend to the great and peculiar duties of their office, the success of the word *increased, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem was, οφoδρα, very much augmented ; and a great company*—Greek, πολλοι οχλοσ, *a great crowd, or multitude, of the priests were obedient to the faith*—That is, they embraced the doctrine of the gospel, and evinced the sincerity of their faith in it, by a cheerful compliance with all its rules and precepts.

Verses 8–10. *And Stephen, full of faith and power*—That is, of a strong faith, by which he was enabled to do extraordinary things. They that are full of faith are full of power, because, by faith the power of God is engaged for us. Some valuable copies, however, read χαριτωσ, *grace*, instead of πιστωσ, *faith*. *Did great wonders and miracles among the people*—Did them openly, and in the sight of all : for Christ's miracles feared not the strictest scrutiny. We need not wonder that Stephen, though not a preacher by office, should do these great wonders ; for the gifts of the Spirit were divided among the disciples as God pleased : and the power of working miracles was a gift distinct from that of prophesying or preaching, and bestowed on some to whom the latter was not given, 1 Cor. xii. 10, 11. And our Lord promised that the signs of miracles should not only follow them that *preached*, but them that *believed*, Mark xvi. 17. *Then there arose certain of the synagogue of the Libertines*—So they were styled, whose fathers were once slaves, and afterward made free. This was the case of many Jews, who had been taken captive by the Romans, under Pompey, and carried into Italy ; and *Cyrenians, &c.*—It was one and the same synagogue, which consisted of these several nations. Saul of Cilicia was, doubtless, a member of it. *Disputing with Stephen*—Arguing

a

of them of Cilicia, and of Asia, disput- A. M. 4037.
ing with Stephen. A. D. 33.

10 And ^o they were not able to resist the wis-
dom and the spirit by which he spake.

11 ^p Then they suborned men, which said,
We have heard him speak blasphemous words
against Moses, and *against God*.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the
elders, and the scribes, and came upon *him*, and
caught him, and brought *him* to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said,
This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous
words against this holy place, and the law :

^o John xii. 42.—^p Luke xxi. 15 ; Chapter v. 39 ; Exodus iv. 12 ; Isa. liv. 17.—^q 1 Kings xxi. 10, 13 ; Matt. xxvi. 59, 60.

with him concerning his doctrine, with a view to prevent the success of his preaching. But such was the force of his reasoning, that *they were not able to resist the wisdom, &c.*—They could neither support their own arguments nor answer his. He proved Jesus to be the Christ by such irresistible arguments, and delivered himself with so much clearness and evidence, that they had nothing of any weight to object against what he advanced : though they were not convinced, yet they were confounded. It is not said, they were not able to resist *him*, but to *resist the wisdom and the Spirit*—That is, the *Spirit of wisdom* which spake by him. They thought they only disputed with Stephen, and could make their cause good against him ; but they were disputing with the Spirit of God in him, for whom they were an unequal match. Now was fulfilled that promise, *I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist*, Luke xxi. 15.

Verses 11–14. *Then they suborned men*—As they found they were incapable of defending themselves by fair argument, they had recourse to a most mean and dishonest fraud ; *they suborned men* to bear false witness against him, and depose that they had *heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses*—Their great and divinely-commissioned law-giver ; and *against God*—The great author of that law which Moses delivered by command from him. They were right in supposing that they who blasphemed Moses, if they meant the writings of Moses, which were given by inspiration of God, blasphemed God himself. They that speak reproachfully of the Scriptures, and ridicule them, reflect upon God himself, and do despite to him. But did Stephen blaspheme Moses ? By no means ; he was far from it. Christ and the preachers of his gospel never said any thing that looked like blaspheming Moses ; they always quoted his writings with respect ; appealed to them, and said no other things but what Moses foretold should come. Very unjustly, therefore, is Stephen indicted for blaspheming Moses. “On such terms,” says Baxter, “we dispute with malignant men : when they cannot resist the truth, they suborn

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A. M. 4037. 14 ^a For we have heard him say, A. D. 33. that this Jesus of Nazareth shall ^r destroy this place, and shall change the ¹ customs which Moses delivered us.

^a Chap. xxv. 8.

men to swear to false accusations. And it is next to a miracle of Providence, that no greater number of religious persons have been murdered in the world, by the way of perjury and pretence of law, when so many thousands hate them, who make no conscience of false oaths." *And they stirred up the people and the elders*—They incensed both the government and the mob against him, that if they could not prevail by the one, they might by the other; that if the sanhedrim should still think fit, according to Gamaliel's advice, to let him alone, yet they might prevail against him by popular rage and tumult; or, if the people should countenance and protect him, they might effect his destruction by the authority of the elders and scribes. *And came upon him, and caught him*—Greek, *επισαντες συνηρασαν, rushing on him, they seized him, and brought him to the council*; which, it seems, was then sitting; and there, in the presence of their highest court of judicature, they *set up false witnesses*—Witnesses that they themselves knew to be false; *who said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words*—These suborned witnesses, being brought together, imboldened one another in bearing a false testimony. *Against this holy place*—Meaning the temple, where they then were; *and the law*—The divinely-inspired law, as one that has no reverence at all for its authority. *For we have heard him say, that Jesus shall destroy this place*—Perhaps they had, but that did not prove that he had been guilty of blasphemy. Thus Christ was condemned as a blasphemer, for words which were thought to reflect upon the temple, for the honour of which they seemed to be greatly concerned, at the very time when by their wickedness they were profaning it; making it not only a house of merchandise, but a den of thieves. *And shall change the customs which Moses delivered us*—It is not probable that Stephen knew the mystery of the abolition of the Mosaic law, which even the apostles do not seem to have had now any idea of. And it is much less probable that he openly taught what Paul himself, many years after, only insinuated, and that with very great caution. Compare Gal. ii. 2. This therefore seems to have been merely an inference drawn by them from what he taught concerning the destruction coming on the Jews, if they continued in their unbelief: but it was a very precarious inference, as the city and temple had been destroyed before, without any repeal of the law, and therefore they were false witnesses. And they were still more so in affirming that in saying these things he had spoken *blasphemous words against that holy*

15 And all that sat in the coun- A. M. 4037. cil, looking steadfastly on him, A. D. 33. saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

^r Dan. ix. 26.—¹ Or, *rites*.

place, and against the law—What blasphemy was it against that holy place, which they at once profaned and idolized, to say that it should not be perpetual, any more than Shiloh was? And that the just and holy God would not continue the privileges of his sanctuary to those that abused them? Had not the prophets given the same warning to their fathers, of the destruction of that holy place by the Chaldeans? Nay, when the temple was first built, did not God himself give the same warning? *This house, which is high, shall be an astonishment*, 2 Chron. vii. 21. And with respect to the *law*, which they charged him with blaspheming, that law of which they made their boast, and in which they put their trust, even then, when, through breaking it, they dishonoured God, (Rom. ii. 23,) how was Stephen's saying, (if he really did say,) that *Jesus would change the customs which Moses had delivered to them*, blaspheming it or its glorious Author? Was it not foretold by the prophets, and therefore to be expected, that in the days of the Messiah, the old customs should be changed, and that the shadows should give place when the substance was come? This, however, was no essential change of the law, but the perfecting of it: for Christ came *not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it*; and if he changed some customs that Moses delivered, it was to introduce and establish those that were much better.

Verse 15. *And all that sat in the council*—The priests, rulers, scribes, and elders; *looking steadfastly on him*—As being a stranger, and one whom they had not till now had before them, *saw his face as it had been the face of an angel*—Covered with a supernatural lustre, like that which appeared on the face of our Lord when he was transfigured, or at least that of Moses's face, when he came down from the mount. Hereby God designed to put honour on his faithful witness, and confusion on his persecutors and judges, whose sin would be highly aggravated, and would indeed be rebellion against the visible glory of God, if, notwithstanding this, they proceeded against him. They reckoned his preaching of Jesus as the Christ, was destroying both *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. And it was an astonishing instance of the incorrigible hardness and wickedness of their hearts, that they could murder a man on whom God put such a visible glory, similar to that of their great legislator. But we know what little impression other miracles made upon them, the truth of which they were compelled to acknowledge.

CHAPTER VII.

Stephen, being accused before the sanhedrim of blasphemy, vindicates himself, (1.) By going over the Old Testament, and giving an historical account of the Hebrew nation, under the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, 1-16: under Moses, 17-41: under Joshua, their judges, and kings, especially David and Solomon, 42-50: in which narrative he shows that God had been regularly worshipped in other lands and places; that the temple and ceremonies were but typical; and that for their wickedness God had threatened their nation with a miserable dispersion. (2.) He applies his discourse to his persecutors, and charges them with wickedness, which would provoke God to cast them off, 51-53. (3.) Enraged herewith, they furiously stone him to death; while he beholds and commits his spirit to Christ, and prays for pardon to his murderers, 54-60.

A. M. 4037. **THEN** said the high-priest, Are
A. D. 33. these things so?

2 And he said, ^a Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

3 And said unto him, ^b Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee.

^a Chap. xxii. 1.—^b Gen. xii. 1.—^c Gen. xi. 31; xii. 4, 5.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verses 1-3. *Then said the high-priest*—Who was president of the council, and, as such, the mouth of the court; *Are these things so?*—Are they as these witnesses have deposed? for thou art permitted to speak for thyself, and make thy defence. *And he said*—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. The sum of his discourse is this: I acknowledge the glory of God revealed to the fathers, verse 2; the calling of Moses, verse 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, verses 2, &c., 9, &c., 17, &c., 32, 34, 45; and they showed faith and obedience to God, verses 4, 20, &c., 23; particularly by their regard for the law, verse 8, and the promised land, verse 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, verses 2, 9, 33, 44. And that our fathers and their

4 Then ^c came he out of the land of
the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

And from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not *so much as* to set his foot on: ^d yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child.

^d Gen. xii. 7; xiii. 15; xv. 3, 18; xvii. 8; xxvi. 3.

posterity were not tied down to this land, their various sojournings, verses 4, &c., 14, 29, 44, and exile, verse 43, show. But you and your fathers have always been evil, verse 9; have withstood Moses, verses 25, &c., 39, &c.; have despised the land, verse 39; forsaken God, verse 40, &c.; superstitiously honoured the temple, verse 48; resisted God and his Spirit, verse 50; killed the prophets, and the Messiah himself, verse 51; and kept not the law, for which ye contend, verse 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 many other places, is rendered *men*, is a mere expletive. *The God of glory*—The glorious God; *appeared to Abraham before he dwelt in Charran*—Therefore Abraham knew God long before he was in this land. *And he said, Get thee out of thy country*—Depart from this thy native country, which is become idolatrous; *and from thy kindred*—Who are now alienated from my worship; *and come into the land*—A remote land; *which I shall show thee*—And to which, by my extraordinary interposition, I will guide thee; though at present thou dost not know even its situation, much less the way leading to it. See note on Gen. xii. 2.

A. M. 4037. 6 And God spake on this wise, * That
A. D. 33. his seed should sojourn in a strange
land; and that they should bring them into
bondage, and entreat *them* evil † four hundred
years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in
bondage will I judge, saith God: and after
that shall they come forth, and † serve me in
this place.

8 † And he gave him the covenant of circum-
cision. † And so *Abraham* begat Isaac, and
circumcised him the eighth day; † and Isaac

* Gen. xv. 13, 16. —† Exod. xii. 40; Gal. iii. 17. —‡ Exod.
iii. 12. —§ Gen. xvii. 9-11. —¶ Gen. xxi. 2-4. —‡ Gen. xxv.
26.

Verses 4, 5. *Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans*—Strange as the command which was given him might seem, he, with all submission, readily obeyed it; and *dwelt in Charran*—Namely, for several years, having been led thither by the divine conduct, and not immediately receiving a signal to proceed any further. *And from thence*—After his father died, by another call; *he (God) removed him into this land*—The land of Canaan. *And yet, upon his coming into it, he gave him none inheritance*—But he was a stranger and sojourner in it; *no, not so much as to set his foot on*—Or a piece of land which he might cover with the sole of his foot: for the field mentioned, verse 16, he did not receive by a divine donation, but bought it; *yet he promised*—At sundry times; *that he would give it to him for a possession*—Which promise Abraham firmly believed that God would fulfil; *and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child*—And, humanly speaking, it was not likely he ever should have one: but his faith triumphed over all these seeming difficulties, and he confidently trusted in the power, and love, and faithfulness of God to make his word good.

Verses 6-8. *And God spake, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land*—When God had brought Abraham into this country, he did not keep him and his posterity here till the time when they were to enter upon the possession of it, in consequence of this divine grant; but, on the contrary, God informed him in a vision that his seed should be strangers in a foreign land, and that they among whom they sojourned should *bring them into bondage*—Should make them slaves; *and entreat them evil*—Use them with great cruelty; and that these events, with the circumstances preparatory to them, should extend themselves to the full period of four hundred years. See note on Gen. xv. 13. *And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage*—By which they shall be enslaved; *will I judge, said God*—I will assuredly punish with righteous and tremendous severity; *and after that shall they come forth*—Namely, out of that land; *and serve me in this place*—In this land, erecting a temple for the performance of my worship here. *He gave him the covenant of circumcision*—See notes on Gen. xvii. 10-14. *And so Abraham be-*

begat Jacob, and † Jacob begat the A. M. 4037.
twelve patriarchs. A. D. 33.

9 ¶ And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: † but God was with him,

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, † and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt, and all his house.

11 † Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great afflic-

† Gen. xxix. 31, &c.; xxx. 5, &c.; xxxv. 18, 23. —‡ Gen. xxxvii. 4, 11, 28; Psalm cv. 17. —§ Genesis xxxix. 2, 21, 23. —¶ Gen. xli. 37; xlii. 6. —‡ Gen. xli. 54.

gat Isaac—After the covenant was given, of which circumcision was the seal.

Verses 9, 10. *And the patriarchs, moved with envy*—The rest of the twelve sons of Jacob, though their relation to such holy ancestors might have taught them a much better lesson; yet, influenced by envy at the superior regard which Jacob showed to his favourite son, most inhumanly *sold Joseph*—Their brother; *into Egypt*—Where he became a slave, and suffered a great variety of calamities; *but God was with him*—In the midst of them, supporting him, though he was not in this land, and rendering that country a scene of very glorious providences toward him: for by these things God was working, in a mysterious and surprising manner, for the accomplishment of the prediction before mentioned. From what Stephen relates of the story of Joseph, it was obvious for the members of the council to infer that the greatest favourites of Heaven might suffer by the envy of those who were called the Israel of God; and might be exalted by him after having been rejected by them: a thought worthy of their consideration with respect to Jesus; but prudence would not allow Stephen, in the beginning of his defence, to say expressly what they could not have borne to hear; for that they could not, appears by the manner in which they resented his application of these premises, when he was drawing toward a conclusion. *And delivered him out of all his afflictions*—To which he was exposed in consequence of his integrity and piety; *and gave him favour and wisdom*—That is, favour on account of his distinguished wisdom; *in the sight of Pharaoh, who made him governor over Egypt*—Committing all things in the palace, as well as elsewhere, to his direction and management. Thus did God, in the course of his providence, wonderfully exalt this despised Joseph, whom his brethren (then the whole house of Israel) had most outrageously insulted and abused, and even sold for a slave. And thus, Stephen insinuated, hath God exalted Jesus, whom ye treated as a slave, insulted, and abused, scourged, and hanged on a tree.

Verse 11. *Now there came a dearth*—According to the prediction of Joseph, when the seven pre-

A. M. 4037. tion; and our fathers found no suste-
A. D. 33. nance.

12 ^a But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

13 ^a And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren: and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.

14 ^a Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and ^a all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

15 ^a So Jacob went down into Egypt, ^a and died, he, and our fathers,

^a Genesis xlii. 1.—^a Genesis xlv. 4, 16.—^a Gen. xlv. 9, 27. ^b Gen. xlv. 27; Deut. x. 22.—^a Gen. xlvi. 5.—^a Gen. xlix. 33; Exod. i. 6.

ceding years of extraordinary plenty were past, which he had also predicted; *over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan*—A calamity which reduced the latter country to such distress, that, fruitful as it had generally been, *our fathers found no sustenance*—Or, not what was sufficient to support themselves and their families. *But Jacob*, hearing that *there was corn in Egypt*—Ordered his sons to go and fetch a supply from thence; and *sent our fathers first*—Namely, the ten without Benjamin. *And at the second time*—That they went, when Benjamin accompanied them; *Joseph was made known to his brethren*—Of which see on Gen. xlv. 1–15. And, as the matter was immediately made public, *Joseph's kindred*—Greek, *to yevos, his descent, or race*, was discovered to *Pharaoh*, of which he had not been informed before. *Then sent Joseph, and called his father*—With Pharaoh's full consent; and *all his kindred*—Now become numerous, amounting in the whole even to *threescore and fifteen souls*—So the Seventy interpreters, whom Stephen follows: one son and a grand-son of Manasseh, and three children of Ephraim, being added to the seventy persons, mentioned Gen. xlvi. 27. So Bengelius.

Verses 15, 16. *Jacob went down into Egypt, and died*—After having been supported there about seventeen years, by the filial gratitude and tenderness of his son Joseph; and *our fathers*—The patriarch's children also ended their lives in the same country; and *were carried over into Sychem*—That is, as Jacob was immediately carried, with solemn funeral pomp and procession, to be buried in the cave of Machpelah, with Abraham and Isaac, (Gen. i. 13,) so the patriarchs also, having been embalmed, and put into coffins, in Egypt, (Gen. i. 26,) were, at the return of Israel from thence, *carried over to Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre*—Made in that field which Jacob bequeathed to Joseph, as a peculiar legacy; he having first, as Abraham had done in a like case, *bought it for a sum of money*, (that is, for one hundred pieces of silver,) *of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sychem*—From whom, in particular, the place was named; and the Amorites having afterward seized it, Jacob had by force recovered it

16 And ^a were carried over into Sychem, and laid in ^a the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor, *the father of Sychem*.

17 ¶ But when ^a the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, ^a the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

18 Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

19 The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil-entreated our fathers, ^b so that they

^a Exod. xiii. 19; Josh. xxiv. 32.—^a Gen. xxiii. 16; xxv. 19.—^a Gen. xv. 13; Verse 6.—^a Exod. i. 7–9; Psa. cv. 24, 25.—^b Exod. i. 22.

out of their hands. See notes on Gen. xlviii. 22; Josh. xxiv. 32. It seems that St. Stephen, rapidly running over so many circumstances of history, had 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. 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 into Shechem, and laid by the sons [that is, descendants] of Hamor, the father of Shechem, in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money*. So Bengelius and Wesley.

Verses 17–21. *When the time of the promise drew nigh*—That is, the time for the accomplishment of the promise; *which God had sworn to Abraham*—Concerning the multiplication of his seed; see note on Gen. xxii. 16, 17; *the people grew, &c.*—Became very numerous in Egypt, notwithstanding that they were under great oppression there; *till another king arose*—Probably of another family; *which knew not Joseph*—And had no regard to his memory. *The same dealt subtly with our kindred*—Formed crafty and treacherous designs against them; and *evil-entreated our fathers*—Used them in a most injurious and barbarous way, lest in time they should become too powerful; *so that*—In obedience to a most inhuman order, which he pub-

A. M. 4037. cast out their young children, to the
A. D. 33. end they might not live.

20 ° In which time Moses was born, and
d was ¹exceeding fair, and nourished up in
his father's house three months :

21 And ° when he was cast out, Pharaoh's
daughter took him up, and nourished him for
her own son.

° Exod. ii. 2.—^d Heb. xi. 23.—¹ Or, fair to God.

lished; they cast out their young children—Exposed them to perish by hunger or wild beasts; or cast them into the river Nile; to the end they might not live—That they might be cut off from being a people, and their very race become quite extinct. In which afflictive and persecuting, but reasonable time—When our fathers were reduced to this miserable state; Moses was born—The person intended by God to be the instrument of his people's deliverance; and was exceeding fair—Greek, ἀειός τω Θεῷ, fair to God, as the margin reads it. The words, being a Hebraism, are only an emphatical expression, to denote Moses's extraordinary beauty, and might be not unfitly rendered *divinely beautiful*, the name of God being often introduced to express such things as were extraordinary in their kind. So in the Hebrew, what we translate *great wrestlings*, (Gen. xxx. 8,) is *wrestlings of God*; *goodly cedars*, (Psa. lxxx. 10,) are *cedars of God*; *great mountains*, (Psa. xxxvi. 6,) are *mountains of God*. This then agrees with what is said of Moses, (Exod. ii. 2,) that he was a *goodly child*; and with the account which Josephus gives of him, who says, "that when he was but three years old, his extraordinary beauty was such, that it struck every one that saw him; and as they carried him about, persons would leave their work to look at him." See Grotius and Whitby. And when he was cast out—Was thus exposed to perish, the providence of God so ordered it, that Pharaoh's daughter took him up—Being moved with pity at the sight of him; and nourished him—With a purpose of adopting him; for her own son—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. "All these extraordinary circumstances, relating to the birth, preservation, education, genius, and character of Moses, serve to aggravate the crime of Israel in rejecting him, when he offered himself to them as a deliverer under so many advantages, and when Providence had so wonderfully interested itself in his favour."—Doddridge.

Verse 22. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians—Which was then celebrated in all the world, and for many ages after. Geography, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, natural history, physic, and hieroglyphics, are all mentioned by ancient writers as branches of Egyptian literature. Several ancient testimonies to the extraordinary learning of Moses may be seen in Philo, Justin Martyr, Origen, and Clemens Alexandrinus. And

22 And Moses was learned in all the A. M. 4037.
wisdom of the Egyptians, and was A. D. 33.
mighty in words and in deeds.

23 ° And when he was full forty years old,
it came into his heart to visit his brethren the
children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he
defended him, and avenged him that was

° Exod. ii. 3–10.—^f Luke xxiv. 19.—^g Exod. ii. 11, 12.

was mighty in words—Deep, solid, weighty, though not of a ready utterance. "It expresses," says Doddridge, "such a weight and solidity in his counsels and speeches, as may be very consistent with the want of a flowing elocution;" and in deeds—Referring to the astonishing miracles which God wrought by him. We may observe here, that it must have been a great piece of self-denial, such as none but a lover of learning, and one who has made some progress in it, can understand, for a person of such a genius and education as Moses, in the prime of life, to leave the polite court of Egypt, and live as a retired shepherd in the Arabian desert.

Verses 23–25. When he was forty years old—So long he continued in Pharaoh's court; it came into his heart—Probably by an impulse from God; to visit his brethren—He having been instructed, it appears, in the knowledge of his real descent, and in the principles of the Jewish religion; and it is likely his spirit was so impressed with a concern for their welfare, that all the pleasure and grandeur at the court of Egypt could not make him easy, without going in person to take a view of their state. And seeing one of them suffer wrong—Probably by one of the task-masters; he defended him—And smiting the Egyptian with a mortal wound, he at once rescued and avenged him that was oppressed—See note on Exod. ii. 11, 12. For he supposed his brethren would have understood, &c.—The manner in which Stephen expresses himself, seems to imply, that he considered Moses as doing this action in consequence of a special impression from God on his mind, intimating to him the important work for which he was intended, that God by his hands would deliver them—Two things are here proper to be inquired into, namely, 1st, By what authority or right Moses slew the Egyptian. 2d, What reason he had to expect the people should understand that God designed him for their deliverer? "The Jewish historians," says Whitby, "give us a very easy solution of these difficulties; for, according to Clemens Alexandrinus, their priests declare that Moses slew the Egyptian with a word, and so gave them a miracle to prove his mission: and Josephus assures us, that 'God appeared to Amram, the father of Moses, as he was praying to him for the afflicted Jews, and said to him, Thy son, now in the womb of thy wife, shall escape the hand of the Egyptians, and shall deliver the Hebrews from the afflictions of Egypt; and that, to confirm this vision, his wife brought him forth without any pain.' The Jerusalem Talmud

A. M. 4037. oppressed, and smote the Egyptian :
A. D. 33.

25 ^a For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them : but they understood not.

26 ^b And the next day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren ; why do ye wrong one to another ?

27 But he that did his neighbour wrong,

^a Or, Now.—^b Exod. ii. 13.—^c Luke xii. 14 ; Chap. iv. 7.

likewise declares that Moses slew the Egyptian by the spirit of prophecy, or by an extraordinary impulse from God ; and Maimonides makes this action one degree of prophecy. And thus, as Stephen here says, it came into his heart, namely, from God, to visit his brethren : and indeed otherwise he could not have justified this fact to God and his own conscience. Now Moses, knowing what had been declared of him to his father, and by this action working deliverance to one of them, might justly hope they would look upon him as one appointed by God to be their deliverer." Dr. Benson, however, not crediting these stories, thinks "it does not appear that Moses had as yet any prophecy to assure him that he was the person who should deliver Israel ; but, knowing there was a divine promise of deliverance made to, and retained in the house of Israel ; that he himself had been extraordinarily preserved and educated, and that the time of their deliverance was approaching, he showed himself willing to run all hazards and dangers with the people of God, rather than continue in the splendour of the Egyptian court ; and that when the time should be fully come, he would cheerfully join and head them, in order to rescue them from their bondage and cruel slavery." But it seems there is more than this implied in the verse ; and though we may have no certain information of any prophecy that Moses had yet received, it does not follow but he might have received some private revelation from God, that he was the person appointed by him to deliver the Israelites. But they understood not—Such was their stupidity and sloth, which made him afterward unwilling to go to them.

Verses 26-29. The next day he showed himself unto them—Of his own accord, unexpectedly ; as they strove—As they were quarrelling with each other ; and would have set them at one—That is, by interposing between them, he would have put an end to their quarrel, and have persuaded them to live in peace and friendship ; saying, Sirs, ye are brethren—Descended from Jacob, our common ancestor, and now also joined in affliction as well as in religion ; which things ought doubly to cement your affections to each other ; why then do you injure one another ? But he that did his neighbour wrong—Unable to bear with his plain and faithful reproof ; insolently thrust him away—As a person

thrust him away, saying, ⁱ Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us ?
A. M. 4037.
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28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday ?

29 ^k Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons.

30 ^l And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

^k Exod. ii. 15, 22 ; iv. 20 ; xviii. 3, 4.—^l Exod. iii. 2.

that had nothing to do in their controversy ; saying, Who made thee a ruler, &c., over us ?—Thus, under the pretence of the want of a call by man, the instruments of God are often rejected. The speech of this single person is represented (verse 35) as expressing the sentiments of the whole body of the people, as their slowness afterward to believe the mission of Moses, when attested by miracle, (Exod. v. 20, 21,) seems evidently to show that it was. Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian, &c.—His blood may cost thee dear enough, without adding mine to it. Then fled Moses—Finding the matter was discovered, and being apprehensive that, in consequence of it, the Egyptian power would soon be armed against him, while the Israelites were not inclined to use any efforts for his protection, nor to put themselves under his guidance. See the note on Exod. ii. 15. And was a stranger in the land of Madian—Where he became shepherd to Jethro, the prince of the country, and marrying Zipporah his daughter, he begat two sons, Gershom and Eliezer.

Verses 30-34. When forty years were expired—That is, forty after his leaving Egypt ; during which time Israel had continued under this bondage. and Moses, inured to hardships and poverty, and to contemplation and devotion, had been trained up and prepared, in the humble and retired life of a shepherd, for the great work for which God designed him ; see on Exod. ii. 22 ; there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina—Which lay in the confines of the Midianite country, not far from the Red sea ; an angel of the Lord—The Son of God, as appears from his styling himself Jehovah ; (see on Exod. iii. 2 ;) 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, Psa. lxxxiii. 18. It was therefore the Angel of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1, the Angel of God's presence, Isa. lxiii. 9, who delivered the law to Moses, and was with the church in the wilderness, and gave them possession of Canaan as the Captain of the Lord's host, Josh. v. 14. In a flame of fire in a bush—Which, though of combustible matter, was not consumed ; representing the state of Israel in Egypt, where, though they were in the fire of affliction, yet they were not con-

A. M. 4037. 31 When Moses saw *it*, he wondered at the sight; and as he drew near to behold *it*, the voice of the Lord came unto him,

32 *Saying*, "I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold.

33 "Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

34 "I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

^a Matt. xxii. 32; Heb. xi. 16.—^b Exod. iii. 5; Josh. ix. 15. ^c Exod. iii. 7.—^d Exod. xiv. 19; Num. xx. 16.—^e Exod. xii. 41; xxxiii. 1.—^f Exod. vii., viii., ix., x., xi., xiv.; Psa. cv. 27.

sumed by it, but miraculously preserved as a people, and even increased. *When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight*—Wondered why the bush, which burned, was not consumed: it was a phenomenon, with the solution of which all his Egyptian learning could not furnish him. *And as he drew near to behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, &c.*—Expressions sufficiently showing that the person speaking was not a mere angel, but possessed of true Deity, and therefore, as being also styled *an angel*, or messenger, was the Son of God, the Father's Messenger to men. *Then Moses trembled*—Moses, upon this, perceiving that God himself was there present, and spake to him, trembled at this appearance of his majesty, and durst not behold with a curious regard, as he had intended. *Then said the Lord, Put off 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. See the note on Exod. ii. 5. "It was formerly in the eastern nations, and is now in the southern, esteemed a ceremony of respect, to put off the shoes when approaching a superior, lest any of the dirt or dust cleaving to the shoes should be brought near him, and that the person approaching barefoot might tread more cautiously. This, which perhaps was introduced at first in court apartments, where rich carpets might be used, the King of kings requires to be done in a desert, as a token of the infinitely greater reverence due to him. See Josh. v. 15, and Eccles. v. 1. On the same principle, it seems, the priests ministered thus in the tabernacle and temple, no direction being given for shoes or sandals as a part of their dress, though all the rest of it was so particularly prescribed." *I have seen, I have seen the affliction*—See note on Exod. ii. 7, 8.

Verses 35, 36. *This Moses, whom they refused*—Namely, forty years before: probably not they, but their fathers did it, and God imputes it to them. So

35 This Moses, whom they refused, ^{A. M. 4037} saying, Who made thee a ruler and a ^{A. D. 33.} judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer ² by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

36 ^a He brought them out, after that he had ¹ showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, ^a and in the Red sea, ¹ and in the wilderness forty years.

37 ¶ This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, ^a A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, ² like unto me; ² him shall ye hear.

38 ² This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with ^a the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with our fathers*:

^a Exod. xiv. 21, 27-29.—^b Exod. xvi. 1, 35.—^c Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Chapter iii. 22.—^d Or, *as myself*.—^e Matt. xvii. 5. ^f Exod. xix. 3, 17.—^g Isa. lxiii. 9; Gal. iii. 19; Heb. ii. 2.

God frequently imputes the sins of parents to those of their children who are of the same spirit. *The same did God send to be a ruler and deliverer*—Which is much more than a judge. *By the hand*—That is, by the means; *of the angel*—See on verse 30. *He brought them out*—Though for a while he hesitated, he afterward complied, and at length led them forth in triumph, a willing people listed under his banner; *after he had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt*—Which were afterward continued for the completing their deliverance, according as the case called for it; *in the Red sea, and in the wilderness, forty years*—During which space they were every day miraculously fed with manna from heaven, and conducted by a pillar of fire and cloud, and had a variety of other astonishing miracles wrought in their behalf continually. Thus Stephen is so far from blaspheming Moses, that he extols him as a glorious instrument in the hand of God in the forming of the Old Testament Church. But it does not at all derogate from his just honour, to say that he was but an instrument, and was excelled by Jesus, whom he encourages these Jews yet to receive and obey; not fearing, if they did so, but that they should be accepted, and obtain salvation by him, as the people of Israel were delivered by Moses, though they had once refused him.

Verses 37, 38. *This is that Moses which said, A prophet, &c.*—Here Stephen shows that there is no opposition between Moses and Christ. And it is mentioned as one of the greatest honours God put upon Moses; nay, as that which exceeded all the rest, that by him God gave notice to the Israelites of the great prophet that should come into the world, raised their expectation of him, and required them to receive him on pain of utter destruction. Now this was very full to Stephen's purpose, supposing him to have intimated, as his accusers affirmed, that Jesus should change the customs of the ceremonial law. And he is so far from blaspheming Moses, that

A. M. 4037. * who received the lively ^b oracles to
A. D. 33. give unto us :

39 To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust *him* from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,

40 ° Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for *as for* this Moses, which

* Exod. xxi. 1; Deut. v. 27, 31; xxxiii. 4; John i. 17. —^b Rom. iii. 2. —^c Exod. xxxii. 1. —^d Deut. ix. 16; Psa. cvi. 19.

he really does him the greatest honour imaginable, by showing how one of the most important of his prophecies was fulfilled. *This is he* (Moses) *that was in the church in the wilderness*—Presiding in all the affairs of it for forty years, and being *king* as well as prophet, in *Jeshurun*, Deut. xxxiii. 5. Here we see the camp of Israel is called *the church in the wilderness*; and with good reason, for it was a sacred society, incorporated by a divine charter, under a divine government, and blessed with a divine revelation. It was a church, though not yet so perfectly formed as it was to be when they should come to Canaan. It was the honour of Moses that he was in that church; and many a time it would have been destroyed, if Moses had not been in it to intercede for it. But Christ is the president and guide of a more excellent and glorious church than that in the wilderness; and is more in it than Moses could be in that, as being the life and soul of it. *With the angel that spake to him*—The Angel of the covenant, even of the old as well as of the new. The angel that went before him and was a guide to him, otherwise he could not have been a guide to Israel. Of this God speaks, (Exod. xxiii. 20,) *I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, &c., beware of him, and obey his voice, for my name is in him.* He was in the church with the angel, without whom he could have done no service to the church: but Christ is himself that angel which was with the church in the wilderness, and therefore has an authority above Moses. *Who* (Moses) *received the lively oracles*—Not only the ten commandments, but the other instructions, *which the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak them to the children of Israel.* Observe, reader, 1st, The words of God are oracles, certain and infallible, and of unquestionable authority and obligation: they are to be consulted as oracles, and by them all controversies must be determined. 2d, They are *lively oracles*, for they are the oracles of the living God, not of the dumb and dead idols of the heathen. They are full of divine life and energy; *quick and powerful*, (Heb. iv. 12,) enlightening the eyes, rejoicing the heart, converting the soul, raising the dead: for the word that God speaks is *spirit and life*: they were delivered in an awakening and impressive manner, and instruct us in the way to life and happiness. Not that the law of Moses could give life of itself, but it showed the way to life, especially as exhibiting, in types and shadows, *good things to come*. 3d, It was the principal privilege of the Jews that unto them were committed these oracles, and it was by the

brought us out of the land of Egypt, A. M. 4037.
we wot not what is become of him. A. D. 33.

41 ^d And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

42 Then ° God turned, and gave them up to worship 'the host of heaven: as it is written

* Psa. lxxxi. 12; Exod. xx. 25, 39; Rom. i. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 11. ' Deut. iv. 19; xvii. 3; 2 Kings xvii. 16; xxi. 2; Jer. xix. 13.

hand of Moses that they were committed. Moses was not the author of them, nor of the law contained in them: he was merely the medium, or instrument, of their communication. And he that gave those customs by his servant Moses, might, no doubt, when he pleased, change them by his Son Jesus, who has received more lively oracles to give unto us than Moses gave.

Verses 39-41. *Whom our fathers would not obey*—Even after all the proofs of his miraculous powers given in Egypt, and at the Red sea; *but thrust him from them*—Acting a part more stupid and ungrateful than that before mentioned, verse 27; rejecting him a second time, as in contempt of all these wonderful appearances of God by him; *and in their hearts*—In their affections and intentions; *turning back again into Egypt*—Preferring their garlick and onions there, before the manna they daily received under the conduct of Moses, and the milk and honey they hoped for in Canaan. They murmured at him, mutinied against him, refused to obey his orders, and sometimes were ready to stone him. *Saying unto Aaron*—At the very foot of that mountain upon which God had visibly manifested himself to them, while the sound of his voice was, as it were, yet in their ears, and though, but a few days before, they had seen their great leader ascending up to him, by an intimacy of approach allowed to no other mortal: *make us gods to go before us*—Back into Egypt, or forward to the promised land, and to conduct us in the way thither: *for as for this Moses, who, indeed, brought us out of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him*—And have not patience to wait for him any longer: therefore *make us gods of gold*—As if gods of Aaron's making, though of gold, would be sufficient to supply the place of Moses, or rather, of Jehovah! *And they made a calf*—In imitation of the Egyptian Apis, to be their saviour and their guide; *in those days*—Those very days in which they continued encamped in that remarkable situation; *and offered sacrifice unto the senseless and dead idol*—Which could neither see nor hear, nor take any notice of the worship offered to it; *and rejoiced in the work of their own hands*—In the god they had made, as if, instead of being a reproach and abomination, it had been an ornament and defence to them. Nay, so proud were they of their new god, that, after they had sat down to *eat and drink, they rose up to play* (Exod. xxxii. 6) before it, and in honour of it.

Verses 42, 43. *Then God turned*—Upon this, God, being most righteously provoked, turned away

A. M. 4037. in the book of the prophets, "O ye
A. D. 33. house of Israel, have ye offered to me
slain beasts and sacrifices *by the space of forty*
years in the wilderness?

43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Mo-
loch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures
which ye made to worship them: and I will
carry you away beyond Babylon.

44 ¶ Our fathers had the tabernacle of wit-
ness in the wilderness, as he had appointed,
speaking unto Moses, that he should make

† Amos v. 25, 26.—^a Or, *who spake*.—^b Exod. xxv. 40; xxvi. 30; Heb. viii. 5.—^c Joshua iii. 14.—^d Or, *having received*.
‡ Nehemiah ix. 24; Psalm xlv. 2; lxxviii. 55; Chap. xiii. 19.
§ 1 Sam. xvi. 1; 2 Sam. vii. 1; Psa. lxxxix. 19; Chap. xiii. 22.

from them in anger, and, as in many other instances, punished one sin by letting them fall into another; and at length gave them up, in succeeding ages, to the most abandoned, public, and general idolatry, even to worship all the host of heaven—The stars and other heavenly bodies, and that with as little reserve, and as little shame, as the most stupid of the heathen nations. As it is written in the book of the prophets—Namely, of the twelve minor prophets, which the Jews always connected together in one book. What is here quoted is taken from the Prophet Amos, chap. v. 25; where see the note. The passage consists of two parts; of which the former confirms verse 41, concerning the sin of the people; the latter, the beginning of verse 42, respecting their punishment: *O house of Israel, have ye offered to me—To me alone; slain beasts, &c., forty years in the wilderness?*—You know that even then you began to revolt, and provoke me to jealousy with your abominations. They had offered many sacrifices, but did not offer them to God alone, but sacrificed to idols also; and God did not accept even those that they offered to him, because they did not offer them with an upright heart. And in succeeding ages you were continually renewing and aggravating your rebellions and treasons against me. *Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch*—Instead of confining yourselves to my tabernacle; and the star of your god Remphan—Or Chium, as it is called in Amos. Moloch probably meant the sun, and Remphan, or Chium, the moon; or some other star. Aben Ezra thinks Saturn; figures which ye made—Images, or emblematical representations, of these supposed deities; to worship them—Both the images, and the supposed deities which they were intended to represent. See note on Amos v. 26. *I will carry you away beyond Babylon*—Into countries more distant. So Dr. Prideaux reconciles Stephen's quotation with the original passages in Amos, where we read, beyond Damascus. This was fulfilled by the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii. 6.

Verses 44–47. *Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness*—Greek, τῆ μαρτυρικῆς, of the testimony. The two tables of stone, on which the ten commandments were written, were most properly the testimony, as being a constant testimony of the relation

it according to the fashion that he A. M. 4037.
had seen. A. D. 33.

45 Which also our fathers, that came after, brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;

46 Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

47 But Solomon built him a house.

48 Howbeit, the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

¶ 1 Kings viii. 17; 1 Chronicles xxii. 7; Psalm cxxxii. 4, 5.—^a 1 Kings vi. 1; viii. 20; 1 Chron. xvii. 12; 2 Chronicles iii. 1.—^b 1 Kings viii. 27; 2 Chron. ii. 6; vi. 18; Chap. xvii. 24.

between God and Israel: 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. This, says Stephen, was with our fathers in the wilderness, a tabernacle made in all respects as God had appointed, who, speaking unto Moses, commanded him to make it according to the fashion, or model, that he had seen—Namely, in the mount, Exod. xxv. 40. "As Stephen had been accused of blaspheming the temple, he, with great propriety, takes occasion to speak of their sacred places with due reverence, as raised by special direction from God; and yet corrects that extravagant regard for them, and confidence in them, which the Jews entertained."—Doddridge. *Which our fathers, that came after*—Or rather, as διαδεξαμενοι more properly signifies, having received; brought in with Jesus—That is, with Joshua, when he led them over Jordan; 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 Stephen intimates two things: 1st, That God always loved good men in every land. 2d, That he never loved bad men even in this. *Unto the days of David*—That is, the tabernacle continued for many ages, even unto David's time, to be the resort of the pious worshippers in Israel; above four hundred years before there was any thought of building a temple. David indeed having found favour before God, desired—Greek, ἠρώτα, petitioned, this further blessing, on which his heart was set; even to have the honour to find a tabernacle—Or a dwelling more stable and splendid; for the God of Jacob—But he did not obtain his petition. For, as he had been a man of war, and had shed much blood, God would not permit him to build the temple. He laid a plan for it, however, and consecrated a considerable part of the spoils which he had taken from the enemy toward erecting it. But God remained without any temple till Solomon built him a house—Which, till the reign of that prince, he never had commanded or permitted to be done. Observe how wisely the word house is used here, rather than the word temple, with respect to what follows.

Verses 48–50. *Howbeit*—Ἄλλα, but, or yet; we

A. M. 4037. 49 ^p Heaven is my throne, and earth
A. D. 33. is my footstool: what house will ye
build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place
of my rest?

50 Hath not my hand made all these things?

51 Ye ^a stiff-necked, and ^r uncircumcised in
heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy
Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so do ye.

52 ^a Which of the prophets have not your
fathers persecuted? and they have slain them
which showed before of the coming of ^t the
Just One; of whom ye have been now the
betrayers and murderers;

^p Isa. lxi. 1, 2; Matt. v. 34, 35; xxiii. 22.—^a Exod. xxxii. 9; xxxiii. 3; Isa. xlvi. 4.—^r Lev. xxvi. 41; Deut. x. 16; Jer. iv. 4; vi. 10; ix. 26; Ezk. xlv. 9.—^t 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; Matt. xxi. 35; xxiii. 34, 37; 1 Thess. ii. 15.

are not to imagine that God permitted a temple to be built even then for his own sake: for it was acknowledged, at the same time, by Solomon himself, that *the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*—Be they ever so rich, splendid, and majestic. *As saith the prophet*—Namely, Isaiah, chap. lxvi. 1, where, speaking in the name of God, he says, *Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool*; and how then should my presence be confined to any particular place? *What house will ye build me*—Suitable for me; *saith the Lord: or, what is the place of my rest?*—Have I need of rest? What need have I of a house? either to rest in, or wherein to show my glory? *Hath not my hand made all these things?*—Whatever splendour any temples may have, did not I form the materials with which they are built, and endow the workmen, that fashioned them, with all their art and genius? Do not imagine, then, that you can confer any obligation upon me by such structures as these, or any act of homage which you can render to me in them, nor think that you can charm me to continue my abode there, or to be a constant guard to you, merely because you have such edifices among you.

Verses 51–53. *Ye stiff-necked, &c.*—Stephen, finding by a confused murmur in the place that they understood whither his discourse tended, and perceiving by the eagerness of their countenances that they would soon interrupt him, applied himself more closely to his persecutors in these remarkable words, which he boldly addressed to them under the influence of the Holy Spirit, by whose direction he spoke; *Ye stiff-necked*—Inflexible and obstinate sinners, not bowing your necks to God's yoke; and *uncircumcised in heart and ears*—So that you will not hearken to instruction, or be seriously affected with it. This they immediately showed. See verses 54, 57. So far were they from receiving the word of God with their hearts, that they would not hear it even with their ears. *Ye*—And your fathers; ye, as a people, in all ages; *resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did*—In former ages; *so do ye now*. This is the sum of what he had shown at large.

53 ^a Who have received the law by ^a A. M. 4037.
the disposition of angels, and have ^a A. D. 33.
not kept *it*.

54 ¶ ^a When they heard these things, they
were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on
him with *their teeth*.

55 ^a But he, ^r being full of the Holy Ghost,
looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw
the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the
right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, ^a I see the heavens
opened, and the ^a Son of man standing on the
right hand of God.

^t Chap. iii. 14.—^a Exod. xx. 1; Gal. iii. 19; Hebrews ii. 2.
^r Chap. v. 33.—^a St. Stephen's Day, epistle, verse 55 to the
end.—^r Chap. vi. 5.—^a Ezk. i. 1; Matt. iii. 16; Chap. x. 11.
^a Dan. vii. 13.

Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?—Some have inferred from this, that many writings, containing the history of these persecutions, have been destroyed by the Jews; but it seems more natural to understand the words in a limited sense, as only intimating that most of the prophets had suffered such unworthy usage. Attempts, however, were sometimes made to cut off all the prophets of the Lord at once. See 1 Kings xix. 10, 14; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. *They have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just or righteous One*—That is, Christ; so called by way of eminence, as being alone perfectly righteous: of whom—When you ought to have heard of him with delight, and to have received him with the most humble reverence and joyful gratitude; *you have been now the perfidious betrayors, and cruel murderers*. *Who have received the law*—Delivered from Sinai with astonishing circumstances of solemnity, majesty, and terror, *by the disposition, or administration of angels, and have not kept, but continually violated it*—When the Son of God gave the law on mount Sinai, he was attended with *thousands of angels*, Gal. iii. 19; Psa. lxxvii. 17. Dr. Doddridge renders the original expression, *εἰς διατάξας ἀγγέλων, through ranks of angels*, “marshalled in solemn array upon that grand occasion:” and he thinks it is evident, from Heb. ii. 2, that God made use of the instrumentality of angels to form the voice heard at that awful time.

Verses 54–56. *When they heard these things*—These plain, and undeniable, and alarming truths; *they were cut to the heart*—Or sawn asunder, the original word being the same that is used chap. v. 33. And not permitting him to proceed any further, in a transport of rage, *they gnashed on him with their teeth*—As if they would have devoured him alive. *But he, being full of the Holy Ghost*—And therefore no way terrified with the foresight of the evil which appeared to be determined against him; *looked up steadfastly into heaven*—From whence alone he could expect help or mercy; and *saw the glory of God*—Prepared for him; and *Jesus stand-*

A. M. 4037. 57 Then they cried out with a loud
A. D. 33. voice, and stopped their ears, and ran
upon him with one accord,

58 And ^b cast him out of the city, ^c and stoned
him: and ^d the witnesses laid down their
clothes at a young man's feet, whose name
was Saul.

^b 1 Kings xxi. 13; Luke iv. 29; Heb. xiii. 12.—^c Lev. xxiv.
16.—^d Deut. xiii. 9, 10; xvii. 7; Chap. viii. 1; xxii. 20.

ing on the right hand of God—Risen up from the
throne of his glory, (for he is generally represented
as sitting,) to afford help to his distressed servant,
and ready to receive him. Doubtless many other
martyrs, as Mr. Addison has observed, when called
to suffer the last extremities, had extraordinary
assistances of a similar kind; otherwise frail mortal-
ity could not have endured the torments under
which they rejoiced, and sometimes preached Christ,
to the conversion of spectators, and, in some in-
stances, of their guards and tormentors.

Verses 57-59. Then they cried out with a loud
voice—Being provoked to such a degree that they
could not contain themselves, and meaning to drown
the voice of Stephen; and stopped their ears—As
if they could not bear to hear such blasphemy as
they wished to have it thought he had spoken.
And ran upon him—Greek, *ωρμησαν*, rushed on him
with one accord, before any sentence was regularly
passed; and cast—Greek, *εβαλοντες εξω της πολεις*,
casting him out of the city—It seems by a gate near
the place where the sanhedrim sat; and as soon as
they had got without the boundaries of that sacred
place, of which they judged it would be a profana-
tion to stain it with human blood, they stoned him—
This, like the stoning of Paul at Lystra, seems to
have been an act of popular fury, exceeding the
power which the Jews regularly had; which, though
it might have extended to passing a capital sentence,
was certainly not sufficient for carrying it into
execution, without the consent of the Romans. The
Jews were more than once ready to stone Christ,
not only when by their own confession they had
not power to put any one to death, (John xviii. 31.)
but when nothing had passed which had the shadow
of a legal trial. How far they now might have
formed those express notions of what the rabbis
call the *judgment of zeal*, is not easy to say; but it
is certain they acted on that principle, and as if they
had thought every private Israelite had, like Phine-
has, who is pleaded as an example of it, a right to
put another to death on the spot, if he found him in
a capital breach of the divine law; a notion, by the
way, directly contrary to Deut. xvii. 6, which re-
quired at least two witnesses in capital cases, where
there was a legal process. And the two witnesses—
Whose hands were first upon him to put him to
death; laid down their clothes, &c.—In executions
of this kind, it was usual for those who had borne
witness against the criminal to cast the first stones
at him; and for this purpose they were wont to put

59 And they stoned Stephen, ^e call- A. M. 4037.
ing upon God, and saying, Lord Je- A. D. 33.
sus, ^f receive my spirit.

60 And he ^g kneeled down and cried with a
loud voice, ^h Lord, lay not this sin to their
charge. And when he had said this, he fell
asleep.

^e Chap. ix. 14.—^f Psa. xxxi. 5; Luke xxiii. 46.—^g Chap. ix.
40; xx. 36; xxi. 5.—^h Matt. v. 44; Luke vi. 29; xxiii. 34.

off their upper garments, and gave them to be kept
by persons equally hearty in the prosecution with
themselves; and on this occasion the witnesses laid
their clothes at the feet of Saul, afterward called
Paul, who, it seems, willingly took charge of them,
to show how heartily he concurred with them in the
execution. O Saul! wouldst thou have believed, if
one had told thee, while thou wast urging on the
cruel multitude, that the time would come when
thou thyself shouldst be twice stoned in the same
cause, and shouldst triumph in committing thy soul
likewise to that Jesus whom thou wast now blas-
pheming? 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 washed their robes, and made
them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Verses 59, 60. And thus they stoned Stephen—
Who, during this furious assault, continued with his
eyes fixed on the heavenly glory, of which he had
so bright a vision, calling upon God—The word
God is not in the original, which is literally, *introk-
ing*; and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit—
For Christ was the person to whom he prayed: and
surely such a solemn prayer addressed to him, in
which a departing soul was thus committed into his
hands, was 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.
And he kneeled down, &c.—Having nothing further
relating to himself which could give him any soli-
citude, all his remaining thoughts were occupied in
compassion to these inhuman wretches, who were
employed in effecting his destruction. Having,
therefore, as we have reason to suppose, received
many violent blows, rising as well as he could upon
his knees, he cried, though with an expiring, yet
with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their
charge—With severity proportionable to the weight
of the offence, but graciously forgive them, as indeed
I do from my heart. The original expression, *μη
σησης αυτοις την αμαρτιαν*, has a peculiar emphasis, and
is not easy to be exactly translated, without multi-
plying words to an improper degree. It is literally
weigh not out to them this sin; that is, a punishment
proportionable to it; alluding, it seems, to passages
of Scripture where God is represented as weighing
men's characters and actions in the dispensations of

his justice and providence. This prayer of Stephen was heard, and remarkably answered, in the conversion of Saul, of whose history we shall shortly hear more. *When he had said this*—Calmly resigning his soul into the Saviour's hand, with a sacred serenity, in the midst of this furious assault, *he sweetly fell asleep*—Leaving the traces of a gentle composure, rather than a horror, upon his breathless corpse.

CHAPTER VIII.

(1.) While Stephen is buried and lamented, the Christians at Jerusalem are terribly persecuted by Saul and others, 1-3. (2.) The church is enlarged by the dispersion of the persecuted, particularly Philip the evangelist, in the country of Samaria, 4-13. (3.) Peter and John confirm the new converts there, and severely reprove Simon the sorcerer, 14-25. (4.) By divine direction, Philip goes toward the south, and joining an Ethiopian eunuch, whom he found reading the prophecy of Isaiah, he preaches Christ to him, converts him to the faith, and baptizes him, 26-38. (5.) While the eunuch joyfully pursues his journey homeward, Philip preaches the gospel along the western borders of Canaan, 39, 40.

A. M. 4038. **AND** ^a Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and ^b they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

^a Chap. vii. 58; xxii. 20.—^b Chap. xi. 19.—^c Gen. xxiii. 2; i. 10; 2 Sam. iii. 31.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verses 1, 2. *And Saul was consenting*—*Ἦν συνευδοκῶν τῆ ἀναίρεσει αὐτοῦ*, was consenting with delight; to his death—Or, more literally, was well pleased with his slaughter; for he was so full of rage and malice against the Christian name, that he thought no severities were too great to be exercised on those who thus zealously endeavoured to propagate it. *And at that time*—*Ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*, in that day, in the very day in which this inhuman murder was committed on Stephen, who leads the van in the glorious army of martyrs; *there was a great persecution*—Which continued to rage for some time; *against the church at Jerusalem*—Which was no sooner planted than it was persecuted, as Christ had often intimated, signifying that tribulation and persecution would arise, because of the word, particularly at Jerusalem, that city having been formerly famous for killing the prophets, and stoning them that were sent to it, Matt. xxiii. 37. And now the adversaries of the Christians, having tasted blood, were the more eager to shed it. *And they were all scattered abroad*—Not all the church, for 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. *And devout men*—Who feared God more than persecution; *carried Stephen to his burial*—Having the courage to show themselves openly as the friends of that holy man, whose blood had been so unrighteously shed; *and made great lamentation over him*—Mourning that the church had lost so excellent an instrument of usefulness, though he himself was so much a gainer by it, as to

2 And devout men carried Stephen A. M. 4038. to his burial, and ^e made great lamentation over him. A. D. 34.

3 As for Saul, ^d he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison.

^d Chap. vii. 58; ix. 1, 13, 21; xxii. 4; xxvi. 10, 11; 1 Cor. xv. 9; Gal. i. 13; Phil. iii. 6; 1 Tim. i. 13.

be the object of congratulation, rather than condolence.

Verse 3. *As for Saul*—Who was one of the main instruments in this persecution; *he made havoc of the church*—Like some furious beast of prey. So the Greek word properly signifies. He did his utmost to ruin it, not caring what mischief he did to the disciples of Christ, and setting no bounds to his rage and cruelty: *entering into every house*—Where the Christians used to assemble for the worship of God; or every house that had, or was thought to have, any Christians in it; *haling men and women*—Dragging them along the streets, without any regard to age or sex; *committed them to prison*—For no crime, real or pretended, but that of having believed in Jesus, and embraced the gospel. *Therefore they that were*—Greek, *οἱ μὲν ἐν διασπαρευτες*, they, therefore, being scattered abroad, went everywhere—Went through Judea and Samaria, (verse 1,) *preaching the word*—Wherever they came; scattering the knowledge of Christ and his gospel wherever they were scattered: they went, *εὐαγγελίζομενοι τὸν λόγον*, evangelizing, or, declaring the glad tidings of the word—Those of them that had ability to preach, in their preaching, and others in their common converse. And in many places they were remarkably successful. So that God overruled the cruelty and rage of his people's enemies to subserve his own wise and gracious purposes. There is no room to inquire where these poor refugees had their orders. Some of them were endowed with miraculous gifts: and, if none of them had been so, the extraordinary call they had to spread the knowledge of Christ wherever they came, among

A. M. 4038. 4 Therefore * they that were scatter-
A. D. 34. ed abroad went everywhere preach-
ing the word.

5 Then † Philip went down to the city of Sa-
maria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed
unto those things which Philip spake, hearing
and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For ‡ unclean spirits, crying with loud
voice, came out of many that were possessed
with them: and many taken with palsies, and
that were lame, were healed.

* Matt. x. 23; Chap. xi. 19.—† Chap. vi. 5.

those who were ignorant of him, abundantly just-
fied them in what they did. They were now in a
country where many of them were no strangers, for
Christ and his disciples had conversed much in the
regions of Judea and Samaria, so that a foundation
had been laid for them to build upon, and it was re-
quisite to let the people in those parts know what
had been the issue of the preaching Christ's doc-
trine, and that it was not now left neglected and for-
gotten, as perhaps they had been made to believe.

Verses 5-7. *Then Philip, &c.*—The sacred histo-
rian here proceeds to record one particular instance
of the success of the preaching of the persons dis-
persed by the above-mentioned persecution. The
Philip here spoken of was not the apostle of that
name, for all the apostles continued at Jerusalem,
(verse 1,) and this Philip, as appears from verses
14-17, had not the power of communicating the mi-
raculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, by laying on of
hands. He was, therefore, Philip the deacon, men-
tioned chap. vi. 5; no other of that name, besides
the apostle, having been mentioned in this history.
Went down to the city of Samaria—Or, as some
read it, *to a city of Samaria*; as it is not specified
what city of that country it was. The mode of ex-
pression, however, seems to point out the capital of
Samaria, which was Sychar, or Sichem, where
Christ had preached in the beginning of his minis-
try: *and preached Christ unto them*—It is certain
that the Samaritans were better prepared to receive
the gospel than most of the Gentile nations, as they
worshipped the true God, and acknowledged the au-
thority of the pentateuch. Nay, indeed, in some
respects they were better prepared than the body of
the Jewish nation, as we do not find that they had
either such notions of the Messiah's temporal reign
as the Jews had, or had received the Sadducean
principles, which were both very strong prejudices
against the Christian doctrine. *And the people*—
Who inhabited that city, notwithstanding their nat-
ural prejudices against the Jews; *with one accord*—
Ομοθυμαδον, *unanimously*; *gave heed unto those
things which Philip spake*—Of the truth and im-
portance of which, upon their attending to them,
they were soon persuaded; *hearing*—The rational
and convincing arguments which he used; *and see-*

8 And there was great joy in that A. M. 4038.
city. A. D. 34.

9 ¶ But there was a certain man, called Si-
mon, which beforetime in the same city ^h used
sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria,
ⁱ giving out that himself was some great one:

10 To whom they all gave heed, from the
least to the greatest, saying, This man is the
great power of God.

11 And to him they had regard, because that
of long time he had bewitched them with sor-
ceries.

‡ Mark xvi. 17.—^h Chap. xiii. 6.—ⁱ Chap. v. 36.

ing the miracles—Which he performed, in confirm-
ation of his doctrine. *For unclean spirits*—At
Philip's command, *came out of many persons that
had been possessed by them, crying with a loud
voice*—Which showed that they came out with
great reluctance, and much against their wills, but
were forced to acknowledge themselves overcome
by a superior power. *And there was great joy in
that city*—Both on account of those benevolent mi-
racles which were performed by Philip in it, and of
that excellent doctrine which he preached among
them, containing such welcome tidings of pardon
and eternal salvation.

Verses 9-11. *But there was, &c.*—At the time
when the gospel was thus brought to them by Phi-
lip, a man was there, *called Simon, which before-
time in the same city used sorcery*—Greek, *had been
υαγεων, using magic arts*. Some think the ex-
pression is entirely of the same signification with the
word μαγος, and is intended to tell us, that this Simon
was one of the sect of the magi; (see on Matt. ii. 1;) and it is possible he might profess himself of that
sect: but certainly the expression here used imports
much more, and amounts to the same with *one who
used enchantments*, pretending, in consequence of
them, to exert some supernatural powers; whereas
the word *magus*, at least about Christ's time, seems
to have signified much the same with our English
word *sage*, and to have denoted a proficient in learn-
ing, and especially in astronomy, and other branches
of natural philosophy, to which the Persian magi
addicted themselves, and so gave name to many who
were far from holding the peculiarities of that sect.
Yet as many natural philosophers pretended also
to be magicians in the common sense of the word
among us, and might make their natural knowledge
subservient to that pretence when it was mere im-
posture, it is not improbable that they generally
called themselves magi; and so the verb μαγεων
might come to signify the making use of unlawful
arts, (as it plainly does here,) while the noun, from
whence it was derived, might still retain a more ex-
tensive and innocent signification. See Doddridge.
And bewitched the people—Εξιζων το εθνος, *astonish-
ing the nation*; *of Samaria*—By his magic arts he
showed many signs and lying wonders, which

A. M. 4038. 12 But when they believed Philip, A. D. 34. preaching the things ^k concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the ^lmiracles and signs which were done.

14 ¶ * Now when the apostles which were

* Chap. i. 3.—^l Gr. signs and great miracles.—* Tuesday in Whitsun-week, epistle, verse 14 to verse 18.

seemed to be miracles, but really were not so; like those of the magicians of Egypt, and those of the man of sin, mentioned 2 Thess. ii. 9: *giving out, that himself was some great one*—A person possessed of supernatural powers; he wished the people to believe so, and to respect him accordingly. *To whom they all gave heed*—Paid great regard, as he desired them to do; *from the least to the greatest*—Both young and old, both poor and rich; *saying, This man is the great power of God*—Greek, *η δυναμις του Θεου, η μεγαλη*, literally, *the power of God, that great power*. Thus ignorant, unthinking people mistake what is done by the power of Satan, as if it were done by the power of God; and so with the Gentile world, devils pass for deities, and in the antichristian kingdom, *all the world wonders after the beast*, to whom the dragon gives his power, and who opens his mouth in blasphemy against God, Rev. xiii. 2-5. Their meaning probably was, that Simon was the long-expected Messiah, and even Omnipotence itself incarnate, otherwise, they supposed, he could not do such wonderful things. *And to him they had regard*—Had the greater regard; *because that of long time he had bewitched them*—Or rather, *had astonished them*, the word being the same with that used verse 9; *with sorceries*—With the lying wonders which he wrought by his enchantments.

Verses 12, 13. *But when they believed Philip, &c.* When they became spectators of Philip's miracles, and were convinced that they were real, and those of Simon a mere sham; or, when they believed the doctrine that Philip preached, *concerning the kingdom of God*, they then saw and felt the real power of God, and submitted thereto; *and were baptized, both men and women*—Thus making an open profession of their faith in the gospel. By the influence of divine grace, working with the word, they that had been led captive by Satan, were brought into obedience to Christ. *Then Simon himself believed*—The truth of the doctrine taught by this messenger of God, though his heart was not truly changed by its power: *and when he was baptized*—On a profession of that faith; *he continued with Philip*—Courting a further acquaintance with him; *and wondered, beholding the miracles, &c.*—Greek, *was astonished*, or filled with amazement, as the Samaritans had formerly been, at the sight of his magical performances. "It is with peculiar elegance and

at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had A. M. 4038. received the word of God, they sent A. D. 34. unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them ¹that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

16 (For ^mas yet he was fallen upon none of them: only ⁿthey were baptized in ^othe name of the Lord Jesus.)

¹ Chap. ii. 38.—^m Chap. xix. 2.—ⁿ Matt. xxviii. 19; Chap. ii. 38.—^o Chap. x. 48; xix. 5.

propriety, that the same word which had been used to express the manner in which the Samaritans were affected with Simon's enchantments, is here used to describe the impression which Philip's miracles made on him." Thus Doddridge; who adds, "We see in this, as in a thousand nearer instances, that there may be a speculative faith in the gospel where there is no true piety; and if such persons, on the profession of that faith, where nothing appears contrary to it, be admitted to those ordinances by which Christians are distinguished from the rest of mankind, it is an evil in the present state of things unavoidable, and the conduct of Christian ministers and societies, in admitting such, will be less displeasing to God than a rigorous severity."

Verses 14-17. *When the apostles heard that Samaria*—That the inhabitants of that country, or of the chief city thereof; *had received the word of God*—By faith; being desirous that these new converts should be further settled in their Christian profession, by receiving those spiritual gifts which no inferior teacher or officer in the church could be the instrument of communicating; *they sent unto them Peter and John*—Two of the most eminent of their number, made remarkable by the miracle they had lately performed, and the courageous manner in which they had borne their testimony to the gospel. Here we find Peter sent by the other apostles, which is a proof that he was not their head and superior, for greater is he that sends than he that is sent. Peter and John were sent to Samaria, 1st, To assist and strengthen the hands of Philip. Ministers in a higher station, and that excel in gifts and graces, should consider how they may be helpful to those in a lower sphere, and should labour to promote their comfort and usefulness. 2d, To endeavour to carry on the good work that was begun among the people, and through those heavenly graces that had enriched themselves to confer upon them spiritual gifts. *Who, when they were come, prayed for them*—The imposition of their hands would have been unavailing toward the purpose of their mission, without prayer: *that they might receive the Holy Ghost*—In his miraculous gifts, as well as in his sanctifying graces. Not that all who had been baptized in Samaria might receive these gifts, for it was never so in any church, no, not in that of Jerusalem; there being only some, even among them, who were, in this sense, full of the Holy Ghost; (Acts vi. 3;)

A. M. 4038. 17 Then ^p laid they *their* hands on
A. D. 34. them, and they received the Holy
Ghost.

18 ¶ And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on

^p Chap. vi. 6; xix. 6; Heb. vi. 2.—¹ Matt. x. 8; ² Kings v. 16.

but that some of them might receive these gifts, for the confirmation of the gospel, and especially such as were designed for some office in the church, or at least, to be eminently active members of it; and that some of them might receive one gift of the Holy Ghost, and others another; see 1 Cor. xii. 4, 8, 28-31; xiv. 26. *For as yet he was fallen upon none of them*—None of them were endued with his extraordinary influences, notwithstanding that those influences had been wonderfully displayed among them in the astonishing miracles which Philip had performed. It is rightly observed here by Epiphanius, that Philip, being only a deacon, had not the power of conferring these miraculous gifts, and therefore these apostles were sent to do it. *Then laid they their hands on them*—Namely, after they had prayed for them; and *they received the Holy Ghost*—In answer to the prayers of these apostles: that is, these new converts spake with tongues, and performed other extraordinary works. Thus God put honour upon the apostolic office, bore witness to his truth, and by qualifying many persons to instruct others therein, and to sustain other offices among his people, he made provision for the further enlargement of his work, in the conversion of more sinners, and the establishment and edification of believers.

Verses 18, 19. *And when Simon*—The magician, spoken of before; *saw*—With astonishment; *that through laying on of the apostles' hands*—On the heads of many individuals, lately converted to the Christian faith; *the Holy Ghost was given*—In his extraordinary operations; *he offered them money*—And hence the procuring any ministerial function, or ecclesiastical benefice, by money, is termed *Simony*: saying, *Give me also this power*—Let me prevail with you, by this reward, to confer on me the power which I have seen you exercise with so much ease. It seems Simon imagined, if by the imposition of his hands he could confer such gifts as Peter and John conferred, it would turn considerably to his honour and advantage; and especially if he could, by this means, communicate to whom he would the knowledge of languages, which they had never been at the trouble of learning in a natural way. "Simon," says Henry, "did not desire the apostles to lay their hands on him, that he might receive the Holy Ghost himself, for he did not foresee that any thing was to be got by that; but that they would convey to him a power to bestow the gift upon others; he was ambitious to have the honour of an apostle, but not at all solicitous to have

whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. A. M. 4038. A. D. 34.

20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because ^q thou hast thought that ^r the gift of God may be purchased with money.

21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this

^r Chap. ii. 38; x. 45; xi. 17.

the spirit or disposition of a Christian: he was more desirous to gain honour to himself than to do good to others. Now in making this motion, 1st, He put a great affront upon the apostles, as if they were mercenary men, who would do any thing for money. 2d, He put a great affront upon Christianity, as if the miracles that were wrought in confirmation of it were done by magic arts, only of a different nature from those which he himself had practised formerly." Indeed, as Dr. Whitby observes, "The sin of Simon struck at the very foundation of the Christian faith; supposing that the apostles, and other Christians, did their miracles by some higher art of magic than that which he had learned, and so that they, by the same art, could teach others to do the same works for any other end." "3d, He showed that, like Balaam, he aimed at the rewards of divination; for he would not have bid money for this power, if he had not hoped to get money by it. 4th, He showed that he had a very high conceit of himself, and that his heart had never been truly humbled."

Verses 20, 21. *But Peter said, Thy money perish with thee*—Not being able to conceal his indignation, upon hearing so infamous an offer. His words are not to be considered as an imprecation, but as a strong admonition to Simon of his danger, and an intimation, how much rather the apostle would see the greatest sum of money lost and cast away, than receive any part of it upon such shameful terms. With a horror like that with which Peter received the wicked proposal of Simon, should we look on the conduct of all those by whom sacred things are either bought or sold; an infamous traffic, about which an upright man cannot deliberate a moment, but will reject it at once with an honest scorn and indignation, like that of Peter in the present instance. "They," says Beza, "who buy and sell sacred things, are the successors not of Simon Peter, but of Simon Magus." A crime almost equally enormous with this is, that of prostituting the ordinances of Christ to secular ends. In vain is it for men to profess themselves Christians, in vain to submit like Simon to baptism, or like him to adhere constantly to the ministers of the gospel, while such hypocritical conduct proclaims aloud that they are *in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*. *Because thou hast thought*—Hast persuaded thyself; *that the gift of God may be purchased with money*—Thus, on the one hand, overvaluing the wealth of this world, as if it were an equivalent for any thing, even for spiritual and eternal blessings; and, on the

A. M. 4038. matter: for thy heart is not right in
A. D. 34. the sight of God.

22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, * if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.

23 For I perceive that thou art in the 'gall

* Dan. iv. 27; 2 Tim. ii. 25.—† Heb. xii. 15.—‡ Gen. xx. 7, 17;

other, undervaluing the gift of the Holy Ghost, and putting it on a level with the common gifts of nature and providence. Observe, reader, all the buying and selling of pardons and indulgences in the Church of Rome is the product of this same wicked thought, that the gift of God may be purchased with money; whereas the offer of divine grace is expressly made to all that will receive it, *without money and without price. Thou hast neither part—By purchase, nor lot—Given gratis, in this matter—This gift of God; nor any interest in the important spiritual blessings to which all these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit are subservient; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God—Otherwise thou wouldst think far more honourably of his Spirit than to form a mercenary scheme to traffic in it in this scandalous manner. Probably Peter discerned that Simon's heart was not right in the sight of God long before he 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 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 death, Phil. ii. 25–27; nor left so useful a fellow-labourer as Trophimus sick at Miletus, 2 Tim. iv. 20. Observe, reader, although we cannot infer from every thing that a man saith or doth amiss, that he is a hypocrite in the profession he makes of religion; yet, conduct like this of Simon is such a fundamental error as can by no means consist with a state of grace. His offering money for a spiritual gift was an incontestable evidence, 1st, That he was yet under the power of a worldly and carnal spirit; and, 2d, That he was yet a mere natural man, who received not the things of the Spirit of God. His heart, as Peter tells him, was not right, and we are as our hearts are: if they be not right, we are wrong; and, whatever our pretensions may be, our religion is vain, and will stand us in no stead on a death-bed, or at the day of judgment. Inquire, therefore, reader, whether thy heart be right in His sight who trieth the heart and the reins, to whom every heart is open, and who will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, and in particular will make manifest the counsels of the heart.*

Verses 22, 23. Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness—Be humbled and ashamed for what thou hast thought, said, and done; own thyself guilty in this matter, and be sorry for it; condemn thy way, and amend it; and be a new creature in Christ. And pray to God—He must pray that God would give

of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. A. M. 4038. A. D. 34.

24 Then answered Simon, and said, * Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

Exod. viii. 8; Num. xxi. 7; 1 Kings xiii. 6; Job xlii. 8; James v. 16.

him repentance, and pardon upon repentance. "Here is so incontestable an evidence of an unconverted sinner being exhorted to repentance and prayer, while he was known to be in that state, that it is astonishing the propriety of doing this should ever have been disputed; and one would think none could be so wild as to imagine faith in Christ was not included in that repentance which an apostle preaches to a baptized person as the way of obtaining forgiveness."—Doddridge. *If, perhaps, the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee—Without all doubt, if Simon had repented he would have been forgiven; and this dubious manner in which Peter speaks of his obtaining forgiveness, intimates, not that his repentance, if sincere, might possibly fail of acceptance, for that would have been contrary to the whole tenor of the gospel; but the doubt was, whether he would sincerely repent; whether, after the commission of a sin so nearly approaching the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, he could ever be brought to true repentance. For I perceive thou art in the gall of bitterness—That is, the most bitter gall. "Significat animi constitutionem perquam vitiosam, et talem, qualis sunt cibi felle corrupti." It signifies a state of mind very vicious, and like meats corrupted with gall.—Grotius. Odious to God, as that which is bitter as gall is to us; or plunged in that hateful pollution which must be bitterness and poison in the latter end. See note on Deut. xxix. 18; and Heb. xii. 15. And in the bond of iniquity—Held in the chains of thine own covetousness and carnality, and consequently in a state of base servitude; bound over to the judgment of God by the guilt of sin, and bound under the dominion of Satan by the power of sin, led captive by him at his will. The whole sentence expresses, in Peter's strong manner of speaking, how odious and wretched a creature Simon now appeared to him: and how much more odious must such a sinner be in the eyes of a holy God!*

Verse 24. Then answered Simon—Alarmed by the solemn admonition given him; and said—To the apostles; Pray ye to the Lord for me—If you indeed conceive my case to be so bad, extend your charity so far as to make your supplications to the Lord on my account; that none of these things, which ye have spoken, come upon me—He probably inferred, from what Peter had said, that some token of God's wrath would soon fall upon him, which he thus dreaded and deprecated. But there is reason to fear that this pretence of conviction and humiliation was used chiefly to prevent Peter and John from disgracing him among the body of Christians: for it is reasonable to suppose this conversation

A. M. 4038. 25 And they, when they had testified
A. D. 34. ed and preached the word of the Lord,
returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel
in many villages of the Samaritans.

26 ¶ And the angel of the Lord spake unto
Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south,
unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem
un'o Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose, and went: and behold, * a
man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority
under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who

* Zeph. iii. 10.

passed in private between them: and, perhaps,
Simon might have some hope, that, if the secret
were kept, he might reduce the people, when Peter
was gone, to their former subjection to him, notwith-
standing their conversion to Christianity.

Verse 25. *And when they had testified, and preached
the word of the Lord*—Had borne a solemn testi-
mony by word and deed to the truth of the gospel,
and confirmed what Philip had preached; they re-
turned to Jerusalem—To the other ten apostles,
having executed their commission, and performed
the errand on which they were sent; *and preached
the gospel*—As they went along; *in many villages
of the Samaritans*—Which lay in their way, doubt-
less confirming their doctrine by miracles, though
none are here recorded.

Verses 26–28. *And*—After the important affairs
above mentioned were despatched at Samaria, and a
church was established there, and supplied with
proper pastors and teachers; *the angel of the Lord
spake unto Philip*—Probably in a dream or vision
by night; *saying, Arise, and go toward the south*
—Though angels were not employed to preach the
gospel, they were often employed in carrying mes-
sages to those that preached it, for advice, direction,
and encouragement. And it gives us a very high
idea of the gospel, to see the ministers of it receiving
such immediate direction from celestial spirits, in
the particular discharge of their office. *Unto the
way from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert*—
There were two ways from Jerusalem unto Gaza;
one desert, the other through a more populous coun-
try. And Philip is directed in these words to go to
some part of the former, because there he would
find work to do. *And he arose and went*—Without
objection, or presuming to inquire into the errand
on which he was sent; *and behold, a man of Ethio-
pia*—Greek, *Αιθιοψ ευνηχος, an Ethiopian eunuch*.
The Hebrew word *כַּסֵּי*, which answers to that here
rendered *eunuch*, is sometimes very properly trans-
lated *an officer*: and chief officers were often an-
ciently called *eunuchs*, though not always literally
such; because such used to be chief ministers in
the eastern courts. *Of great authority*—*Δυναστης, a
grandee; under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians*
—It appears that Candace was a name common to
several of the queens who reigned in Meroe, a part of

had the charge of all her treasure, A. M. 4038.
and * had come to Jerusalem for to A. D. 34.
worship,

28 Was returning; and sitting in his chariot,
read Esaias the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near
and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard
him read the Prophet Esaias, and said, Under-
standest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some

† John xii. 20.

Ethiopia to the south of Egypt; *who had the charge
of all her treasure*—So great a trust did she repose in
him; *and had come to Jerusalem to worship*—Being
a proselyte to the Jewish religion, and as such hav-
ing renounced idolatry, and being brought over to
the worship of the God of Israel. This man was
then returning home, *and sitting in his chariot,
read Esaias*—It is probable his mind was deeply
impressed with devout and religious sentiments, in
consequence of his having attended the solemnities
of divine worship at one of the festivals at Jerusa-
lem, and that he was therefore thus employed in
reading the writings of this prophet, that he might
learn the will of God and his duty. God meets
those that remember him in his ways. It is good to
read, hear, and seek information even on a journey.
Why should we not redeem all our time?

Verses 29–31. *Then the Spirit*—By that secret
suggestion which inspired persons could distinguish
with certainty as divine revelation; *said to Philip,
Go near*—Now Philip shall know the reason of his
being sent into a desert; *join thyself to this chariot*
—Enter into conversation with the person who sits
in it, without fear of offending him, or exposing thy-
self to any inconvenience. *And Philip ran to him*
—Ran up to the chariot; *and heard him read*—For
he read aloud, both that his own mind might be
more deeply impressed with what he read, and that
his servants, who were near, might receive some
benefit by it. And Philip, being well acquainted
with the Holy Scriptures, soon perceived that the
book in which he read was that of the Prophet
Isaiah, and that the passage he was reading would
give him a very proper opportunity of entering into
discourse with him concerning Christ, and deliver-
ing to him that evangelical message with which he
was charged. He therefore took occasion to begin
the conversation from this circumstance, saying to
the eunuch, *Understandest thou what thou readest?*
—This question Philip puts to him, not by way of
reproach, but with a design to offer him his service,
and lead him into the true knowledge of the import-
ant prophecy which now engaged his attention.
Observe, what we read and hear of the word of God,
it highly concerns us to understand; especially
what we read and hear concerning Christ; and
therefore we should often ask ourselves whether

A. M. 4038. man should guide me? And he desired
A. D. 34. Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the Scripture which he read was this, * He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his gene-

* Isa. liii. 7, 8.

we understand it or not. Philip 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. *And he said, How can I—* The eunuch was so far from being offended at the freedom Philip took, that he mildly and respectfully said in reply, *How should I understand such obscure oracles as these, except some man should guide me—* Unless some person, better acquainted with the contents of them than I am, should throw that light upon them which I, who am so much a stranger to the Jewish affairs, must necessarily be destitute of. *And he desired Philip to come up and sit with him—* Inferring from the question he put, that he was better acquainted with these things than himself. Here we see a remarkable instance of the providence and grace of God. This great man had been at Jerusalem, where the apostles were preaching the Christian faith, and multitudes professing it, and yet there he had taken no notice of it, and made no inquiries after it; nay, it seems had slighted it, and turned his back upon it. Yet the grace of God pursues him, overtakes him in the desert, and there converts him. Thus God is often found of those that sought him not!

Verses 32, 33. *The place—* Η *περιοχη, the portion, or paragraph, of the Scripture which he read was, He was led, &c.*—These words were taken from Isa. liii. 8; where, that the prophet speaks of Christ, no Christian can reasonably doubt, there being scarce a verse in the whole chapter which is not by the Holy Ghost applied to Christ in the New Testament; the 1st verse, John xii. 38; the 3d, Mark ix. 12; the 4th, Mark viii. 17; the 5th, Mark xv. 28. And by reading this same chapter, many Jews, yea, and deists, have been converted. Some of them history records; but God knows them all. The passage here referred to is quoted according to the Septuagint version, which differs in some things from the original Hebrew. Grotius thinks the eunuch read it in Hebrew, having learned, from the many Jews that were in Ethiopia, both their religion and their language, and that Luke gives it to his readers in Greek, as being the language in which he wrote his history, and which he knew would be more generally understood. But, considering that the Septuagint version was made in Egypt, which was the country next adjoining to Ethiopia, and lay between it and Jerusalem, it is more probable that translation was most familiar to the eunuch, and

ration? for his life is taken from the
earth. A. M. 4038.
A. D. 34.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, * and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

* Luke xxiv. 27; Chap. xviii. 28.

therefore was now used by him. The greatest variation from the Hebrew here is, that what in it is, *He was taken from prison and from judgment, or, as the margin has it, He was taken away by distress and judgment;* that is, he was taken out of this life by oppression, violence, and a pretence of justice; is here read, *In his humiliation his judgment was taken away—* That is, he appeared so mean and despicable in the eyes of mankind, both Jews and Romans, that they denied him common justice, and, against all the rules of equity, condemned him, even while they declared him innocent. To take away a person's judgment is a proverbial phrase for oppressing him. The sense therefore is nearly the same with that of the Hebrew. But see the notes on Isa. liii. 7, 8; where the paragraph is explained at large.

Verses 34, 35. *The eunuch said, Of whom speaketh the prophet this—* He asks a very important question, a question necessary to be resolved, in order to the understanding of the prophecy; *of himself—* Does the prophet speak this of himself, in expectation of being treated as the other prophets were? or, does he speak it of some other man—In his own age, or in some age to come? Though the modern Jews will not allow it to be spoken of the Messiah, yet their ancient doctors interpreted it of him; and, perhaps, the eunuch knew this, and did partly understand the prophecy, and only proposed this question to draw on discourse with Philip. *Then Philip—* Doubtless, secretly adoring the divine providence, in giving him so fair an opportunity; *opened his mouth—* With an air of solemnity, proportionable to the importance of what he had to say; *and began at the same scripture—* In which Christ was so plainly described; *and preached to him Jesus—* ευηγγελισατο αυτω τον Ιησου, *preached to him glad tidings of Jesus, of whom, not Isaiah alone, but so many of the other prophets had spoken.* And after he had laid before him the predictions recorded in Scripture concerning the Messiah, he, doubtless, bore witness to the glorious accomplishment of them in Jesus of Nazareth, and gave him the history of those extraordinary facts which had lately happened, in confirmation of the gospel he taught. His noble hearer, in the mean time, we have reason to believe, hearkened attentively; and, it appears, not in vain. For though he saw no miracle performed, in evidence of the truth of Philip's doctrine, he found such a light-breaking in upon his mind

A. M. 4038. 36 And as they went on *their way*,
A. D. 34. they came unto a certain water: and
the eunuch said, See, *here is water*; ^b what doth
hinder me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, ^c If thou believest with
all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered
and said, ^d I believe that Jesus Christ is the
Son of God.

^b Chap. x. 47.—^c Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 16.—^d Matt.
xvi. 16; John vi. 69; ix. 35, 38; xi. 27; Chap. ix. 20; 1 John

from the view given him of the prophecies, and
such an inward conviction wrought in his spirit by
the divine influence, that he became a sincere con-
vert to the gospel.

Verses 36, 37. *And as they went on their way*—
Discoursing together of the person and sufferings
of Christ, and of the method of salvation by him;
they came to a certain water—For even the cir-
cumstances of the journey were under the direction
of God; and the eunuch, having learned what was
the rite of initiation which the great Prophet and
Sovereign of the church had appointed, and being
willing to embrace the first opportunity that Providence
offered of making a surrender of himself to
Christ, and of being received into the number of his
people; *said, Here is water; what doth hinder me
to be baptized?*—Why should I not, from this hour,
become one of the Christian community? Prob-
ably he had been circumcised; otherwise Cornelius
would not have been the first-fruits of the Gentiles.
Observe, reader, in the solemn dedicating of ourselves
to God, it is good to make haste, and not delay, for
the present time is the best time. Thus the psalmist,
*I made haste and delayed not to keep thy command-
ments*, Psa. cxix. 60; and thus the eunuch here: he
feared lest the good affections now working in him
should abate; and therefore was desirous immedi-
ately to bind his soul with the baptismal bonds unto
the Lord, that he might bring the matter to a good
issue. *And Philip said, If thou believest with all
thy heart, thou mayest*—That is, if thou believest
this doctrine which I have preached to thee concern-
ing Jesus; if thou receivest the record God has
given concerning him, and set to thy seal that it is
true; if thou not only assentest to the gospel truths
in thy understanding, but embracest gospel blessings
in thy affections, and consentest in thy will to obey
the gospel precepts; if thou indeed *believest with thy
heart unto righteousness*, thou art by that faith united
to Christ, and mayest, by baptism, be joined to his
church. *And he answered, I believe that Jesus Christ*
—Whom thou hast now been preaching to me; *is the
Son of God*—And the promised Messiah, who was
to be sent into the world for the salvation of lost sin-
ners. He was before a worshipper of the true God,
so that all he had now to do, in order to be a true
Christian, was thus to receive Christ Jesus the Lord.
In many ancient copies and versions this verse is
omitted; (see Dr. Mill on the place.) “Neverthe-
less,” says Beza, “God forbid I should think it

38 And he commanded the chariot ^{A. M. 4038.}
to stand still: and they went down ^{A. D. 34.}
both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch;
and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the
water, ^e the Spirit of the Lord caught away
Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and
he went on his way rejoicing.

iv. 15; v. 5, 13.—^e 1 Kings xviii. 12; 2 Kings ii. 16; Ezek.
iii. 12, 14.

ought to be expunged, since it contains such a con-
fession of faith as in the apostolic times was re-
quired of the adult, in order to their being admitted
to baptism.” Allowing it to be genuine, it fully
proves that Philip had opened to the eunuch the
doctrine of Christ’s divinity; and indeed, if he had
not done it, he must have given him a very imper-
fect account of the gospel.

Verse 38. *And he commanded the chariot to stand
still*—Namely, upon Philip’s declaring his satisfac-
tion in this profession of his faith in Christ, and
subjection to him, and readily consenting to receive
him as a fellow Christian. *And they went down
both*—Namely, out of the chariot; *into the water*—
Or rather, *to the water*, as εἰς τὴν ὕδαρ literally signi-
fies. For it is not certain that he was baptized by
immersion. This text neither affirms nor intimates
it. *And he baptized him*—Though Philip had very
lately been deceived in Simon Magus, and had ad-
mitted him to baptism, though he afterward appeared
to be no true convert, yet he did not therefore scruple
to baptize the eunuch immediately upon his
profession of faith, without putting him upon a
longer trial than was usual. *If some hypocrites, who
afterward prove a grief and scandal to us, crowd into
the church, yet we must not therefore make the
door of admission any straiter than Christ has made
it; they shall answer for their hypocrisy, and not we.*

Verse 39. *And when they were come up out of the
water*—Or, *from the water*, as ἐκ τῶ ὕδατος may
be properly rendered; *the Spirit of the Lord caught
away Philip*—Namely, in a miraculous manner,
probably transporting him, part of the way at least,
through the air; a thing which seems to have hap-
pened with respect to some of the prophets. See
1 Kings xviii. 12; 2 Kings ii. 16; Ezek. iii. 14.
That the eunuch saw him no more—This fact is as
surprising as the other parts of the story. One
would have expected that the eunuch should either
have stayed with Philip, or have taken him along
with him into his own country, especially as it
seems he might have been spared in these parts of
Palestine, where there were so many apostles, evan-
gelists, and other teachers of Christianity; and his
ministry was much needed in Ethiopia, where, at
this time, there were none; and where, recommended
by a person so high in power as the eunuch was, he
might probably have been remarkably useful in con-
verting the Ethiopians to the faith of the gospel.
But God ordered it otherwise, and took away Philip

A. M. 4038. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through, he preach-

ed in all the cities, till he came to A. M. 4038.
A. D. 34. Cesarea. A. D. 34.

so suddenly as not even to give him time to address an exhortation to the eunuch after his baptism, as it is probable he intended to do. His sudden departure, however, in so miraculous a way, was sufficient to make up the want of that exhortation, especially if we suppose that he was caught up and carried through the air in the eunuch's sight. It may not be improper to observe here, that the Alexandrian MS., and several other old copies, read it, Πνευμα αγιον επεσεν επι τον ευνεχον, αγγελος δε Κυριου ηρπασεν, *The Holy Spirit fell upon the eunuch, but an angel of the Lord snatched away Philip*: and certainly it is not improbable that God should communicate a large measure of his Spirit, and even some extraordinary gifts thereof, to such a person going into a country where the gospel was entirely unknown, and should thereby furnish him for the great work of preaching it there. *And he went on his way rejoicing*—His heart being full of thankfulness, that he had been favoured with the privilege of so important an interview with such a divinely-commissioned teacher, and highly-favoured servant of Christ, and that, after having received the gospel from his lips, he had seen such a miraculous confirmation of its truth in his sudden removal from his sight; a fact to which all his attendants were witnesses. He rejoiced also, 1st, That he himself was united to Christ, had an interest in him, and was thereby made a child of God, and an heir of eternal felicity and glory: and, 2d, That he had such good tidings to bring to his countrymen, and a prospect of bringing them also, by virtue of his interest among them, into fellowship with Christ; for he returned, not only a Christian, but a minister. And Eusebius assures us, (*Eccles. Hist.*, lib. ii. cap. 1.) that he planted a flourishing church in Ethiopia, a fact in which all the most ancient histories of that country agree.

Verse 40. *But Philip*—Quickly after he was sepa-

rated from the eunuch; *was found at Azotus*—Or Ashdod, a city that was more than thirty miles from Gaza. Probably none saw him from the time of his leaving the eunuch till he was there. *And passing through*—That part of the country; *he preached in all the cities*—Namely, Joppa, Lydda, Saron, and all the other cities along the coast of the Mediterranean sea; *till he came to Cesarea*—Namely, Cesarea in Palestine, a city far distant from Cesarea Philippi, (mentioned Matt. xvi. 13, where see the notes,) which was situate to the north of the tribe of Naphtali, and near the sources of Jordan. Wherever the word *Cesarea* occurs without *Philippi*, the former place is intended. It was anciently called *Stratonice*, or *Straton's Tower*, and was rebuilt by Herod the Great in honour of Augustus Cesar, and greatly enlarged and beautified with many fine edifices of polished marble; but the greatest and most beneficial of all his works here was the harbour, which he made equal in largeness to the Piræus at Athens. The beauty of this Cesarea, and the conveniences of its situation, were so great, that when the Romans reduced Judea into the form of a province, they made it the seat of their government, in preference even to Jerusalem itself. It appears that Philip settled here for some time, probably for life, for we find him long after this residing here with his four unmarried daughters, who were prophetesses, and entertaining Paul and his company many days at his house, when on their way to Jerusalem. See chap. xxi. 8, 9. It is likely, therefore, that his itinerant mission ended here. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that he still continued to preach the gospel to those Jews who were disposed to attend his ministry, and that he made, at least, some converts among them. He doubtless also performed the work of an evangelist in some other places in those parts.

CHAPTER IX.

(1.) *Saul, setting out for Damascus, with an intent to persecute the church there, is miraculously converted by our Lord's appearance to him on the way, 1-9. (2.) After some reluctance, Ananias baptizes him, 10-19. (3.) Saul immediately preaches Christ in the synagogues at Damascus, 20-22. (4.) The Jews attempt to murder him, and he narrowly escapes, 23-25. (5.) After three days he is, with some difficulty, admitted among the Christians at Jerusalem, 26-28. (6.) To escape the murderous fury of the Hellenist Jews, he retires to Tarsus, while the church greatly flourishes, 29-31. (7.) At Lydda Peter cures Eneas of a palsy, and at Joppa restores Dorcas to life, 32-43.*

A. M. 4039. AND *Saul,* yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the

disciples of the Lord, went unto the A. M. 4039.
A. D. 35. high-priest, A. D. 35.

* St. Paul's Day, epistle, verse 1 to verse 23.

* Chap. viii. 3; Gal. i. 13; 1 Tim. i. 13.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verses 1, 2. *And Saul, yet (eri, adhuc, hitherto, or =till) breathing out threatenings and slaughter*—This very emphatical expression refers to what is

related of Saul, chap. viii. 3; (where see the note;) and it shows that his zeal against the followers of Christ was so outrageous that he could be satisfied with nothing less than their utter destruction. It

A. M. 4039. 2 And desired of him letters to Da-
A. D. 35. mascus to the synagogues, that if he found any ¹ of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

3 And ^b as he journeyed, he came near Da-

¹ Gr. of the way, Chap. xix. 9, 23.—^b Chap. xxii.

shows too, that the Jews were now at liberty to put them to death; probably, as Macknight observes, "because between the removal of Pontius Pilate, and the accession of Herod Agrippa, in the second year of the Emperor Claudius, who gave him all the dominions of his grandfather, Herod the Great, there was no procurator in Judea to restrain their intemperate zeal." Saul, therefore, being thus freed from restraint, and at liberty to pursue his malicious design of endeavouring to effect their extirpation; *went to the high-priest*—Whom he knew to be much exasperated against them; and *desired of him letters to Damascus*—It is generally supposed that Caiaphas now filled the office of high-priest; and if so, as he was an inveterate enemy of Christ, and had a principal hand in his crucifixion, he would doubtless be glad to employ so active and bigoted a zealot as Saul in carrying on the persecution against them, which at this time was very violent and severe. *To the synagogues*—From this, and from verse 20th, where Paul is said to preach Christ at Damascus in the synagogues of the Jews, it appears there were more than one in that city, as there were also in divers other cities of the Gentiles. These synagogues, it seems, had a jurisdiction over their own members, in the exercise of which, however, they were sometimes directed, as on this occasion, by the high-priest and council at Jerusalem. At this time Damascus was full of Jews. Indeed, being the capital city of Syria, it generally abounded with them; so much so, that Josephus assures us ten thousand of them were once massacred there in one hour; and at another time, eighteen thousand with their wives and children. (Joseph. *Bell.*, lib. ii. cap. 20; and lib. vii. cap. 8.) Now in a place which so much abounded with Jews, it is very likely there would be some Christians. Probably, indeed, some of those whom persecution had driven from Jerusalem had taken refuge there, and by their zeal and diligence had been instrumental in making converts to the faith of Christ. If so, it must have exceedingly vexed Saul to find that his endeavours to extirpate Christianity only tended to spread it the more, and to increase the number of those who embraced it. This, of course, would the more inflame his rage against Christ's disciples, and excite him to make still greater efforts to destroy them, and exterminate their religion. Be this as it may, understanding that there were Christians at Damascus, although it was at a great distance from Jerusalem, he resolved to go thither, with his new commission from the high-priest; *that if he found any there of this way*—Any of the Christian community; *whether they were men*

and suddenly there shined ^{A. M. 4039.}
^{A. D. 35.} round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, ^c why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the

6; xxvi. 12; 1 Cor. xv. 8.—^c Matt. xxv. 40, &c.

or women—For he and his employers spared no age or sex; *he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem*—To be proceeded against in the severest manner by the sanhedrim. He was not content with having driven many of them into exile, and with having imprisoned others, (chap. viii. 3,) but he thirsted for their blood. And, as he was joined by assistants equally bigoted and furious with himself, the news of their coming reached Damascus before they arrived, and greatly terrified the saints, verses 14, 21. The Lord, however, marvellously interposed for their deliverance, and probably in answer to their united and fervent prayers; but in a way which, it is likely, none of them had thought of.

Verses 3-5. *And as he journeyed*—Full of wrath against the Lord's disciples; and *came near to Damascus, suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven*—This, doubtless, was occasioned by the rays of glory which darted from our Lord's body. Some have thought that Saul, being a learned Jew, would easily know this to be the *Shekinah*, or visible token of the divine presence; and that he therefore cried out, *Who art thou, Lord?*—Though he saw no human form. But the question certainly rather implies, that he did not know who or what he was who spoke to him: and it is plain, from chap. xxii. 14, and other texts, that he did see, amidst this glory, a human form, which yet he might not at first imagine to be that of Jesus, though Stephen had, probably in his hearing, declared that he saw a vision of this kind. See chap. vii. 55, 56. *And he fell to the earth*—As did also all those that journeyed with him, according to the relation which he himself gives, chap. xxvi. 14. They all fell prostrate from fear or reverence, supposing the supernatural light which they saw to be an indication of the appearance of some divine person or angel. Thus Saul, when his rage is come to the highest, 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 this also the suddenly-constituted apostle was guarded against the grand snare in which novices are apt to fall, namely, that of pride and high-mindedness. *And*—To his great astonishment; *he heard a voice*—Severe, yet full of grace; *saying unto him*—In the Hebrew language, (chap. xxvi. 14,) *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*—The persecutions of Christ's disciples are here represented as the persecutions of Christ himself; because of their union with him by the Holy Spirit, which renders them members of his body; and because of that sympathy which he has with them under all their sufferings. See Heb. iv. 15;

A. M. 4039. Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou per-
A. D. 35. secutest. ^d It is hard for thee to kick
against the pricks.

6 And he, trembling and astonished, said,
Lord, ^e what wilt thou have me to do? And
the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into
the city, and it shall be told thee what thou
must do.

^d Chap. v. 39.—^e Luke iii. 10; Chap. ii. 37; xvi. 30.

Isa. lxiii. 9. *And he said, Who art thou, Lord?—*
And what is it that I have done against thee? *And*
the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest—
Who can describe the amazement and terror which
must have seized Saul on hearing these words? The
name of Jesus was not unknown to him; his heart
had risen at it in anger and resentment many a time;
and gladly would he have buried it in oblivion. He
knew it was the name that he persecuted; but little
did he expect to hear it from heaven, or from the
midst of such glory as now shone round about him.
*It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks—*Thou
wilt find it hard for thee to accomplish thy malicious
designs against me; nay, all thy fury can only wound
thyself, without being able to do me or my cause
any real injury. For, as Dr. Hammond rightly ob-
serves, this is a proverbial expression, signifying
that impotent rage which hurts one's self, and not
the person or thing against which it is levelled.

Verse 6. *And, trembling and astonished—*To find
that he whom he had so often affronted and de-
spised, yea, blasphemously and virulently opposed,
even Jesus of Nazareth, was such a glorious and
powerful person; and yet, that instead of destroy-
ing him immediately, as he might have easily done,
he had condescended thus compassionately to ex-
postulate with him, he was overwhelmed with con-
fusion and dismay; and in the deepest self-abase-
ment and contrition, *said, Lord, what wilt thou*
*have me to do—*What is thy will concerning me?
Can mercy be extended to me? If so, I am pre-
pared for any submission, self-denial, labour, or
hardship which may be required of me. These
were the first words that grace spoke in and by
Saul; and with these began his spiritual life. In
these he manifested a serious desire to be instructed
by Christ in his duty, and a sincere resignation
of himself to Christ's conduct and government. *And*
*the Lord said, Arise, and go into the city, &c.—*To
which thou art now near; *and it shall be told thee*
*what thou must do—*Thou shalt be instructed in all
things which I have appointed concerning thee. It
was encouragement enough to Saul, to have further
instruction promised him. But, 1st, He must not
have it yet: it shall be told him by and by what he
must do: but for the present he must pause upon
what has been already said to him; and must im-
prove that: let him consider a while what he has
done in persecuting Christ and his people, and be
deeply humbled for that, and then he shall be told
what he has further to do. 2d, He must not have

7 And ^f the men which journeyed A. M. 4039
with him stood speechless, hearing a A. D. 35.
voice, but seeing no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his
eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led
him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and
neither did eat nor drink.

^f Dan. x. 7; Chap. xxii. 9; xxvi. 13.

further instructions in this way, by a voice from
heaven, for it is what he cannot bear. He trembles
and is astonished; he shall be told, therefore, what
he must do, by a man like himself, whose terror
shall not make him afraid. Observe, Christ declares
his mind to his people by degrees; and both what
he doth, and what he would have them do, though
they know not now, they shall know hereafter.

Verse 7. *And the men which journeyed with him*
—Who at first fell to the ground, as Saul did: upon
recovering themselves and rising up; *stood speech-*
*less—*With astonishment and terror; *hearing a*
*voice—*ἄκροτες μὲν τῆς φωνῆς, *hearing indeed the*
voice; namely, the sound of that voice which had
spoken to Saul; but without distinctly understand-
ing the sense of what was said. This seems the
most probable way of reconciling this with chap.
xxii. 9; and it is confirmed by John xii. 29; where
we learn that some present, when the voice from
heaven came to Christ, took it for thunder. But
*seeing no man—*Nor perceiving who it was that had
been speaking to Saul. So it was with the men
who were with Daniel, when he saw the vision,
mentioned Dan. x. 7; and the heathen, however
they came by the notion, thought their deities often
rendered themselves visible to one only, in a com-
pany consisting of many.

Verses 8, 9. *And Saul arose from the earth—*
When Christ bade him; but probably not without
help, the vision having made him faint and weak,
like Daniel; when, upon receiving a vision, *no*
strength remained in him, Dan. x. 16, 17. And
*when his eyes were open, he saw no man—*He was
incapable of discerning objects; for his nerves had
been so affected with the glory of that light which
had shone from the body of Jesus, that he had lost
the power of sight, chap. xxii. 11; *but they—*That
were with him; *led him by the hand—*For as they
had not looked so earnestly and steadfastly, as Saul
had done, on the glorious light wherewith the per-
son of Christ was surrounded, but had lain with
their faces on the ground, their eye-sight remained.
*And he was three days without sight—*By scales
growing over his eyes, not only to intimate to him
the blindness of the state he had been in, but to im-
press him also with a deeper sense of the almighty
power of Christ, and to turn his thoughts inward,
while he was rendered less capable of conversing
with external objects. This was, likewise, a mani-
fest token to others, of what had happened to him
in his journey; and ought to have humbled and

A. M. 4039. 10 ¶ And there was a certain disci-
A. D. 35. ple at Damascus, ^g named Ananias;
and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias.
And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul ^h of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth,

12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias, coming in, and putting *his* hand

^g Chap. xxii. 12.—^h Chapter xxi. 39; xxii. 3.—ⁱ Verse 1. ^j Verse 21; Chap. vii. 59; xxii. 16; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 22.

convinced those bigoted Jews, to whom he had been sent from the sanhedrim. *And neither did eat nor drink*—This his long-continued fasting was a natural expression of his bitter grief, for having opposed the gospel, and persecuted the disciples of Jesus. With fasting he joined fervent and often-repeated prayer, perhaps, to Jesus; in which he made confession of his sin in persecuting him, and earnest supplication for pardon; all which, being certain signs of his repentance, they are here (verse 11) mentioned as such. During his three days' blindness and fasting, Saul was instructed by visions and revelations from the Lord, agreeably to what was promised him, *that in Damascus it should be told him what he was to do*. One vision of this kind is expressly mentioned, in which the restoration of his sight by Ananias was foretold to him. See verse 12. Here it is natural to reflect, that the situation in which Saul now lay, was indeed apparently very melancholy; his sight being lost, his appetite for food gone, and his whole soul wrapt up in deep astonishment, or melted in deep contrition and remorse. But, though he thus *sowed in tears*, he was soon to *reap in joy*. Light and gladness were sown for him. He came out of the furnace refined as gold and silver; and these three dark and dismal days are, no doubt, recollected by him in the heavenly world, as the era from whence he dates the first beamings of that divine light in which he now dwells. Let us never be afraid of the pangs of that *godly sorrow*, which, *working repentance to salvation*, *not to be repented of*, will soon be ten thousand times overbalanced by that *exceeding weight of glory*, and those full transports of eternal joy, for which it will prepare the soul. See Doddridge.

Verses 10-12. *And there was a disciple named Ananias*—This Ananias, before his conversion to Christianity, had lived so conformably to the law, that he was much esteemed by all the Jews who dwelt at Damascus, chap. xxii. 12. And after his conversion, his piety being still more conspicuous, he was a person of great note among the brethren also. To him Jesus appeared in a vision on the third day of Saul's fast, and ordered him to go into the house of Judas, and inquire for Saul of Tarsus; of whom he needed no longer be afraid, because he was praying, not as he had done formerly, while a

on him, that he might receive his ^{A. M. 4039.}
^{A. D. 35.} sight.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, ⁱ how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests, to bind all ^k that call on thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for ^l he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my

ⁱ Chap. xiii. 2; xxii. 21; xxvi. 17; Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 10; Gal. i. 15; Eph. iii. 7, 8; 1 Tim. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11.

Pharisee, in self-confidence and pride, but in humiliation, contrition, and deep penitence, namely, for the pardon of his sin in persecuting the saints; and because Ananias himself had been shown to him in a vision, as sent to cure his sight. *He hath seen in a vision, &c.*—This vision which Saul had may be considered, 1st, As an immediate answer to his prayer, and the keeping up that communion with God which he had entered into by prayer. He had in prayer spread the misery of his case before God, and God presently manifests himself, and the kind intentions of his grace to him. 2d, As designed to raise his expectations, and make Ananias's coming more welcome: he would readily receive him as a messenger from God, since he was told beforehand in vision, that such a one would come to him.

Verses 13, 14. *Then Ananias*—Astonished to hear such a name mentioned in such a connection; *answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man*—What a malicious enemy he is to thy gospel: all those who were scattered upon the late persecution, many of whom are come to Damascus, *tell how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem*—That he was the most virulent, violent persecutor of all the rest; what havoc he has made of the church: nay, and his errand to Damascus at this time is to persecute us Christians; for *here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name*—To treat thy disciples as the worst of criminals. Now, why doth Ananias thus object? Does he say, Therefore I do not owe him so much service? Why should I do him a kindness, who has designed and done us so much unkindness? No, Christ had taught him another lesson, namely, to render good for evil, blessing for cursing, and to pray for persecutors. But if he be such a persecutor of Christians, 1st, Will it be safe for Ananias to go to him? Will he not by so doing throw himself like a lamb into the mouth of a lion? And if he thus bring himself into trouble, will he not be justly blamed for his indiscretion? 2d, Will it be to any purpose to go to him? Can such a hard heart be ever softened? or such an Ethiopian ever change his skin?

Verses 15, 16. *But the Lord said, Go thy way*—Do not tell me how bad he has been; I know it well; but go with all speed, and execute that message of mercy with which I have charged thee; for

A. M. 4039. name before ^a the Gentiles, and
A. D. 35. ^a kings, and the children of Is-
rael.

16 For ^o I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

17 ^p And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house: and ^q putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord (*even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou*

^a Romans i. 5; xi. 13; Gal. ii. 7, 8.—^a Chapter xxv. 22, 23; xxvi. 1, &c.—^q Chap. xx. 23; xxi. 11; 2 Cor. xi. 23.

—How great and aggravated soever his former transgressions may have been, I assure thee he is a *chosen vessel*—Or instrument; *unto me, to bear my name*—That is, to testify of me, and bear witness of my truth; *before the Gentiles*—*ἔθνη* *ἔθνων*, before nations, namely, heathen nations; and *kings*—King Agrippa and Cesar himself; and *the children of Israel*—To thousands of whom, as well in the Gentile countries as in Judea, he shall testify the gospel of my grace. Beza justly observes, that an instrument of building, agriculture, &c., is often, in Greek, called *σκευος*, here rendered *vessel*, because in him the gospel treasure was to be lodged, in order to the conveyance of it to many; and a *chosen vessel*, because he was destined for eminent services, for which, doubtless, some persons are chosen and set apart from their mother's womb, as Paul says he was, Gal. i. 15. *For I will show him how great things he must suffer*—He that hath been a persecutor, shall be himself persecuted. Christ's saying he would show him this, was intended to signify his giving him notice of these sufferings beforehand, that they might be no surprise to him. Observe, reader, those that bear Christ's name must expect to bear the cross for his name; and those that do most for Christ are often called to suffer most for him. Saul, that was designed for eminent services, was also designed for eminent sufferings.

Verses 17–19. *And Ananias went his way*—With all readiness and joy undertook the message, not presuming to object any further; and *entered into the house*—To which he had been so particularly directed; and *putting his hands on him*—According to Christ's direction, Mark xvi. 18; *said, Brother Saul*—So he terms him, because he was made a partaker of the grace of God, though not yet baptized; and his readiness to own Saul as a brother intimated to him God's readiness to own him as a son, though he had been a blasphemer of God, and a persecutor of his children. *The Lord, even Jesus*—That same Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way—And convinced thee of thy sin in persecuting him; *hath sent me*—To thee, to comfort thee: his light struck thee blind, but he hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight—For his design was not ultimately to blind the eyes of thy body, but to open the eyes of thy soul; and that thou mightest be filled with the Holy Ghost—Which shall be poured out upon thee, not only in his sanctifying graces, but in his miraculous gifts, before I leave this place. See

camest) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and ^r be filled with the Holy Ghost. A. M. 4039. A. D. 35.

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. ^s Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

^p Chap. xxii. 12, 13.—^q Chap. viii. 17.—^r Chap. ii. 4; iv. 31; viii. 17; xiii. 52.—^s Chap. xxvi. 20.

a further account of what passed between Ananias and Saul on this occasion, Acts xxii. 14–16. *And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales*—*ὄσσει λεπίδες*, something like scales, an emblem of the darkness and prejudice which before had veiled his eyes; and their falling off intimated the clear views of divine things which he should henceforth enjoy. *And he received his sight forthwith*—That is, immediately on the scales falling from his eyes: the cure was sudden, to show that it was miraculous. *And he arose and was baptized*—And thereby submitted himself to the government of Christ, and cast himself upon his grace. Saul is now a disciple of Christ, and not only ceases to oppose him, but devotes himself entirely to his service and honour. Happy change! a change for which he himself, and myriads of immortal beings, will bless God through the never-ending ages of eternity. *And when he had received meat, he was strengthened*—Recovered that bodily strength which had been impaired by his long fast, as well as by what had happened to him in the way; and that strength it was his immediate care to employ in the service of his new Master, now associating with the disciples at Damascus, whom he had come to persecute. In this miraculous manner was Saul, in the very height of his rage against the saints, converted, and made an apostle of Jesus Christ, and called to preach that very faith which he had been so zealous to destroy. Luke has not mentioned any date by which we can with certainty fix either Saul's age at his conversion, or the particular year in which that remarkable event took place; nevertheless, from some circumstances mentioned in his history, learned men have gathered that it happened about the end of the third year after the death of Christ, or the beginning of the fourth, and when Saul was about thirty-four years of age. It may not be improper to observe here, that this conversion of Saul "added great lustre to the evidence of Christ's resurrection from the dead. He had persecuted all who preached that miracle; wherefore, when he himself went over to the persecuted party, and published Christ's resurrection with greater earnestness and diligence than any of them, every impartial person must have been sensible that such an alteration of sentiment and conduct, in a person of Saul's good sense, learning, and zeal, and that at the very time he was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disci-

A. M. 4039. 20 And straightway he preached
A. D. 35. Christ in the synagogues, [†] that he is
the Son of God.

21 But all that heard *him* were amazed, and
said, [‡] Is not this he that destroyed them which
called on this name in Jerusalem, and came
hither for that intent, that he might bring them
bound unto the chief priests?

22 But Saul increased the more in strength,
[‡] and confounded the Jews which dwelt at

[†] Chap. viii. 37.—[‡] Chapter viii. 3; Verse 1; Gal. i. 13, 23.
[‡] Chap. xviii. 28.

ples of the Lord, could not possibly have happened, unless he had actually received that unquestionable evidence of Christ's resurrection from the dead, which he affirmed had been given him, by Christ's appearing to him personally as he went to Damascus, and by conferring upon him the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is true, the appearing of Jesus might seem to many an improbable story; yet, as by the miracles which Saul performed, he gave convincing proofs that Christ had bestowed on him the gift of the Holy Ghost, no reasonable person, after that, could doubt of his having appeared to him, as Saul constantly affirmed."—Macknight.

Verses 20-22. *And straightway*—That is, immediately after his conversion; *he preached Christ in the synagogues*—Some writers have given it as their opinion, (see Dr. Wells on the place, and *Script. Geog.*, vol. iii. p. 375,) that as soon as Saul had strength to go anywhere abroad, he retired into the desert of Arabia, and there was favoured with a full revelation of Christianity, and spent some considerable time in devotion; and that after this he returned to Damascus and preached, which they argue from Gal. i. 16, 17. But this opinion seems inconsistent with what is here said of his preaching, *εὐθὺς, immediately*. It seems, therefore, probable, that by his going into Arabia, to which Damascus now belonged, we are to understand his making excursions from that city into the neighbouring parts of that country, which he might do, perhaps, between the time in which he began to preach in Damascus, and his quitting it, after repeated labours there, to go to Jerusalem. *That he is the Son of God*—Foretold Psa. ii.; which he knew and proved Christ to be by incontestable arguments. *But all that heard him were amazed*—As well they might be; and *said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name*—And now doth he call on this name himself, and persuade others to call upon it, and strengthen the hands of those that do! Nay, and did he not come hither for that intent—To seize all the Christians he could find; and bring them bound to the chief priests?—Who would have thought then that he should preach Christ as he doth? No doubt this was looked upon by many to be, what indeed it was, a great confirmation of the truth of Christianity, that a person who had been such a notorious persecutor of it, should come on a sudden to be such an intelli-

Damascus, proving that this is very ^{A. M. 4039.}
Christ. ^{A. D. 35}

23 ¶ And after that many days ^{A. D. 37.}
were fulfilled, [‡] the Jews took counsel
to kill him.

24 [‡] But their laying await was known of
Saul. And they watched the gates day and
night to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night, and
[‡] let *him* down by the wall in a basket.

[‡] Chapter xxiii. 12; xxv. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 26.—[‡] 2 Cor. xi. 32.
[‡] Josh. ii. 15; 1 Sam. xix. 12.

gent and strenuous preacher of it. This miracle upon the mind of such a man outshone the miracles upon men's bodies, and the giving Saul such another heart was more than giving men to speak with other tongues. *But Saul increased the more in strength* Became more intimately acquainted with the gospel of Christ, and his pious affections became more strong, his faith and hope firm, and his love to Christ and his disciples, and to all mankind, more fervent. He also became more bold and resolute in the defence of the gospel: *and confounded the unbelieving Jews, proving that this Jesus of Nazareth is the very Christ*—The true Messiah, the Son of God. He answered their objections to the satisfaction of all indifferent persons, and pressed them with arguments to which they could make no reply. And we can have no reason to doubt that he was instrumental in converting many to the faith of Christ, and therefore of building up the church at Damascus, which he had come thither to destroy.

Verses 23-25. *And after many days were fulfilled*—In which several events took place, which are elsewhere hinted at; and particularly after he had made an excursion into Arabia, as is mentioned Gal. i. 16-18, probably to spread the gospel there, or, as some suppose, that he might have opportunity, in privacy and retirement, for studying the Jewish Scriptures more carefully than he had done, by the help of the new light which had been bestowed on him, and for prayer and meditation, and attending to such further revelations as Christ should be pleased to make to him; and after he had returned again to Damascus, *the Jews took counsel to kill him*—Finding it impossible to answer his arguments, or to damp his zeal, they resolved to silence him by putting an end to his life. Here we cannot but reflect on the astonishing malignity and obstinacy of these blinded Jews! How amazing it is, that when so great a persecutor of the Christians was, by a voice and appearance from heaven, converted to Christianity, they should be so far from following his example, that they should attempt even to take away his life! In this design they were assisted by the governor of the city, under Aretas, king of Arabia, who, after having been conquered by the Romans under Pompey, had by some means got possession of it. This governor guarded the city night and day with the greatest strictness, persons being appointed to keep watch at

A. M. 4041. 26 ¶ And ^b when Saul was come to A. D. 37. Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27 ^c But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, ^d and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

^b Chap. xxiii. 17; Galatians i. 17, 18.—^c Chap. iv. 36; xiii. 2. ^d Verses 20, 22.

all the gates to prevent his escaping; and the Jews, in the mean time, lying in wait to seize and murder him. Their designs, however, were known to Saul, God graciously discovering them to him, so that he kept himself concealed, and gave them no opportunity of executing their purpose. *Then the disciples*—Who were in Damascus, anxious to preserve a life of so much value; *took him by night*—When they were not observed, either by the Jews or the governor's garrison; *and let him down by the wall in a basket*—As Rahab did the spies, Josh. ii. 15; and Michal did David, 1 Sam. xix. 12; the providence of God directing and assisting them in this undertaking, so that, as he himself says, (2 Cor. xi. 32, 33,) *he escaped out of their hands.*

Verses 26-30. *And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, &c.*—It must be observed here, that the history of Paul's preaching at Damascus, going into Arabia, and visiting Jerusalem, is somewhat intricate, and interpreters differ much about it. But the series of it seems most probably to be as Dr. Whitby has stated it; namely, 1st, That, "after his conversion, he constantly preached in the synagogues of Damascus, that Jesus was the Son of God. 2d, That, going thence into Arabia, between two and three years after, he returned to Damascus, (Gal. i. 17,) of which journey, however, Luke, not being with him, gives no account. 3d, That, at his return, being increased in wisdom and strength, he continued many days in Damascus, proving that Jesus was the Christ. 4th, That, after three years, escaping from Damascus, he came to Jerusalem, and was by Barnabas brought to the apostles Peter and James, and continued there fifteen days, Gal. i. 18, 19. 5th, There Christ appeared to him in a vision; commanding him to depart out of Jerusalem; and he accordingly went thence to Cesarea Philippi in Cælo-Syria, and to Tarsus in Cilicia, chap. ix. 30; Gal. i. 21."

He assayed to join himself to the disciples—The despised, persecuted followers of Jesus, who were now in his eyes the excellent of the earth, and with whom he desired to be united in Christian fellowship. *But they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he*—Who had signalized himself so much by his rage against the church; *was indeed a disciple*—But suspected that his professing to be such was a mere artifice whereby he endeavoured to insinuate himself into their confidence, in order that he might thus have it in his power to detect and ruin a

28 And ^e he was with them coming A. M. 4041. in and going out at Jerusalem. A. D. 37.

29 And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: ^f but they went about to slay him.

30 *Which* when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

^e Galatians i. 18.—^f Chapter vi. 1; xi. 20.—^g Verse 23; 2 Cor. xi. 26.

great number of them. It may seem strange that so remarkable an event as Saul's conversion should be concealed so long from the Christians at Jerusalem; but it is to be considered, that there were not then such conveniences of correspondence between one place and another as we now have, and the war then subsisting between Herod Antipas and Aretas, (Jos. Antiq., xviii. 5,) might have interrupted that between Damascus and Jerusalem. Now might Paul be tempted to think himself in an ill case, when the Jews had abandoned and persecuted him on the one hand, and the Christians, on the other, would not receive and entertain him. *But Barnabas took him*—Probably having been informed of his conversion by Ananias, or some of the brethren of Damascus; *and brought him to the apostles*—Namely, to Peter and James, the rest, it seems, being then absent from Jerusalem, for Paul himself tells us, (Gal. i. 19,) that, on his going to Jerusalem at this time, he saw no other of the apostles but these two. *And declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way*—To Damascus, and that he had spoken to him in a manner that had conquered all his former prejudices against the gospel; *and how*—In consequence of the change which was then made in his views, and in his heart; *he had preached boldly at Damascus*—Even at the apparent hazard of his life. So that he gave sufficient proof that he was a new creature, changed in principle and practice. *And he was with them*—With the Christians, who, on receiving such information from Barnabas, gladly admitted him into communion with them, and even into their most intimate friendship, so that he was *coming in and going out among them*—That is, frequently conversing and associating with them, for fifteen days, Gal. i. 18. *And he spake boldly in the name of Jesus*—Even in Jerusalem, and that not only to such Jews as were natives of Judea; *but disputed against the Grecians*—Or Hellenists, namely, the foreign Jews, who used the Greek language, and came out of other parts to worship at Jerusalem. For Saul seems to have earnestly desired that they might carry along with them the knowledge of Christ into their own countries. *But they went about to slay him*—As they did Stephen, when they could not resist the Spirit by which he spake: so enraged were they at this unexpected opposition from one, on whose zeal for the Jewish religion, and against Christianity, they had had so great a dependance. *Which when the*

A. M. 4041. 31 ^b Then had the churches rest
A. D. 37. throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and
Samaria, and were edified : and walking in the
fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy
Ghost, were multiplied.

A. M. 4042. 32 ¶ And it came to pass, as Peter
A. D. 38. passed ⁱ throughout all *quarters*, he
came down also to the saints which dwelt at
Lydda.

^b Chap. viii. 1.—ⁱ Chap. viii. 14.—^h Chap. iii. 6.

brethren knew—Remembering how the putting Stephen to death, upon his disputing with the Hellenists, had been the beginning of a sore persecution, and being afraid of seeing such a tragedy acted over again, they hastened Paul out of the way; *they brought him down to Cesarea*—Namely, Cesarea Philippi, (for he went through the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and therefore went by land, Gal. i. 21,) and from thence sent him forth—Doubtless with proper recommendations; to *Tarsus*—The capital of Cilicia, and his native place, where they hoped he might proceed in his work with more safety than at Jerusalem, and, perhaps, might meet with protection, and some support from his relations and friends. Yet it was also by direction from heaven, as he himself tells us, (chap. xxii. 17, 18,) that he left Jerusalem at this time, Christ ordering him to go out of it quickly, because he must be sent to the Gentiles. Observe, reader, those by whom God has work to do, shall be protected from all the designs of their enemies against them till it be done; for Christ's witnesses cannot be slain till they have finished their testimony.

Verse 31. *Then had the churches*—The whole body of Christian believers, with all their congregations, wherever they were dispersed; *throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, rest*—*Ειρήνη*, peace; their bitterest persecutor being converted. So some. But the peace they now enjoyed, Dr. Doddridge, with many others, thinks, "is by no means to be ascribed merely or chiefly to Saul's conversion, who, though a great zealot, was but one young man, and whose personal danger proves the persecution, in some measure, to have continued, at least, three years after it. The period spoken of, therefore, seems to be that which commenced at, or quickly after, his setting out for Cilicia; and, as Dr. Lardner observes, this repose of the Christians might be occasioned by the general alarm which was given to the Jews, when Petronius, by the order of Caligula, attempted to bring the statue of that emperor among them, and set it up in the holy of holies; a horrid profanation, which the whole people deprecated with the greatest concern, in the most solicitous and affectionate manner. How long this peace, or rest, continued, we do not certainly know: probably till Herod interrupted it, as we shall see, chap. xii. *And were edified*—In faith and holiness. The word *οικοδομειναι*, thus rendered, is a figurative expression, properly a term of architecture, signifying the erecting or constructing the whole superstructure of a build-

33 And there he found a certain ^{A. M. 4042.}
^{A. D. 38.} man named Eneas, which had kept
his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34 And Peter said unto him, Eneas, ^h Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.

35 And all that dwelt in Lydda and ¹ Saron saw him, and ^m turned to the Lord.

16; iv. 10.—¹ 1 Chron. v. 16.—^m Chap. xi. 21.

ing upon a foundation. In this place it must signify, by analogy, that the churches were further instructed in the great truths of the gospel, and advanced in all the branches of piety and virtue; *and walking*—That is, speaking and acting; *in the fear of the Lord*—That is, under the influence of that principle; *and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost*—In the consolations afforded by his agency; *were multiplied*—By an accession of new members, whereby the damage sustained in the late persecution was abundantly repaired.

Verses 32-35. *And as Peter passed through all quarters*—Where the disciples that were dispersed had planted churches; *he came to the saints that were at Lydda*—A town of Phœnicia, situated in the tribe of Ephraim, 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; *and there*—The providence of God so ordering it, for the greater confirmation of the gospel; *he found a certain man named Eneas*—His name is mentioned for the greater assurance of the fact here recorded; *which had kept his bed eight years*—In so deplorable a state as to be quite incapable of rising from it, or any way helpful to himself, because of the palsy wherewith he was afflicted; *and Peter*—Being moved with compassion for him, and concerned to relieve his misery, as well as to confirm the gospel which he preached, said, *Eneas, Jesus Christ*—In whose name I preach and act, *maketh thee whole*—Operates while I now speak to strengthen and restore thy weakened frame. The great difference there is between the manner in which this miracle is wrought by Peter, and that in which Christ performed his works of divine power and goodness, is very observable; and the different characters of the *servant* and the *Son, the creature* and the *God*, are strikingly apparent. *Arise, and make thy bed*—Depending entirely upon his almighty agency. *And he arose immediately*—The palsy instantly leaving him, and the disabled man being all at once strengthened. It deserves notice here, also, that no faith on the part of the person to be healed was required; and the like is observable in many other cases, where persons, perhaps ignorant of Christ, were surprised with an unexpected cure. But where persons petitioned themselves for a cure, a declaration of their faith was often required, that none might be encouraged to try experiments out of curiosity, in a manner which would have been very indecent, and have tended to many bad consequences. *And all that*

A. M. 4042. 36 ¶ Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called ¹ Dorcas; this woman was full ² of good works and alms-deeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in ³ an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, de-

siring *him* that he would not ² delay to come to them. A. M. 4042. A. D. 38.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

40 But Peter ² put them all forth, and ⁴ kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body, ⁵ said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

¹ Or, *Doe*, or, *Roe*.—² 1 Tim. ii. 10; Tit. iii. 8.—³ Chap. i. 13.

⁴ Or, *be grieved*.—⁵ Matt. ix. 25.—⁶ Chap. vii. 60.—⁷ Mark v. 41, 42; John xi. 43.

dwelt in Lydda and Saron—That is, many of the inhabitants of those places; *turned to the Lord*—That is, did so as soon as they saw him restored to health and strength, whom they before knew to be weak and helpless, and when they had had an opportunity of being informed in the particulars of so unparalleled a fact.

Verses 36–38. *There was at Joppa*—A noted seaport in the neighbourhood, lying on the Mediterranean sea, about forty miles from Jerusalem, and the nearest maritime town to it. It is mentioned in the Old Testament by the name of *Japho*, (see Josh. xix. 46.) and was the place to which the materials for building Solomon's temple were brought in floats by sea, and carried from thence by land to Jerusalem. It was here that Jonah took ship for Tarshish, (Jonah i. 3,) and, as it lay between Azotus and Caesarea, it was probably one of the cities where Philip preached the gospel in his progress. There are still some remains of it under the name of Jaffa. *A certain disciple, named Tabitha, by interpretation, Dorcas*—She was probably a Hellenist Jewess, 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. These circumstances of places and persons are recorded to evidence the certainty of the history. *This woman was full of good works and alms-deeds*—Which upon all proper occasions she performed; thus showing her faith by her works. *And it came to pass in those days*—While Peter was at Lydda; *that she was sick and died*—Removed by Divine Providence in the midst of her usefulness, probably to give Peter occasion, by another and still more remarkable miracle than that just mentioned, of confirming the gospel, and awakening men's attention to it; *whom, when they had washed*—According to the custom prevailing among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins; and still in use among us; *they laid her in an upper chamber*—In her grave-clothes. *And as Lydda was nigh to Joppa*—Being only six miles distant; *and the disciples had heard that Peter was there*—And that he had lately raised Eneas by a miracle from a bed of affliction; *they sent two men*—Two, to render

the message more solemn and respectful; *desiring that he would not delay to come*—They do not mention the reason for which they desired his coming. But it is probable that it was not merely that he might give them advice and comfort in their great sorrow for the loss of so good and useful a woman: it is likely they had also some expectation of his restoring her to life: which, if they had, it was certainly a remarkable instance of the greatness of their faith, as it does not appear that any of the apostles had, before this, raised any one from the dead. Were we to have been judges, perhaps we should have thought it better that Stephen should have been raised than Dorcas; but it is our happiness and duty to submit our reasonings on what we think fittest and best, to the infinitely wiser determination of Providence.

Verses 39–41. *Then Peter arose and went with them*—Doubtless God inclined him so to do, intending to work an extraordinary miracle by him, for the manifestation of his truth and glory. *And when he was come*—To Tabitha's house; *they brought him into the upper chamber*—Where she was laid out. *And all the widows*—Who had been relieved by her benevolence; *stood by him weeping, showing the coats, &c.*—Here was no need of mourning women to be hired: the death of this woman was a common loss; these coats were made by her in her lifetime, to clothe the poor and naked therewith. *But Peter put them all forth*—That he might with the more freedom pour out his soul before God in prayer on this occasion, and not be disturbed with their mournful lamentations. *And he kneeled down and prayed*—In his healing Eneas there was an implicit prayer; but in this greater work he addressed himself to God in solemn prayer, as Christ did when he raised Lazarus; but Christ's prayer was with the authority of a Son, who quickens whom he will; Peter's with the submission of a servant, who is under direction, and therefore he *kneeled down* when he offered it. And then rising, *and turning to the body, he said*—As with the voice of authority, in the name and presence of his great Lord, the Sovereign of life and death; *Tabitha, arise*—Words which were immediately accompanied with a divine

A. M. 4042. 41 And he gave her *his* hand, and
A. D. 38. lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

* John xi. 45; xii. 11.

power, so that she *opened her eyes*, and seeing Peter, *sat up*—Showing that she was really and truly alive. *And when he had called the saints and widows*—Who were all in sorrow for her death, and were near the chamber, waiting impatiently for the event; *he presented her alive*—And in perfect health, as all were that were miraculously cured. 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 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.

Verses 42, 43. *And it was known, &c.*—The report of this wonderful miracle was immediately spread *throughout all Joppa*—And it being a town of seafaring men, the story of it would soon be carried from thence to many other countries; and though some would not regard it, many, there is reason to suppose, would be influenced by it so as to make those inquiries which would issue in their conversion to the true God, and the true religion. Accordingly

42 And it was known throughout all A. M. 4042.
Joppa: *and many believed in the Lord. A. D. 38.

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one † Simon a tanner.

† Chap. x. 6.

it is here said, *many believed in the Lord*—Namely, upon the credit of this signal miracle; many, not only at Joppa, but in other places. So that the great end for which the miracle was wrought was answered; this, and all other miracles that were done, being chiefly performed to cause the gospel to be believed, of the truth and importance of which they were undeniable proofs. *And he tarried many days*—Willing to improve so favourable an occasion as was now afforded him, of spreading the knowledge of Christ and his gospel. The miracle had only prepared the people to receive his doctrine, which he stayed some time to instruct them in; sowing the seed of the word in the ground prepared to receive it. And he tarried not in the house of Tabitha, (where, doubtless, he would have been hospitably entertained and comfortably accommodated.) lest he should seem to seek his own glory; but he took up his lodgings with an ordinary tradesman, whose business is here mentioned, perhaps, that it might appear the apostle was not elevated, by the dignity of the late miracle, above mean persons and things; and to teach us, in imitation of his example, to condescend to men of low estate. And though Peter might seem to be buried in obscurity in the house of a poor tanner *by the sea-side*, yet God fetched him thence to a noble piece of service, as we find in the next chapter; for *they that humble themselves shall be exalted*.

CHAPTER X.

In this chapter, (1.) Cornelius, a Roman captain, directed by an angel, sends to Joppa for Peter to instruct him in the way of salvation, 1-8. (2.) Directed by a vision and a voice from heaven, Peter, attended by certain disciples, readily accompanies Cornelius's messengers, 9-23. (3.) Peter and Cornelius relate the substance of their respective visions, as the reason of their present interview, 24-33. (4.) Peter, in a sermon delivered on this remarkable occasion, represents the distinction between Jews and Gentiles as being now abolished by God, and exhibits Christ crucified, and now exalted, as the Messiah foretold by the prophets, and the Saviour of the world, 34-43. (5.) The Holy Ghost, in a miraculous manner, descending upon Cornelius and his friends, they are baptized, 44-48.

A. M. 4045. **T**HERE was a certain man in Ce-
A. D. 41. sarea, called Cornelius, a centu-

rior of the band called the Italian A. M. 4045.
band, A. D. 41.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verses 1, 2. *There was a certain man in Cesarea*—That is, Cesarea of Palestine, (of which see note on chap. viii. 40,) where Philip had been and preached before, and where, therefore, the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ was not quite unknown. It had been preached, however, by him, as it was now at Jerusalem and elsewhere, only to the Jews, Samaritans, and such Gentiles as were circumcised,

and complete proselytes to Judaism. But God was now determined to open a way for the publication of it to the uncircumcised Gentiles, and to admit them into his church by baptism, on the terms of true repentance and faith in Christ, without obliging them to be circumcised, or proselyted to the Jewish religion. This remarkable change in the economy of divine grace toward mankind; this discovery of the gospel to the Gentiles; and the bringing of them,

A. M. 4045. 2 ° A devout man, and one that
A. D. 41. b feared God with all his house, which
gave much alms to the people, and prayed to
God alway.

3 ° He saw in a vision evidently, about the
ninth hour of the day, an angel of God com-
ing in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid,

° Verse 22; Chap. viii. 2; xxii. 12.—b Verse 35.

who had been *strangers and foreigners*, to be *fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God*, without laying them under any obligation of observing the ceremonial law, was such a mystery to the apostles themselves, and such a surprise, (Eph. iii. 3, 6,) that it concerns us carefully to observe all the circumstances of the beginning of this great work, this part of the *mystery of godliness*, Christ preached to the Gentiles, and believed on in the world, 1 Tim. iii. 16. No doubt, before this time, some Gentiles had occasionally entered into the synagogues of the Jews, which Christ and his apostles continually visited, and had heard the gospel preached by them; but the gospel had not yet been designedly preached to the uncircumcised Gentiles, nor had any of them been baptized; the person here mentioned was the first. Of the conversion of this man, the first-fruits of the Gentiles in the Christian Church, we are here presented with a most interesting and edifying account. We are informed that before his conversion, although a Roman soldier, (a centurion, or commander of one hundred men, in what was called the *Italian band*, or cohort, the soldiers composing it, it seems, being Italians,) and although an uncircumcised heathen, he was a *devout man*—A man of real piety, as *εὐσεβής*, the expression here used, signifies; *one that feared God*—Who believed in the one living and true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, revered his glory and authority, and had a dread of offending him by sin. Yea, he feared him *with all his house*—Had not an idolater or profane person in his family; but took care that not himself only, but all his, should serve the Lord. He was also a very charitable man, one who gave much alms to the people—Namely, the people of the Jews, notwithstanding the singularities of their religion. Though he was a Gentile, he was ready to contribute to the relief of any one that was a real object of charity, whatever his religious sentiments or mode of worship might be. Add to this, he spent much time in prayer; yea, he prayed to God alway—Living continually in the spirit of prayer; and having, and constantly observing, stated times for prayer in private and in his family, esteeming it an important part of his daily business and pleasure to employ himself in such sacred exercises. Observe, reader, wherever the fear of God rules in the heart it will show itself in works both of piety and charity; both equally necessary, and neither of which will excuse our neglecting the other.

Verses 3-6. *He saw*—At a time, it seems, when

a

and said, What is it, Lord? And he A. M. 4045.
said unto him, Thy prayers and thine A. D. 41.
alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for
one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

6 He lodgeth with one d Simon a tanner,
whose house is by the sea-side: ° he shall tell
thee what thou oughtest to do.

° Verse 30; Chap. xi. 13.—d Chap. ix. 43.—e Chap. xi. 14.

engaged in secret devotion; in a vision—Not in a trance, like Peter; *evidently*—*φανερός*, manifestly and plainly, so as to leave him, though not accustomed to things of this kind, no room to suspect any imposition; *about the ninth hour*—That is, about three in the afternoon, which, being the hour of evening sacrifice, was chosen by him as a proper season for his devotion; *an angel of God*—Known to be such by the brightness of his countenance and the manner of his coming in to him: *and saying*, *Cornelius*—Calling him by his name, to intimate the particular notice God took of him. *And when he looked on him*—*Αετιστας αυτω*, having fixed his eyes on him; *he was afraid*—And no wonder, for the wisest and best of men have been struck with fear upon the appearance of any extraordinary messenger from heaven; *and said*, *What is it, Lord?*—As if he had said, What can this mean? for the words seem to be a sudden exclamation, and prayer to God to preserve him, and let him know what was the design of so astonishing an appearance. *And he* (the angel) *said*, *Thy prayers, and thine alms*—With which they have been attended; *have come up for a memorial before God*—Far more pleasing to him than the most fragrant incense. And dare any man say, then, that 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. *And now*—Adds the angel, since God is about to give thee a very singular proof of his love, by discovering things to thee which it is of the highest importance thou shouldst know; *send*, therefore, *to Joppa, and call for one Simon, &c.*; *he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do*—Two things here are remarkable, and worthy of particular attention: 1st, Cornelius is influenced continually by the fear of God; from that principle he prays and gives alms; is religious himself, and maintains religion in his family. And all this he does in such a manner as to be accepted of God therein. Nevertheless, it is now necessary he should do something further; he must embrace the Christian religion, God having now established it among men. Not, he might do this if he pleased, and it would be an improvement of his religion; but, he must do it, his doing it is indispensably necessary to his acceptance with God for the future. He that had believed the promise of the Messiah, must now believe the performance

A. M. 4045. 7 And when the angel which spake
A. D. 41. unto Cornelius was departed, he called

two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

8 And when he had declared all *these* things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

9 ¶ On the morrow, as they went on their

¶ Chap. xi. 5, &c.

of that promise. Now God having given a further record concerning his Son than what had been given in the Old Testament prophecies, he requires men to receive that record when it is brought to them; and unless they do so, neither their prayers nor their alms can any longer come up for a memorial before him. Prayers and alms are indeed still accepted from those that believe in God and fear him, if they have not an opportunity of knowing more. But with those to whom the gospel is preached, it is necessary, in order to the acceptance of their persons, prayers, and alms, that they should believe that Jesus is the Christ, and should confide in him alone for acceptance. 2d, Though Cornelius has now an angel from heaven talking to him, yet he must not receive the gospel of Christ from this angel, nor be told by him what he ought to do, but must send for Peter to inform him. As the former observation puts a remarkable honour upon the gospel, so doth this upon the gospel ministry. It was not to angels, but to saints, persons compassed about with infirmity, that this grace was given, to preach among the *Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*, that the excellence of the power might be of God, and the dignity of Christ's institution supported. And as it was an honour to the apostle, that he must preach that which an angel might not, so it was a further honour, that an angel was despatched from heaven on purpose to order him to be sent for. Observe, reader, to bring a faithful minister and a willing people together, is a work worthy of an angel, and what, therefore, the greatest of men should be glad to be employed in.

Verses 7, 8. *When the angel was departed, he called, &c.*—He was obedient to the heavenly vision, without dispute or delay, and sent forthwith to Joppa to fetch Peter to him. Had he himself only been concerned, he might have gone to Joppa to Peter; but he had a family, and kinsmen and friends, (verse 24,) a little congregation of them, that could not go with him, and therefore he sends for Peter. And to show him the greater respect, he sends *two of his household servants*—All of whom feared God; (verse 2;) and *a devout soldier that waited on him continually*—Always attended his person. How many such attendants have our modern officers? A devout soldier would now be looked upon by many as little better than a deserter from his colours. Observe, a devout centurion had devout soldiers; a little devotion, indeed, commonly goes a great way with soldiers; but there would be more of it in them, if there were more of it in their commanders. *And when he had declared all these things*—Just in

journey, and drew nigh unto the city, A. M. 4045
Peter went up upon the house-top to
A. D. 41. pray, about the sixth hour:

10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

11 And *he* saw heaven opened, and a certain

¶ Chap. vii. 56; Rev. xix. 11.

the manner they had happened, of which he informed them, because Peter's coming was a matter in which they also were concerned, having souls to save as well as he. *He sent them to Joppa*—That very evening. Thus, on Cornelius's part, all things are disposed toward his receiving the gospel; and the same providence, at the same time, disposes all things on Peter's part toward his coming to publish it.

. Ver. 9, 10. *On the morrow, as they went*—For they set out too late to reach the place that night; *Peter went up upon the house-top to pray*—It has often been observed, in the course of these notes, that the houses in Judea had flat roofs, on which people walked for the sake of taking the air, and where they conversed, meditated, and prayed. *About the sixth hour*—Besides the two stated hours of prayer, at the time of the morning and evening sacrifice the more devout among the Jews were used to set apart a *third*, and to retire for prayer at noon. Thus David, (Psa. lv. 17,) *Evening and morning and at noon will I pray*. And Daniel also *kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed*. Whether Peter was induced by this, or by some other reason, to retire for prayer at this time, it seems at least to have been customary, in the first ages of the Christian Church, to offer up their daily prayers at the third, the sixth, and the ninth hour. *And he became very hungry*—At the usual meal-time; or rather, his hunger now was supernatural, to prepare him for the trance and vision here mentioned; for the symbols in these extraordinary discoveries were generally suited to the state of the natural faculties. *And he would have eaten*—Greek, ἠδιδε γενοσθαι, would have taken some refreshment; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance—Or *ecstasy*, as the word, ἐκστασις, signifies; namely, such a rapture of mind as gives the person who falls into it a look of astonishment, and renders him insensible of the external objects around him, while, in the mean time, his imagination is agitated in an extraordinary manner with some striking scenes which pass before it, and take up all his attention. In this ecstasy of Peter, a very remarkable and instructive vision was presented to him, by which the Lord prepared him for the service to which he was immediately to be called; but to which, without some such discovery of the divine will as was now made to him, he would have had an insuperable objection.

Verses 11–14. *And saw heaven opened*—While he lay in a trance, the heaven appeared to be opened above him, to signify the opening of a mystery that had been hid. *And a certain vessel*—Or utensil;

A. M. 4045. vessel descending unto him, as it had
A. D. 41. been a great sheet knit at the four
corners, and let down to the earth :

12 Wherein were all manner of four-footed
beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creep-
ing things, and fowls of the air.

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise,
Peter ; kill, and eat.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord ; ^b for I have
never eaten any thing that is common or un-
clean.

15 And the voice *spake* unto him again the
second time, ⁱ What God hath cleansed, *that*
call not thou common.

^b Leviticus xi. 4 ; xx. 25 ; Deuteronomy xiv. 3, 7 ; Ezra
iv. 14.

(for the word *σκενος*, here used, extends to all sorts of instruments, and every part of household furniture, of which see on chap. ix. 15;) *descending unto him as it had been a great sheet*—*Οθοννη μεγάλην*, a great linen cloth, or wrapper, an emblem of the gospel, extending to all nations of men; *knit—Δεδεμενον*, tied; *at the four corners*—Not all in one knot, but each fastened, as it were, up to heaven; *and let down to earth*—To receive from all parts of the world those that were willing to be admitted into it. *Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts*—The net of the gospel was to enclose persons of all countries, nations, and languages, without any distinction of Greek or Jew, or any disadvantage attaching to barbarian or Scythian, Col. iii. 11. *And there came a voice, Rise, Peter, kill and eat*—Of what thou seest, without any exception, or putting any difference between clean and unclean; the Lord thus showing him that he might now converse with Jews and Gentiles indifferently, and preach unto the latter, as well as unto the former, the word of life; and, at the same time intimating, that the Jewish Christians were, by the gospel, absolved from the ceremonial law, in which the distinction between clean and unclean meats made so considerable a part. *But Peter said, Not so, Lord*—I would rather continue fasting a great while longer, than satisfy my hunger on such terms; for I see only unclean animals here; and *I have never*—From my childhood to this hour, defiled my conscience by eating any thing *common or unclean*—Hitherto I have kept my integrity in this matter, and am determined still to keep it. Peter's words speak his resolution still to adhere to God's law, though he has a counter command by a voice from heaven; for he knew not, at first, but the words, *kill and eat*, might be a command of trial, whether he would abide by the sure word, the written law; and if so, his answer, *Not so, Lord*, had been very proper. Temptations to eat forbidden fruit must not be parleyed with, but peremptorily rejected. Reader, if God by his grace has preserved us from gross sin unto this day, we should use that

16 This was done thrice: and the A. M. 4045.
vessel was received up again into A. D. 41.
heaven.

17 ¶ Now, while Peter doubted in himself
what this vision which he had seen should
mean, behold, the men which were sent from
Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house,
and stood before the gate,

18 And called, and asked whether Simon,
which was surnamed Peter, were lodged
there.

19 While Peter thought on the vision, ^k the
Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek
thee.

ⁱ Matt. xv. 11 ; Verse 28 ; Rom. xiv. 14, 17, 20 ; 1 Cor. x. 25 ;
1 Tim. iv. 4 ; Tit. i. 15.—^k Chap. xi. 12.

as an argument with ourselves to continue to abstain from all appearance of evil.

Verses 15, 16. *And the voice spake the second time*—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 Peter, however, had several good effects. Hereby the will of God, on 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. *What God hath cleansed*—By such a declaration of his will, in commanding thee to eat them; *that call not thou common*—But readily submit thyself to his directions, acknowledging the power of the great Lawgiver to change his precepts as he shall see fit. *This was done thrice*—To make the deeper impression on Peter's mind. That is, the sheet was drawn up a little way, and let down again a second time, and so the third time, with the same call to him, *Kill and eat*. But whether Peter's refusal was repeated the second and third time is not certain; we may suppose it was not, since his objection had the first time received such a satisfactory answer.

Verses 17, 18. *Now while Peter doubted in himself*—He did not doubt, that it was a heavenly vision; all his doubt was concerning the meaning of it. Christ generally reveals his will to his people by degrees, and not all at once: he leaves them to doubt a while, and to ruminate upon a matter, before he makes it fully manifest to them. *Behold, the men sent from Cornelius*—Being just come to the house; *stood before the gate*—And now Peter will learn the meaning of his vision. Thus frequently the things which befall us from within and from without at the same time, are a key to each other: and the things which so concur and agree together ought to be diligently attended to.

Verses 19–22. *While Peter thought on the vision*—Was meditating on what he had seen and heard; *the Spirit said unto him*—God, by his Spirit, sug-

A. M. 4045. 20 ¹ Arise therefore, and get thee
A. D. 41. down, and go with them, doubting
nothing: for I have sent them.

21 Then Peter went down to the men which
were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said,
Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the
cause wherefore ye are come?

22 And they said, ^m Cornelius the centurion,
a just man, and one that feareth God, and ^a of
good report among all the nation of the Jews,
was warned from God by a holy angel to send
for thee into his house, and to hear words of
thee.

¹ Chapter xv. 7.—^m Verses 1, 2, &c.—^a Chapter
xxii. 12.

gested to his mind, as manifestly as if he had whis-
pered in his ear, (as he spake to Samuel, 1 Sam. ix.
15;) *Behold three men seek thee; arise therefore,*
&c.—Delay not, but go down to these men, and go
with them—The journey which they shall propose;
doubting nothing—Without any hesitation or scruple
on account of the messengers being Gentiles,
and coming from one who is also a Gentile. *For I
have sent them*—And have shown thee, that the
great ceremonial distinction between Jew and Gen-
tile, clean and unclean, is now to be abolished. And
when thou comest to compare their message with
what thou hast now seen, thou wilt easily know the
intent of this vision, and the use thou art to make
of it for thine own direction. How gradually was
Peter prepared to receive this new admonition of
the Spirit! Thus God is wout to lead on his children
by degrees, always giving them light for the present
hour. *Then Peter went down to the men*—Instan-
tly, before any message from them could reach
him. *And said*—To them, while they continued at
the door; *Behold, I am he whom you seek*—The
person you inquire for; *what is the cause where-
fore ye are come?*—Peter, not perfectly knowing yet
whither all this tended, makes the more exact in-
quiry. *And they said, Cornelius, &c.*—Endeavour-
ing to prevent any prejudice which Peter might
have against Cornelius, on account of his being a
Gentile, they inform him: 1st, That he was a just,
or righteous, man. 2d, That he worshipped the
true God, the God whom the Jews worshipped, and
not the false gods of the Gentiles. 3d, That he was
of good report even among the Jews; was reputed
by them a pious and good man; so that it would be
no disparagement to him to go to him. And, 4th,
What must have been an irresistible argument with
Peter, that he had been warned by an angel to send
for him to his house. When God's command is
evident, his true people do not hesitate to obey.

Verses 23, 24. *Then called he them in, and lodged
them*—Or, hospitably entertained them that night.
He did not bid them go to an inn, and refresh or re-
pose themselves at their own charge, but was him-
self at the charge of entertaining them at his own

23 Then called he them in and ^{A. M. 4045.}
^{A. D. 41.} lodged them. And on the morrow

Peter went away with them, ^o and certain bre-
thren from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And the morrow after they entered into
Cesarea. And Cornelius waited for them,
and had called together his kinsmen and near
friends.

25 ¶ And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius
met him, and fell down at his feet, and wor-
shipped him.

26 But Peter took him up, saying, ^p Stand
up: I myself also am a man.

^o Verse 45; Chap. xi. 12.—^p Chap. xiv. 14, 15; Rev. xix.
10; xxii. 9.

quarters. He lodged them, though they were Gen-
tiles, to show how readily he complied with the de-
sign of the vision, in eating with Gentiles. And,
though they were two of them servants, and the
other a common soldier, yet Peter thought it not
below him to take them into his house. *And on the
morrow went away with them*—Not delaying to
obey the heavenly vision. *And certain brethren*—
Namely, six in number, chap. xi. 12; *accompanied
him*—Being probably desired by the apostle to go
with him, that they might be witnesses of what
happened, as this was an affair in which some diffi-
culties might arise, and some censure be incurred
from the Jewish converts, and such as were not
apprized of his divine direction. How pleasing a
mixture have we here, of prudence and humility!
Sufficient to “teach us, on all proper occasions, to
express at once a becoming deference to our bre-
thren, and prudent caution in our own best intended
actions; that even our good may not be evil spoken
of, when it lies in our power to prevent it.” See
Doddridge, and Rom. xiv. 16. *And on the morrow
after they entered into Cesarea*—Though it is pro-
bable they travelled on foot, yet as Joppa was only
about fifteen leagues distant from Cesarea, they
might easily arrive there the day after that on which
they set out. *And Cornelius waited for them*—Not
engaging himself in any secular business during
that solemn time, but being altogether intent on this
thing. *And he called together his kinsmen*—His
relations; *and near friends*—Those with whom he
was most intimate, and had the greatest love to.
This, he thought, he could not better express, than
by giving them an opportunity to hear the word of
life, and to gain instruction for their souls. And,
probably, those here spoken of were accounted near
friends by Cornelius; because they were such as
had forsaken all pagan idolatry, and were, with
him, worshippers of the true and living God.

Verses 25-27. *As Peter was coming in*—Corne-
lius, who had been expecting him, probably with
some impatience, longing to know what that im-
portant doctrine was, which an angel had told him
he should hear from him; *met him, and fell down*

A. M. 4045. 27 And as he talked with him, he
A. D. 41. went in, and found many that were
come together.

28 And he said unto them, Ye know how
that it is an unlawful thing for a man that
is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of
another nation; but God hath showed me
that I should not call any man common or
unclean.

29 Therefore came I unto you without gain-
saying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask
therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was

† John iv. 9; xviii. 38; Chap. xi. 3; Gal. ii. 12, 14. — Chap. xv.
8, 9; Eph. iii. 6. — Chap. i. 10.

at his feet—Expressing thus his reverence for one,
in so eminent a sense, the messenger of Heaven;
and worshipped him—Not with divine, but mere
civil worship: such as was usually paid to kings
and princes, and others of high dignity, in the East.
Having believed in the one living and true God,
and forsaken the idolatry of the Gentiles, he cer-
tainly could not offer divine or religious worship to
Peter: nor could he, as some have fancied, imagine
Peter to be an angel, considering how the angel had
spoken of him. But his reverence for him as a di-
vine messenger, together with the custom which
prevailed in those countries, of expressing the
highest respect by prostration, might induce him to
fall down at his feet, and offer a homage, which
Peter wisely and religiously declined accepting.
And as he talked with him, he went in—They
went into the house talking together, probably of
the goodness of God manifested in so happily bring-
ing them together, for they could not but see and
acknowledge God in it. And found many that
were come together—More than Peter expected,
which at once added solemnity to this service, and
afforded a greater opportunity of doing good.

Verses 28, 29. And he said, Ye know how it is an
unlawful thing, &c.—A thing not allowed by the
Jews; for a man that is a Jew—A native Jew, as I
am; to keep company with, or come unto one of
another nation—A stranger, and an uncircumcised
Gentile. This was not made unlawful by the law
of God, but by the precepts of their wise men,
which they looked upon to be no less obliging.
They did not indeed forbid them to converse with
Gentiles, in the way of traffic or worldly business,
but to eat with them. With such scorn did the
Jews look upon the Gentiles, who in their turn held
them in equal contempt, as appears by many pas-
sages in the Latin poets. But now, saith Peter,
God hath showed me—By a remarkable vision; that
I should not call any man common or unclean—
Peter thought it necessary to inform them how he
came to change his mind in this matter, lest, being
thought to have used lightness, his word should
have the less authority. Therefore—Having re-

fasting until this hour; and at the ninth
hour I prayed in my house, and behold,

a man stood before me in bright clothing,
31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard,
and thine alms are had in remembrance in
the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither
Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged
in the house of one Simon a tanner, by the
sea-side: who, when he cometh, shall speak
unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and
thou hast well done that thou art come. Now

† Matt. xxviii. 3; Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 4. — Verse 4, &c.;
Dan. x. 12. — Heb. vi. 10.

ceived direction from God; came I unto you with-
out gainsaying—Or delay; as soon as I was sent
for—Ready to preach the same gospel to you that
I preached to the Jews. I ask, therefore, for what
intent ye have sent for me—Although Peter in a
great measure knew this already, he puts Cornelius
on telling the story, both that his friends, and all
that were present, might be informed, and Cornelius
himself be 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.

Verses 30–33. And Cornelius said, 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, Peter set out; and on the
fourth, came to Cesarea; until this hour—Cornelius
does not intend to declare by this how long he had
fasted; but he tells him when he, being fasting, saw
the vision, which was four days before, at the same
hour of the day. And at the ninth hour—An hour
of solemn prayer, being the time of offering the
evening sacrifice, see chap. iii. 1. I prayed, and
behold a man stood before me—A man in appear-
ance, but an angel in reality, as in verse 3; in
bright clothing—Such as Christ's was, when he
was transfigured; and that of the two angels, who
appeared at his resurrection, Luke xxiv. 4; and at
his ascension, chap. i. 10; showing their relation to
the world of light. And said, Thy prayer is heard
—Doubtless he had been praying for instruction
how to worship and serve God in the most accept-
able manner; and thy alms are had in remem-
brance in the sight of God—Who looks not merely
on the outward gift, but on the inward affection
from which it proceeds, and the intention with
which it is offered. Send, therefore, to Joppa, &c.—
See note on verses 4–6. Immediately, therefore,
I sent—As I was directed; and thou hast well done
that thou art come—To us, though we are Gentiles.
Observe, faithful ministers do well in going to those
that are willing and desirous to receive instruction
from them. Now, therefore, are we all here present
before God—The language this of every truly
Christian congregation; to hear all things that are

A. M. 4045. therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are

commanded thee of God.

34 ¶ Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, ^γ Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons :*

35 But ^z in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, ^a preaching peace by Jesus Christ : (^b he is Lord of all :)

37 That word, *I say*, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and ^c began

^γ Deut. x. 17; 2 Chron. xix. 7; Job xxxiv. 19; Rom. ii. 11; Gal. ii. 6; Eph. vi. 9; Col. iii. 25; 1 Pet. i. 17.—* Easter Monday, and Whitsun Monday, epistle, verses 34 to 49.—^z Chapter xv. 9; Romans ii. 13, 27; iii. 22, 29; x. 12, 13; 1 Corinthians xii. 13; Galatians iii. 28; Ephesians ii. 13, 18; iii. 6.—^a Isaiah

commanded thee of God—To know and do whatsoever he shall require of us. In this spirit ought every one that would profit by the word of God, to attend upon it.

Verses 34, 35. *Then Peter opened his mouth*—Addressed himself to them, with a seriousness and solemnity answerable to so great an occasion; and *said, Of a truth I perceive*—More clearly than ever, from such a concurrence of circumstances; *that God is no respecter of persons*—Is not partial in his love. The words mean, 1st, That he does not confine his love to one nation; as the Jews were ready to suppose that he confined it to their nation. 2d, That he is loving to every man, and willeth that all men should be saved; *but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness*—He that, 1st, Reverences God as infinitely great, glorious, wise, mighty, holy, just, and good; the cause, end, proprietor, and governor of all things: and, 2d, 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 Peter. See note on verse 6.

Verse 36. *The word*—Message, or doctrine; *which God sent unto the children of Israel*—When he sent his Son into the world; *preaching*—Proclaiming by him, and his apostles and evangelists, *peace*—Between God and man, whether Jew or Gentile; *by*—Or through; *Jesus Christ: he is Lord of all*—Not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, and under that character will manifest the riches of his mercy *unto all that call upon him*, Rom. iii. 29, and x. 12; *that word you know*—In some degree; you cannot

from Galilee, after the baptism which *John preached*; A. M. 4045. A. D. 41.

38 How ^d God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; ^e for God was with him.

39 And ^f we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; ^g whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him ^h God raised up the third day, and showed him openly;

41 ⁱ Not to all the people, but unto witnesses

lvii. 19; Ephes. ii. 14, 16, 17; Col. i. 20.—^b Matt. xxviii. 18; Rom. x. 12; 1 Cor. xv. 27; Eph. i. 20, 22; 1 Pct. iii. 22; Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16.—^c Luke iv. 14.—^d Luke iv. 18; Chap. ii. 22; iv. 27; Heb. i. 9.—^e John iii. 2.—^f Chapter ii. 32. ^g Chap. v. 30.—^h Ch. ii. 24.—ⁱ John xiv. 17, 22; Ch. xiii. 31.

be entirely ignorant of the facts attested by it, or of the doctrine built thereon; both which, however, I shall now more particularly explain and confirm to you: the facts and doctrine, I mean, *published throughout all Judea, and begun from Galilee*—Taking their first rise there; *after the baptism which John preached*—Who went before that extraordinary Person to prepare his way, by calling sinners to repentance and amendment of life, and admitting the penitent to the baptism of water; *how God anointed Jesus*—Particularly at his baptism, thereby inaugurating him into his office; *with the Holy Ghost*—With an extraordinary measure of his Holy Spirit; *and with power*—It is worthy of 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 persons *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.

Verses 39–42. *And we*—His apostles, of whom I have the honour and happiness to be one; *are witnesses of all things which he did*—Having been present when he did them; *both in the land of the Jews*—In all parts of Judea; and particularly in *Jerusalem*—Their capital city; for we attended him in all the progress which he made, beholding with astonishment his miracles, and hearing with delight his discourses; *whom*—Nevertheless, this unbelieving and ungrateful people were so far from receiving with a becoming regard, that, in a most infamous manner, *they slew and hanged him on a tree*—Crucifying him, as if he had been the vilest of malefactors and slaves. Their crucifying Christ is here spoken of, the rather, to show how justly the

A. M. 4045. chosen before of God, *even* to us, ^k who
A. D. 41. did eat and drink with him after he
rose from the dead.

42 And ^lhe commanded us to preach unto
the people, and to testify ^mthat it is he which
was ordained of God *to be* the Judge ⁿof quick
and dead.

43 ^oTo him give all the prophets witness,
that through his name ^pwhosoever believeth in
him shall receive remission of sins.

^k Luke xxiv. 30, 43; John xxi. 13.—^l Matt. xxviii. 19, 20;
Chap. i. 8.—^m John v. 22, 27; Chap. xvii. 31.—ⁿ Rom. xiv.
9, 19; 2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1; 1 Pet. iv. 5.—^o Isa. liii. 11;
Jer. xxxi. 34; Dan. ix. 24; Mic. vii. 18; Zech. xiii. 1; Mal.

Jews were now to be abandoned of God, and that they had no cause to complain of their rejection and the calling of the Gentiles, seeing that they had in such a manner rejected Christ. *Him*—This very same person, though so injuriously treated by men; *God raised up the third day*—According to the repeated predictions of the prophets. Peter thus preaches unto them the resurrection which immediately followed his crucifixion, lest the Gentiles should be deterred from believing in him, and should take offence at the scandal of the cross. *And showed him openly*—Greek, *εδωκεν αυτον εμφανη γενεσθαι*, *gave him to become manifest*, namely, after his resurrection; and evidently to appear. As if he had said, That he rose is unquestionable, it having been evidenced in all the ways by which any thing can be proved. For Christ was seen, and heard, and felt by many after his resurrection; he appeared *not* now indeed *to all the people*—As before his death; *but unto witnesses*—Persons appointed to be witnesses of this fact; *chosen before of God*—For this purpose; *even to us, who did eat and drink*—And converse frequently and familiarly *with him, after he arose from the dead*—As we had done during the time of his ministry; so that we can, and do, with the greatest certainty, bear witness to the truth of these important matters. *And he commanded us*—Gave it us in charge in a most solemn manner; *to preach unto the people*—The glad tidings of salvation, present and eternal; *and to testify*—Wherever we come; *that it is he*—This very Jesus of Nazareth; who is *ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead*—That is, of all mankind, whether they be 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.

Verse 43. *To him give all the prophets witness*—Speaking to heathen, he does not mention the name of any one prophet in particular; but, after having spoken of Christ's person, miracles, and resurrection, contents himself with informing them, in general terms, that there were many prophets in former ages who bore testimony to him, without entering into a particular enumeration of them, or quoting their predictions: an observation which is also applicable to that particular truth which Peter

44 ¶ While Peter yet spake these A. M. 4045.
words, ^qthe Holy Ghost fell on all A. D. 41.
them which heard the word.

45 ^rAnd they of the circumcision which be-
lieved were astonished, as many as came with
Peter, ^sbecause that on the Gentiles also was
poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with
tongues, and magnify God. Then answered
Peter,

iv. 2; Chapter xxvi. 22.—^p Chapter xv. 9; xxvi. 18; Ro-
mans x. 11; Galatians iii. 22.—^q Chapter iv. 31; viii. 15-
17; xi. 15.—^r Verse 23.—^s Chapter xi. 19; Galatians
iii. 14.

here declares the prophets, which he referred to, had attested, namely, *that through his name*—Through his mediation, grace, and Spirit; *whosoever believeth in him*—With a living faith, whether he be Jew or Gentile; *shall receive remission of sins*—Though he had not before either feared God or wrought righteousness. This truth it would have been easy for the apostle to have proved, from several testimonies of the prophets, (had it been proper to do so to that audience,) as will appear by comparing the passages referred to in the margin. We may further observe here, that we do not read of Peter's working any miracle on this great occasion, in proof of the truth of his doctrine; as the preceding testimony of the angel to Cornelius, and the descent of the Holy Spirit in his miraculous gifts, while he was speaking to them, were sufficient proofs, both of the truth of the gospel, and of Peter's being an authorized interpreter of it.

Verses 44-46. *While Peter yet spake*—Or, *was yet speaking*; *these words*—Even before he had finished, and without the imposition of his hands on their heads; *the Holy Ghost fell*—On Cornelius, and on all them which heard—Or, *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. *And they of the circumcision*—The believing Jews; *as many as came with Peter*—On this important occasion; *were astonished*—At the fact; which, if they had not seen it, would to them have appeared incredible; *that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost*—For they had supposed that they could not have even been admitted into the Christian Church, much less have received such a blessing as the Holy Spirit in his gifts and graces, without submitting to circumcision, and so subjecting themselves to the observation of the whole Mosaic law. But now they saw it incontestably proved, that even those who were neither made converts to Judaism, nor circumcised, might be partakers with them in the highest privileges. *For they heard them speak with tongues*—Speak in divers languages, which they had never learned; *and magnify God*—In such exalted sentiments and terms, as abundantly proved that their thoughts as well as their

A. M. 4045. 47 Can any man forbid water, that
A. D. 41. these should not be baptized, which
have received the Holy Ghost ^t as well as we ?

^t Chap. xi. 17 ; xv. 8, 9 ; Rom. x. 12.

expressions, their minds as well as their tongues, were immediately under a divine influence.

Verses 47, 48. *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, &c.*—Peter, yielding to the force of evidence, however contrary to his former prejudices, with great propriety asks this question. 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 guide! 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?* As none of the brethren

48 ^a And he commanded them to ^{A. M. 4045.}
be baptized ^z in the name of the Lord. ^{A. D. 41.}
Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

^a 1 Cor. i. 17.—^z Chap. ii. 38 ; viii. 16.

that came with him pretended to object any thing against it, *he commanded them to be baptized*—Immediately ; choosing to make use of the ministry of his brethren in performing that rite, rather than to do it with his own hands, that by this means the expression of their consent might be the more explicit ; *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 these 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 apostles generally administered the ordinance in that very form which Christ himself had prescribed.

CHAPTER XI.

Here, (1,) Peter is accused by his Christian brethren at Jerusalem, for preaching to and baptizing the Gentiles, 1-5. (2,) By a relation of the matter, he vindicates himself, and abundantly satisfies them, 6-18. (3,) The scattered preachers publish the gospel at Antioch, in Syria, and the neighbouring places, with great success, 19-21. (4,) Barnabas is sent thither ; who confirms the disciples, and afterward, finding Paul at Tarsus, brings him also to Antioch, where they conjointly help forward the good work, and where the disciples are first named Christians, 22-26. (5,) Agabus visits them, and foretels a general famine, whereby the Syrian converts are induced to send relief to their poor brethren at Jerusalem, 27-30.

A. M. 4045. **AND** the apostles and brethren that
A. D. 41. were in Judea, heard that the
Gentiles had also received the word of God.

2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusa-

^a Chap. x. 45 ; Gal. ii. 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verses 1-3. *The apostles and brethren heard*—To their great surprise ; *that the Gentiles had also received the word of God*—That not only the Jews who were dispersed in the Gentile countries, and the Gentiles who were proselyted to the Jewish religion, but that the uncircumcised Gentiles also themselves, with whom it had hitherto been thought unlawful to have any fellowship, had heard and received the gospel, and had even been baptized and received into church communion, without being required to submit to circumcision and the observances of the Mosaic law ; intelligence this which alarmed them exceedingly, as they had not yet been made acquainted with the particular circumstances attending the affair. *And when Peter was come to Jerusalem*—From Cesarea ; *they that were of the circumcision*—Those Jewish converts who still retained

lem, ^a they that were of the circum- ^{A. M. 4045.}
cision contended with him, ^{A. D. 41.}

3 Saying, ^b Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, ^c and didst eat with them.

^b Chap. x. 28.—^c Gal. ii. 12.

a veneration for the ceremony of circumcision, and thought it to be of perpetual obligation ; *contended with him*—About what he had done. *There seems to be no reason here to except any of the believing Jews (unless, perhaps, the apostles) from this contention ; for they were all zealous of the law, and of their customs, and could not endure to hear that any Jew should act contrary to them, chap xxi. 20, 21 ; and Peter himself had been of that mind till he had received the vision, (see chap. x. 28,) and even after the vision withdrew himself from the believing Gentiles for fear of the Jews, Gal. ii. 12 ; and they of the dispersion preached to the Jews only, verse 19.* We may observe here, also, that these Jewish believers had no idea of the supremacy, and much less of the infallibility, of Peter ; for otherwise they would not have dared thus to rise up against him, or to call his actions in question. See Whitby.

A. M. 4045. 4 But Peter rehearsed *the matter* A. D. 41. from the beginning, and expounded it ^d by order unto them, saying,

5 ^o I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay, and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.

10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

^a Luke i. 3.—^c Chap. x. 9, &c.—^f John xvi. 13; Chap. x. 19; xv. 7.—^e Chap. x. 23.—^b Chap. x. 30.—^d Chap. ii. 4.

Verses 4-15. *But Peter rehearsed—Eferideto, laid open; the matter from the beginning—Of the vision which he had seen, which was evidently designed to dispose him to such condescension, and gave them a full detail of all the particulars, with the exactest truth and simplicity. So far was he from taking it ill to be questioned, or desiring to be treated as infallible. And he answers the more mildly, because it related to a point which he had not readily believed himself. See these verses explained in the notes on chap. x. 11-33, 44.*

Verses 16-18. *Then remembered I the word of the Lord—This descent of the Holy Ghost on them, as on us at the beginning of our public ministry, was such an extraordinary occurrence, that I immediately called to mind, and could not but reflect on, the word of the Lord, as then remarkably verified; how he said—Just before his ascension, (chap. i. 5,) Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost—For this pouring forth of the Spirit upon them appeared to be a wonderful accomplishment of that prediction. Forasmuch then as God—The sovereign dispenser of his own favours; gave them the like gift as he did unto us who believed—That is, because we believed, not because we were circumcised, was the Holy Ghost given to us. What was I that I should withstand—Greek, δυνατος κωλυσαι, that I should be able to prohibit, God—From conferring such a gift upon them; or should presume to oppose myself against his wise and gracious pleasure? They had inquired only concerning his eating with the Gentiles, but he satisfies them likewise concerning his baptizing them; and shows that he had done*

11 And behold, immediately there A. M. 4045. were three men already come unto A. D. 41. the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me.

12 And ^f the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover, ^g these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

13 ^h And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, ⁱ as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, ^k John indeed baptized with water; but ^l ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 ^m Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the

^k Matt. iii. 11; John i. 26, 33; Chap. i. 5; xix. 4.—^l Isa. xlv. 3; Joel ii. 28; iii. 18.—^m Chap. xv. 8, 9.

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 firstborn, from worshipping God together. O that all church governors would consider how bold a 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! *When they heard these things, they held their peace*—Being thoroughly satisfied for the present, till the controversy was renewed by some fierce zealots, chap. xv. 1-5; *and glorified God*—For so wonderful a manifestation of his grace; *saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles*—The poor, ignorant, uncircumcised, despised, idolatrous Gentiles; *granted repentance unto life*—Has not only made them overtures of it, but has graciously wrought it in some of their hearts. Here, it is plain, they speak of those to whom this repentance was granted, as persons who before, according to their apprehension, were in a state of spiritual death; in which condition, it is probable, they had thought all uncircumcised persons to be: and, without doubt, they must mean to include the idolatrous Gentiles among the rest, as those who were most evidently and certainly so. Observe, reader, true repentance is a change from spiritual death to spiritual life, and leads to life everlasting.

A. M. 4015. Lord Jesus Christ, "what was I, that
A. D. 41. I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

19 ¶ "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioch, spake unto "the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And "the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and "turned unto the Lord.

¶ Chap. x. 47.—Rom. x. 12, 13; xv. 9, 16.—Chap. viii. 1. ¶ Chap. vi. 1; ix. 29.—Luke i. 66; Chap. ii. 47.—Chap. ix. 35.—St. Barnabas's Day, epistle, verse 22 to the end.

Verses 19–21. *Now they which were scattered abroad*—Luke here resumes the thread of his narration in the very words wherewith he broke it off, chap. viii. 4; *travelled as far as Phenice*—To the north; *Cyprus*—To the west; and *Antioch*—To the east; *preaching the word to none but the Jews only*—Not being at all apprehensive that the Gentiles were to share the blessings of it. *And some of them*—Who bore a part in this work; *were men of Cyprus*—The island so called; and of the province of *Cyrene* in Africa; *which when they were come to Antioch*—Then the capital of Syria, and, next to Rome and Alexandria, the most considerable city of the empire; *spake unto the Grecians*—Here, instead of *Ελληνιστας*, *Hellenists*, the Alexandrian manuscript, which is favoured by the Syriac, and some other ancient versions, reads *Ελληνας*, *Greeks*; which reading common sense would require us to adopt, even if it were not supported by the authority of any manuscript at all; for as the Hellenists were Jews, there would, in the common reading, be no opposition between the conduct of these preachers and those mentioned in the preceding verse. "Here, undoubtedly, we have the first account of the preaching of the gospel to the idolatrous Gentiles: for it is certain there is nothing in the word rendered *Greeks*, to limit it to those that were worshippers of the true God, such as all those were to whom it had hitherto been preached; nor is there the least hint in the New Testament of the two different periods that some speak of, in the first of which they suppose it was preached only to those called proselytes of the gate, and in the second to those who were before idolaters. It is well known, that as the Greeks were the most celebrated of the Gentile nations near Judea, the Jews called all the Gentiles by that general name."—Doddrige. *And the hand of the Lord*—That is,

22 ¶ "Then tidings of these things A. M. 4016. came unto the ears of the church A. D. 42.

which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth "Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and "exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and "full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith: "and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to A. D. 43. "Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves "with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

¶ Chap. ix. 27.—Chap. xiii. 43; xiv. 22.—Chap. vi. 5. ¶ Verse 21; Chapter v. 14.—Chapter ix. 30.—Or, in the church.

the power of his Spirit; *was with them*—Crowning their pious labours with success; and *a great number*—Of the Gentiles, who were before idolaters, were so effectually enlightened and wrought upon by their discourses and miracles, that they *believed* in the one living and true God, and in Jesus Christ whom he had sent; and *turned unto the Lord*—Dedicated themselves to the service of God through him, with an humble dependance on his merits and Spirit.

Verses 22–24. *Then tidings of these things came to the church at Jerusalem*—And, as they had lately seen a way opened for the conversion of the Gentiles, they received information of this further progress of the gospel with peculiar pleasure; and *sent forth Barnabas to Antioch*—That he might confirm the new converts in the faith into which they had been initiated: *who, when he came*—To the city, and *had seen*—Evident proofs of the grace of God conferred upon them; *was glad*—Rejoiced in the good work wrought among them; and *exhorted them all that*—Whatever circumstances of difficulty and suffering might arise; *they would, with purpose of heart*—With full determination and constancy; *cleave unto the Lord*—Adhere to his truth, cause, and people. *For he was a good man*—A man eminently pious and benevolent; and *full of the Holy Ghost and of faith*—Largely endowed with the sanctifying graces and extraordinary gifts of the Divine Spirit; and *much people*—Through his instrumentality; *were added unto the Lord*—Were converted unto God, and received into the church by baptism.

Verses 25, 26. *Then departed Barnabas*—Namely, after some abode at Antioch, perceiving, probably, that he wanted an assistant in his labours; *to Tarsus, to seek Saul*—Whose departure thither was mentioned, chap. ix. 30. *And finding him there*—According to his expectation, he gave him, it seems,

A. M. 4047. 27 ¶ * And in these days came * prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. A. D. 43.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar.

* St. James's Day, epistle, verse 27, ending chap. xii. verse 3, at *Then were*.—Chap. ii. 17; xiii. 1; xv. 32; xxi. 9; 1 Cor.

such an account of the state of things at Antioch, and such a view of the extensive usefulness which appeared to present itself there, that he prevailed with him to accompany him at his return to that populous and celebrated city. Probably he judged, that since he was by country a Greek, though by descent a Hebrew of the Hebrews, he would be peculiarly fit to assist him in his great work, especially considering, on the one hand, his accomplishments as a scholar, and, on the other, his extraordinary conversion and eminent piety and zeal. And, continuing there a whole year, they taught much people—Instructed them in the doctrines, privileges, and duties of Christianity. And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch—A title that was really an honour to them, and by which, from this time, they were generally denominated, being before termed Nazarenes and Galileans.

Verses 27, 28. *In these days*—While Barnabas and Saul were at Antioch; came prophets thither from Jerusalem—Persons who were divinely inspired to foretell future events. And there stood up—In the congregation; one of them named Agabus, and signified—By the immediate direction of the Spirit; that there should be a great dearth—Or famine; throughout all the world—The expression generally signifies all the Roman empire; but here many learned men suppose it only denotes the land of Judea, which is its meaning in several other places; Which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar—The Roman emperor then reigning. It began, it seems, in the fourth, but raged chiefly in the fifth and sixth years of his reign. It is mentioned by Josephus, (*Antiq.*, xx. 2,) who speaks of it as “a very great famine, in which many died for want of food.” “Then Helena, queen of Adiabene, who had embraced the Jewish religion sent some of her ser-

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea.

30 ^d Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. A. D. 44.

xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11.—^b Chapter xxi. 10.—^c Rom. xv. 26; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; 2 Cor. ix. 1.—^d Chap. xii. 25.

vants to Alexandria, to buy a great quantity of corn; and others of them to Cyprus, to buy a cargo of dried fish, which she distributed to those who were in want.” And in cap. 5, Josephus further observes, that this famine took place when Tiberius Alexander succeeded Cuspius Fadus as procurator.

Verses 29, 30. *Then the disciples*—Foreseeing the distress they would otherwise be in, on account of that famine; determined to send relief unto the brethren in Judea—Καθως ημπορειτο τις, according as each was prospered, or, according to the abundance which each had; these disciples being, doubtless, some in more plentiful circumstances than others. “This their determination was extremely proper; for the churches of Judea being more exposed than other churches to persecution, and the rapacity of the Roman officers, and to those outrages which the populace, under weak and corrupt governments, commit upon the objects of their hatred, the brethren in Judea could not have supported this dearth, if they had not been assisted from abroad.”—Macknight. These disciples, therefore, at Antioch, having made collections for them, sent the money, not to the apostles, (for they had now given up the management of the funds of the church in Jerusalem to others,) but to the elders—Or rulers of that church, chosen, perhaps, out of the one hundred and twenty, on whom the Holy Ghost fell at first. And these were to deliver it to the deacons, or otherwise to make distribution thereof to the brethren, according to their need. By sending this seasonable gift to the brethren in Judea, the disciples at Antioch, among whom were many Gentile proselytes, gave proof of the reality of their conversion, and did what they could to conciliate the good-will of the Jewish believers. And this mark of their regard seems to have been well received by them.

CHAPTER XII.

Here, (1.) Herod, having slain James, seizes Peter and commits him to prison, 1-4. (2.) Prayer is made without ceasing by the church for him, and in answer thereto he is delivered by an angel, to the no small perplexity of his persecutors, 5-19. (3.) Herod, in the midst of his pride and pomp, is struck by an angel, and dies miserably, 20-23. (4.) After his death the gospel has great success, and Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch, 24, 25.

A. M. 4048. **NOW*** about that time, Herod the king, ¹ stretched forth *his hands* to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James ^a the brother of John with the sword.

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. Then were ^b the days of unleavened bread.

4 And ^c when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four

* St. Peter's Day, epistle, verse 1 to verse 12.—¹ Or, began. ^a Matt. iv. 21; xx. 23.—^b Exod. xiii. 14, 15; xxiii. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verses 1, 2. *Now about that time*—When Saul and Barnabas were preparing to set out to Jerusalem, to carry thither what had been collected by the Christians at Antioch; *Herod stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church*—So wisely did God mix rest and persecution, in due time and measure succeeding each other. This was Herod Agrippa, as the Syriac version expressly names him, the former being his Syrian, and the latter his Roman 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 defence. 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. *And he killed James the brother of John*—Thus was the prediction of our Lord fulfilled, that James should drink of his cup, (Matt. xx. 23,) and thus one of the brothers went to God the first, the other the last of the apostles. It is a just observation of a judicious writer, that “this early execution of one of the apostles, after our Lord's death, would illustrate the courage of the rest in still going on with their ministry, as it would evidently show, that even all their miraculous powers did not secure them from dying by the sword of their enemies.”

Verses 3, 4. *And because he saw it pleased the Jews*—Whose favour he laboured by all possible means to conciliate; *he proceeded to take Peter also*—Renowned as he was for such a variety of miracles wrought by him at Jerusalem. According to Josephus, (*Antiq.*, xix. 7,) this Herod “was a great zealot for the Mosaic law, dwelt much at Jerusalem, and gladly embraced all opportunities of obliging the Jews, as his grandfather Herod did of pleasing strangers;” a character well suiting what Luke here says of him. *Then were the days of unleavened bread*—When the Jews came together to Jerusalem from all parts, to celebrate the passover. *And he put him in prison*—And, for the greater security of so noted a person, *he delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers*—That is, to sixteen, each party consisting of four, who were to watch him day and night by turns, four at a time; two of them being chained to him, and two of them watching before

quaternions of soldiers to keep him; A. M. 4048. intending after Easter to bring him ^{A. D. 44.} forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but ² prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

^c John xxi. 18.—² Or, instant and earnest prayer was made, 2 Cor. i. 11; Eph. vi. 18; 1 Thess. v. 17.

the door of the prison; *intending after Easter*—Or, rather, *after the passover*, as *μετα το πασχα* signifies, and ought, doubtless, to have been translated; (the name *Easter* not being in use till many centuries after this book was written;) *to bring him forth to the people*—To be made a spectacle to them, as his Master, Jesus, had been on the first day of unleavened bread; for confining him was not all that Herod designed. His intention was, after the paschal lamb was eaten, and the seven days' festival quite finished, to gratify the people by putting him to death, and that publicly. For, notwithstanding their zeal about rituals, they would submit to be concerned in the vilest immoralities, and most horrid cruelties, exercised on the servants of God.

Verses 5, 6. *Peter therefore*—Till the day of his execution came; *was kept in prison*—Under the continual guard of the fore-mentioned soldiers. *But prayer without ceasing*—(The original expression, *προσευχη εκτενης*, signifies, *earnest and importunate*, as well as *continual prayer*;) *was made of the church for him*—That is, for his deliverance, yet when their prayer was answered, they could scarce believe it, verse 15. But why had they not prayed for James's deliverance also? Doubtless because he was put to death as soon as apprehended. *And when Herod would have brought him forth*—For execution; *the same night*—That is, the night before he had designed to do it; *Peter was sleeping*—Easy and void of fear; *between two soldiers, bound with two chains*—It is well known that this way of securing prisoners of consequence was practised among the Romans, as Grotius has shown in his note on chap. xxviii. 16. One end of one chain was fastened to Peter's right hand, and the other end to the left arm of one of the soldiers; the other chain was, in like manner, fastened to Peter's left arm, and to the soldier's right arm; so that, humanly speaking, it was impossible he should have risen without immediately awaking them. *And the keepers before the door*—The other two guards, then on duty, stood sentry before the prison doors, that there might be no attempt of any kind made to rescue him. So that he was sufficiently secured, to all human appearance. It is likely the Jews remembered how all the apostles had escaped, when they had formerly put them in prison; and, perhaps, they suspected the fidelity of the guards. It was, therefore, most probably at their request that such a num-

A. M. 4048. 7 And behold, ^d the angel of the
A. D. 44.

Lord came upon *him*, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from *his* hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him, and ^e wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought ^f he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; ^g which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and

^d Chap. v. 19.—^e Psa. cxvii. 1.—^f Chap. x. 3, 17; xi. 5. ^g Chap. xvi. 26.—^h Psa. xxxiv. 7; Dan. iii. 28; vi. 22; Heb. i. 14.

ber of soldiers were appointed to guard Peter. But though the persecutors thus showed themselves skilful in taking measures to destroy, they soon found, by experience, that no device can avail against any whom God is determined to preserve.

Verses 7-10. *And behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him*—Greek, ἐπέση, stood over him; and a light shined in the prison—*Εν τῷ οὐκνηματι, in the house, the whole house in which he was confined; and he smote*—Greek, παραΐσα, having smote, Peter on the side—He awoke him; saying, Arise up quickly. And, in that moment, his chains—With which his right arm was bound to one of the soldiers, and his left to the other, fell off—The soldiers, in the mean time, being by a miraculous power kept so fast asleep, that they were not at all alarmed by the noise of their fall. And the angel said, Gird thyself, &c.—Probably Peter had put off his girdle, sandals, and upper garment before he lay down to sleep. And he went out—Of the prison, as he was guided by the angel, meeting with no opposition in his way; and wist not—That what appeared to him to be done was real, but supposed that he was in a dream, or saw a vision. When they were past the first and second ward—At each of which, doubtless, was a guard of soldiers, who, however, were all asleep; they came unto the iron gate leading into the city—Which, though a heavy gate, and very strongly fastened, yet was no hindrance in their way; but opened of its own accord—Without Peter or the angel touching it. And they passed on through one street—That Peter might know which way to go. And forthwith the angel—Having done all that was requisite for his deliverance, and set him at full liberty; departed from him—Peter being himself sufficient for what remained to be done.

Verses 11-15. *When Peter was come to himself*—And perceived that the extraordinary things which had been shown him were not visionary representa-

passed on through one street; and ^{A. M. 4048.} forthwith the angel departed from him. ^{A. D. 44.}

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that ^h the Lord hath sent his angel, and ⁱ hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered *the thing*, ^k he came to the house of Mary the mother of ^l John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together, ^m praying.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came ⁿ to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in,

ⁱ Job v. 19; Psa. xxxiii. 18, 19; xxxiv. 22; xli. 2; xcvi. 10; 2 Cor. i. 10; 2 Pet. ii. 9.—^h Chap. iv. 23.—^l Chap. xv. 37. ^m Verse 5.—ⁿ Or, to ask who was there.

tions, but real facts; and when he saw where he was; *he said, Now know I of a surety, that the Lord*—In whose cause I was upon the point of suffering; *hath sent his angel, and delivered me*—As he formerly did, chap. v. 19. I know that my deliverance is real and effectual; *out of the hand of Herod*—Who not only intended my destruction, but thought he had taken effectual measures assuredly to accomplish it; and *from all the expectation of the people of the Jews*—Who, notwithstanding the many beneficial miracles I have wrought among them, were thirsting for my blood, and waiting impatiently to see me executed. And when he had considered *the thing*—How imminent his danger was, and how great his deliverance, and now what was best to be done; *he came to the house of Mary*—A friend's house, which, it is likely, was near, and *where many*, even then, though it was midnight; *were gathered together, praying*—Doubtless, for his deliverance; God thus answering them while they were yet speaking, and bringing him, for whom they were so much concerned, to the very house in which they were assembled, praying for his release. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate—Of an outer gate at some distance from the house, designing, it seems, to awaken them out of sleep; *a damsel came to hearken*—Whether any one knocked, and if so, not to open the door till she knew who was there, a friend or foe, and what his business was at that unseasonable time of the night. This damsel was probably a Christian, and even of some note in the church, as her name is mentioned, and more zealously affected toward the cause of Christ than the generality of her age. And when she knew Peter's voice—Having probably often heard him pray, preach, and discourse; *she opened not the gate for gladness*—Through surprise and an ecstasy of joy. Thus, sometimes, in a transport of affection toward our friends, we do what is unkind to them; *but ran in*—Instantly, to the com-

A. M. 4048. and told how Peter stood before the
A. D. 44. gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, "It is his angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking. And when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he °beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the pri-

° Gen. xlviii. 16; Matt. xviii. 10.

pany that were assembled in the house; and told that Peter stood before the gate—As she certainly believed, though she had not had courage or presence of mind to open the gate. *And they said, Thou art mad*—Surely thou art out of thy senses, to imagine so incredible and impossible a thing, for Peter is undoubtedly in prison, strongly guarded. *But she constantly affirmed that it was even so*—Persisted in it, that she was sure she had heard his voice. *Then said they, It is his angel*—His guardian angel, who has assumed his form, and imitates his voice, to bring us some tidings of him. It was a common opinion among the Jews, that every man had his particular guardian angel, who frequently assumed both his shape and voice: and Philo speaks of it as also a received notion among the Jews, that the souls of good men deceased officiate as ministering spirits. But these are points on which the Scriptures are silent. And whatever the notion of the Jews was concerning them, no argument can be drawn from it, as to the truth of either of those suppositions.

Verses 16, 17. *But Peter continued knocking*—Though they delayed to open to him; and when—At length, several of them, it seems, going out together; *they had opened the door, and saw him*—That it really was he; *they were astonished*—Were filled with wonder and joy, as much as they were just before with sorrow and fear concerning him. *But beckoning unto them* (many of whom, being amazed, were talking together) *to hold their peace*—That they might hear him relate in what an extraordinary manner he had been delivered; *he declared unto them how the Lord had*—By the ministry of an angel; *brought him out of prison*.—And it is probable, that, having found them praying for his deliverance, he did not part with them till he and they had solemnly given God thanks together for so wonderfully answering their prayers. *And he said, Go show these things unto James*—The brother, or kinsman, of our Lord, and author of the epistle that bears his name. He appears to have been a person of considerable weight and importance, probably the chief overseer of the Christian societies of that province, and of the church in Jerusalem in particular. *And to the brethren*—Namely, The other disciples, that they might join in praising

son. And he said, Go show these things A. M. 4048.
unto James, and to the brethren. And A. D. 44.
he departed, and went into another place.

18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter.

19 And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Cesarea, and there abode.

° Chap. xiii. 16; xix. 33; xxi. 40.

God for this great deliverance, and consider it as laying a further obligation upon them to serve him with still greater zeal and fidelity. *And he departed thence to another place*—Where he might be better concealed till the rage of persecution was abated.

Verses 18, 19. *As soon as it was day*—And they found their prisoner escaped; *there was no small stir* [Greek, *ταραχος εκ ολιγος*, not a little tumult, or confusion] *among the soldiers, what was become of Peter*—Who was gone, and nobody knew how or which way. For the guards, awaking out of their sound sleep, could none of them give any account of what had passed, and were ready to suspect or accuse each other of negligence or treachery, in giving the prisoner an opportunity to make his escape. And indeed it was very fatal to them that he had escaped; for, *when Herod had sought for him*—Wherever there was any probability of his being concealed; *and found him not, he examined the keepers*—As strictly as possible, or rather, questioned them in a judicial manner; and as he could make nothing out by his inquiry, save that the prisoner was gone while they slept; and as he thought it by no means prudent to give any intimation that a miraculous interposition had taken place, in favour of a man whom he had devoted to destruction; he commanded that *they should be put to death*—Greek, *απαχθηναι*, led away to execution, for their negligence. He probably used this severity for another reason also, namely, lest if any apprehension of a miraculous deliverance should prevail, (an apprehension to which what had happened to all the apostles some time before could not but give countenance: see chap. v. 19,) Christianity should thereby gain additional strength. Be this as it may, undoubtedly this seasonable interposition of Providence in its favour, contributed greatly to its further progress; as, it seems, it also, together with the death of Herod, which took place soon after, put a speedy end to this persecution. *And he went down from Judea to Cesarea*—With shame, for not having brought forth Peter, according to his promise; *and abode there*—Till, in the midst of all his pride and glory, the judgment of God overtook him, and avenged the death of James, and the intended murder of Peter, in a most awful manner. Thus

A. M. 4048. 20 ¶ And Herod ⁴ was highly dis-
A. D. 44. pleased with them of Tyre and Sidon.

But they came with one accord to him, and having made Blastus ⁶ the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace, because ⁷ their country was nourished by the king's country.

21 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.

22 And the people gave a shout, saying, *It is*

⁴ Or, bear a hostile mind, intending war.—⁵ Gr. that was over the king's bed-chamber.—⁶ 1 Kings v. 9, 11; Ezra xxvii. 17. ⁷ 1 Sam. xxv. 38; 2 Sam. xxiv. 17.

have the persecutors of the gospel of Christ been often filled with vexation, to see its cause conquering, notwithstanding all their opposition to it; and have been terribly reckoned with for the cruelties exercised on God's servants.

Verse 20. *Herod, &c.*—The historian now proceeds to mention some circumstances that were introductory to the miserable end of Herod; *was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon*—On account of some supposed affront which he had received from them, and which provoked him so far that, having vowed a severe revenge, he was preparing with all speed to make war upon them. *But they came with one accord to him*—Being a trading people, and apprehensive of the consequences of the king's displeasure, they unanimously adopted the resolution of sending proper representatives to Cesarea, to appear before him; *and having made Blastus their friend, desired peace*—They sued for, and obtained, reconciliation with Herod. And thus the Christians of those parts were, by the providence of God, delivered from scarcity: *because 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.

Verses 21-23. *And upon a set day*—When shows and games were exhibited by him 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 reflected from it, dazzled the eyes of the beholders; *sat upon his throne*—In a public theatre; *and made an oration unto them*—Not to the Tyrian and Sidonian deputies merely, but unto all the people assembled on this grand occasion. *And the people gave a shout, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man*—Such profane flattery the heathen frequently paid to princes. But the commonness of a wicked custom rather increases than lessens the guilt of it. And the unhappy king, instead of expressing a just indignation at such base and impious adulation, hearkened to it with a secret pleasure. *And immediately*—For frequently 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 dif-

the voice of a god, and not of a man. A. M. 4048. A. D. 44.

23 And immediately the angel of the Lord ¹ smote him, because ² he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

24 ¶ But ³ the word of God grew and multiplied.

25 ¶ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled *their* ⁴ ministry, and ⁵ took with them ⁶ John, whose surname was Mark.

¹ Psa. cxv. 1.—² Isa. lv. 11; Chap. vi. 7; xix. 20; Col. i. 6. ³ Or, charge, Chap. xi. 29, 30.—⁴ Chapter xiii. 5, 13; xv. 37. ⁵ Verse 12.

ference 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 God the glory*—Did not reject these blasphemous applauses, but willingly received them, and thus filled up the measure of his iniquities. So then vengeance tarried not. *And he was eaten of worms*—Or vermin, which bred in his bowels, and rendered him a most loathsome and horrible spectacle to all about him; *and he gave up the ghost*—Expired in agony and infamy, (as his grandfather, Herod the Great, had done, see on Matt. ii. 19,) and sunk as much below the common state of human nature, as his flatterers endeavoured to raise him above it! The Jewish historian, Josephus, confirms St. Luke's account of the end of this miserable man. He tells us, that "as he did not rebuke the impious flattery addressed to him, he was immediately seized with exquisite and racking tortures in his bowels, so that he was compelled, before he left the place, to own his folly in admitting such acclamations, and upbraided those about him with the wretched condition in which they then saw their god; and being carried out of the assembly to his palace, he expired in violent agonies, the fifth day after he was taken, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign." *Antiq.*, xix. 7.

Verses 24, 25. *But the word of God grew and multiplied*—Became more successful; and in every place where it was preached, the number of disciples was considerably multiplied, and their faith greatly established. So that, after all the opposition of its enemies, who had endeavoured to extirpate it, the progress of Christianity was apparently promoted by the concurrence of the extraordinary events recorded in this chapter, namely, the deliverance of Peter, and the death of Herod, that cruel persecutor, under such heavy tokens of divine vengeance. *And Barnabas and Saul returned*—Namely, to Antioch, after a short abode at Jerusalem; *when they had fulfilled their ministry*—Had faithfully performed the charge committed to them: see chap. xi. 30; *and took with them John, surnamed Mark*—The son of Mary, (at whose house the disciples met to pray for Peter,) who was sister to Barnabas,

CHAPTER XIII.

In this chapter, (1,) Paul and Barnabas are solemnly separated to preach the gospel among the Gentiles as well as the Jews, 1-3. (2,) Beginning at Seleucia, they proceed from thence to Salamis and Paphos, in the isle of Cyprus, preaching the word, 4-7. (3,) They strike Elymas, the sorcerer, with blindness, and convert Sergius Paulus, the Roman deputy there, 8-12. (4,) Coming from Cyprus, by Perga in Pamphylia, they arrive at Antioch in Pisidia; where Paul, allowed by the ruler of the synagogue, having given an abstract of the history of their nation, from the deliverance out of Egypt to the time of David, takes occasion from thence to represent the crucified Jesus as risen again and exalted to glory, and as the only person through whom they could be saved, 13-41. (5,) The substance of this discourse being repeated on the next sabbath, some were converted; but other Jews contradicting and blaspheming, Paul and Barnabas pronounce them obstinate unbelievers, and preached to the Gentiles with great success, 42-49. (6,) Departing thence, they give solemn testimony against their persecutors, and come to Iconium, 50-52.

A. M. 4049. NOW there were ^a in the church
A. D. 45. that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as ^b Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and ^c Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, ¹ which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, ^d Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work ^e whereunto I have called them.

3 And ^f when they had fasted and prayed, and

laid ^g their hands on them, they sent ^h them away. A. M. 4049. A. D. 45.

4 So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to ⁱ Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, ^h they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had also ⁱ John to their minister.

6 ¶ And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found ^k a certain sor-

^a Chapter xi. 27; xiv. 26; xv. 35.—^b Chapter xi. 22-26. ^c Rom. xvi. 21.—^d Or, Herod's foster-brother.—^e Num. viii. 14; Chap. ix. 15; xxii. 21; Rom. i. 1; Gal. i. 15; ii. 9.

^e Matt. ix. 38; Chap. xiv. 26; Rom. x. 15; Eph. iii. 7, 8; 1 Tim. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11; Heb. v. 4.—^f Chap. vi. 6.—^g Chap. iv. 36. ^h Verse 46.—ⁱ Chap. xii. 25; xv. 37.—^k Chap. viii. 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verse 1. *There were in the church at Antioch certain prophets and teachers*—Some of them, it seems, the stated pastors of the church, and some only occasionally resident there: Paul and Barnabas were of the latter. *Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod*—His foster-brother, now freed from the temptations of a court. *As they ministered to the Lord*—Which all diligent faithful teachers do: for while they minister to the church in praying and preaching (both which are here included) they minister also *unto the Lord*, being the servants of the people for Jesus's sake, (2 Cor. iv. 5,) and having a continual regard to him in all their ministrations; engaging in, and prosecuting them from a principle of love to him, in obedience to his will, and with an eye to his glory. *And fasted*—Religious fasting should not be neglected, in our ministering to the Lord; it being both a sign of our humiliation and a means of our mortification. It was not, indeed, much practised by the disciples of Christ, while he, *the bridegroom, was with them*; yet, after he was taken from them, they abounded in this duty, as persons who had well learned to deny themselves, and to endure hardness. *The Holy Ghost said*—Namely, by immediate revelation, but in what way communicated we are not informed. *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*—Namely, the extraordinary work of preaching the gospel among the Gentiles—This was not ordaining them; Saul was ordained long before, and that *not of men, neither by man*, Gal. i. 1. At his conversion he was expressly called to preach to the Gentiles; and that

call was renewed at the time Jesus appeared to him during his trance in the temple: but at what time Barnabas was called by the Holy Ghost to this work, is not said. *And when they had fasted and prayed*—A certain day being appointed for the purpose; and *laid their hands on them*—A rite which was used, not in ordination only, but in blessing, and on many other occasions. It was here intended to be a solemn token of their designation to their important office; *they sent them away*—Dismissed them from Antioch, with all the most affectionate marks of Christian friendship, and fervent desires for the success of their ministry.

Verses 4, 5. *So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost*—By his immediate direction. This seems to be added to signify, that though they were solemnly recommended to God by the prayers of their brethren, their authority was not derived from them, but from the Holy Spirit himself. *Departed unto Seleucia*—A considerable port on the Mediterranean sea; and *from thence they sailed to Cyprus*—The island so infamous for the worship of Venus, who was supposed to hold her peculiar residence there, and therefore was commonly called *the Cyprian goddess*. *When they were at Salamis*—Situated on the eastern part of the island, and consequently was nearest to the place from whence they came; *they preached the word in the synagogues of the Jews*—For there were great numbers of that people in Cyprus. *They had also John for their minister*—Who willingly waited on them, not pretending to a character by any means equal to theirs.

Verses 6-8. *When they had gone through the isle unto Paphos*—Which lay on its western coast; *they*

A. M. 4049. cerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose
A. D. 45. name was Bar-jesus :

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man ; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But ¹Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) ²filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtlety, and all

¹ Ex. vii. 11 ; ² Tim. iii. 8. — Chap. iv. 8. — Matt. xiii. 38 ;

found a certain sorcerer—Or magician ; a false prophet—Who falsely pretended to foretel future events ; a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus—Or the son of one Jesus, or Joshua. “ There were many instances of real or pretended sorcery among the Jews in those days, which seems to have been designed by Satan and wicked men to bring into disrepute the miracles of Christ and his apostles. But by comparing them, in several instances, the Christian cause was magnified yet more than it would otherwise have been. Nevertheless, it is to be feared they wrought on many, who were not wise and candid enough to examine, so as to introduce a general contempt of all pretences to supernatural powers as false or inconclusive.”—Doddridge. *Which was with the deputy*—Which Jew was with the Roman proconsul there, as ἀνθύπατος, the word here rendered deputy, properly signifies ; *Sergius Paulus, a prudent man*—A man of a steady conduct and thoughtful temper ; and therefore not overswayed by the sorcerer, but desirous to inquire further ; *who called for Barnabas and Saul*—Having received some general information of their character and doctrine ; and desired to hear the word of God—That he might know what was the purport of their preaching, and what regard was due to it. *But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation—That is, the word, Elymas, of Arabic or Hebrew derivation, signifies sorcerer, or magician) withstood them*—Being sensible that he should be no more regarded if their doctrine was received, and therefore setting himself with all his might to hinder the effect of it. *Seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith*—To prevent his embracing it, by a variety of crafty and false insinuations.

Verses 9–11. *Then Saul, who also is called Paul*—Moved by an immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him—Looked steadfastly on that impostor, and said, with just indignation, *O full of all subtlety—Παντός δολῆς, of all guile, as a false prophet ; and all mischief*—As a magician ; *thou child 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*—Even now, when thou hast heard the

mischief, ²thou child of the devil, A. M. 4049. *thou enemy of all righteousness,* A. D. 45. *wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord ?*

11 And now behold ; ³the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness ; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

John viii. 44 ; 1 John iii. 8. — Exod. ix. 3 ; 1 Sam. v. 6.

truth of the gospel ; *to pervert*—By thy crafty and diabolical misrepresentations ; *the right ways of the Lord*—The ways of truth, piety, and virtue ; the only right ways. *And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee*—The hand of the heavy displeasure of the Lord Jesus, whose gospel thou opposest ; *and thou shalt be blind*—Totally so, not seeing even the sun at noon-day, for a season—That thou mayest be convinced of thy sin and folly ; and, if possible, be brought to repentance for it. *And immediately*—While Paul was yet speaking ; *there fell on him a mist and a darkness*—That is, a gradually increasing darkness ; *and he went about*—In the utmost confusion ; *seeking some to lead him by the hand*—As not being able so much as to find the door without a guide, and afraid that he might run upon any person or thing that stood in his way.

Verse 12. *Then the deputy*—Or proconsul ; *when he saw what was done*—What a wonderful miracle was performed, yielding to such convincing evidence ; *believed the gospel ; being astonished*—Εκπληροσσωμένος, being struck with astonishment ; *at the doctrine of the Lord*—At the confirmation thus given to it, and probably also at the internal evidence which he soon discovered in it, and which broke in with increasing lustre on his mind. The reader will observe, that at this period of the history, Luke has changed Saul's name, calling him Paul, without assigning any reason for so doing. Some learned men have supposed that this change was made by Saul himself, in honour of the proconsul, who they think was, perhaps, Saul's first convert from among the idolatrous Gentiles, or the first person of high rank of that character who was converted. For it was customary among the Romans to assume the name of a benefactor whom they highly esteemed. Thus the Jewish historian, Josephus, took the name of *Flavius*, in compliment to Vespasian, with whom he was in high favour. But it is more probable, that, coming now among the Romans and Greeks, they adapted his name to their own language, and so called him *Paul* instead of *Saul* ; as one whose Hebrew name was *Jochanan*, would be called by the Greeks and Latins, *Johannes* ; by the French, *Jean* ; by the Dutch, *Hans* ; and by the English, *John*.

A. M. 4049. 13 ¶ Now when Paul and his
A. D. 45. company loosed from Paphos, they
came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John de-
parting from them, returned to Jerusalem.

14 But when they departed from Perga, they
came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the
synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down,

15 And after the reading of the law and
the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent
unto them, saying, *Ye men and brethren, if*

† Chapter xv. 38.—‡ Chapter xvi. 13; xvii. 2; xviii. 4.
* Luke iv. 16; Verse 27.—† Heb. xiii. 22.—‡ Chap. xii. 17.
* Verses 26, 42, 43; Chap. x. 35.—† Deut. vii. 6, 7.—‡ Exod.
i. 1; Psa. cv. 23, 24; Chap. vii. 17.—‡ Exod. vi. 6; xiii. 14,

Perhaps, however, the family of the proconsul might be the first who addressed, or spoke to him, by this name. But in whatever manner it happened, it is certain that ever after this he was known only by this name; and, being the apostle of the Gentiles, he himself used it as a name most familiar to them. From this time forth, likewise, Paul is generally mentioned by the historian before Barnabas: because, by his success in preaching at Paphos, and by the greatness of his miracles, he was now shown to be the principal person; although, formerly, he was mentioned after Barnabas, because he was a younger disciple, and because his apostolical authority was not fully understood.

Verse 13. *Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos*—Sailing to the continent of the lesser Asia; *they came to Perga*—A city in Pamphylia—Situating on the west side of the river Cestos, about seven miles from the sea. Here there was a celebrated temple of Diana; consequently, many priests and others, whose interest and honour depended upon their maintaining the worship of that idol, and who, no doubt, were not a little displeased with these foreign teachers, for presuming to find fault with the gods of the country, and with the worship that was paid to them. On that occasion, John Mark, who had hitherto accompanied them as their minister, departed from them, and returned to Jerusalem, terrified, perhaps, by the threatening speeches of the priests and bigots, or discouraged by the difficulty and danger of the undertaking. Paul and Barnabas, however, were not discouraged by his deserting them; neither were they moved from their purpose by the little success which they had at Perga: for, after they left that place, they travelled through various countries of the lesser Asia; and, as we shall see immediately, made many converts to Christ, both among the Jews and the Gentiles.

Verses 14, 15. *When they departed from Perga*—Proceeding in the prosecution of their important work; *they came to Antioch in Pisidia*—A country to the north of Pamphylia; *and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day*, (Paul making it a point in every place first to offer salvation to the Jews,) *and sat down*—Among those that were worshipping there. *And after the reading of the law and the*

ye have any word of exhortation A. M. 4049.
for the people, say on. A. D. 45.

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with
his hand, said, Men of Israel, and ye that
fear God, give audience.

17 The God of this people of Israel chose
our fathers, and exalted the people when
they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt,
and with a high arm brought he them out of it.

18 And about the time of forty years suf-

16.—‡ Exod. xvi. 35; Num. xiv. 33, 34; Psa. xc. 9, 10; Chap.
vii. 36.—‡ Gr. ἐτροφοφόρησεν, perhaps for ἐτροσοφορήσεν,
bore, or, fed them, as a nurse beareth, or, feedeth her child, Deut.
i. 31; according to the LXX.; and so Chrysostom.

prophets—The law was read over once every year, a portion of it being appointed for each sabbath; to which was added a lesson taken out of the prophets; *the rulers of the synagogue*—Having probably some knowledge of the public character which the two celebrated strangers sustained, and being curious to hear from their own mouth that new doctrine which had made so much noise in other places; *sent unto them, saying, If ye have any word of exhortation for the people*—Any declaration to make which may conduce to their edification; *say on*—As this is the proper season for doing it. According to the Jewish writers, (see Maimonides on the Talmud,) after public worship was over, any one might make a speech to the people in the synagogue, on any subject which he apprehended might be for their advantage: this, it seems, however, was seldom done without the permission of the rulers, which was thus given to Paul and Barnabas.

Verse 16. *Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with, or waving, his hand*—To render the audience more attentive; *said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God*—Whether proselytes or heathen; *give audience*—This expression, *Ye that fear God*, seems best to suit those who, by embracing the Jewish religion, had entered into covenant with the true God, yet so as also to include any others in whom a filial reverence for the Divine Being was a governing principle. The discourse which the apostle now delivered, seems to have been chiefly intended to illustrate the divine economy, in opening the gospel gradually, and preparing the Jews, by temporal mercies, for others of a more important nature. He had thus a good opportunity of showing his acquaintance with their Scriptures, (which they esteemed the highest part of literature,) and thereby of better engaging their attention. His sermon, which seems to be given us at large, is particularly worthy of our consideration, as being an example of his manner of preaching in all the synagogues, and of the arguments which he used for convincing the Jews and proselytes that Jesus was the Messiah, or Christ, foretold by David, in the second Psalm. See on chap. xvii. 2, &c.

Verses 17, 18. *The God of this people, &c.*—Such a commemoration of God's favours to their fathers,

A. M. 4049. fered he their manners in the wilder-
A. D. 45. ness.

19 And when ^b he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, ^c he divided their land to them by lot.

20 And after that, ^d he gave unto them judges,

^b Deut. vii. 1.—^c Josh. xiv. 1, 2; Psa. lxxviii. 55.

as he here gives, was at once calculated to conciliate their minds to the speaker, to convince them of their duty to God, and to invite them to believe his promise and its accomplishment. This paragraph contains the whole sum of the Old Testament. See the passages referred to in the margin, and the notes thereon. *Chose our fathers*—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to be the objects of his special favour, and for their sakes was pleased to promise most important blessings to their offspring; and *exalted the people*—Wrought astonishing miracles in their behalf, and raised them from the state of bondage and depression in which they lay prostrate in Egypt; and *with a high arm*—With an evident and most extraordinary display of uncontrollable and almighty power; *brought them out of it*—In spite of all the efforts of Pharaoh and his host to detain them in slavery. *And forty years suffered he their manners*—Greek, *εργοφορησεν, he endured their behaviour*; by which expression the apostle gives an oblique intimation of that perverseness and ingratitude which so early began to prevail among them. But, according to the Alexandrian and Cambridge manuscripts, and the Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, and Ethiopic versions, the genuine reading is, *ετροφορησεν, he nursed, or cherished them*: a sense which suggests a fine view of the conduct of Divine Providence toward them; and, as Dr. Hammond observes, is beautifully connected with the expression of *taking them up*, when they lay like an exposed infant. See Deut. i. 31; Ezek. xvi. 4-8. The common reading, however, accords better with Psa. xcvi. 8-10; Heb. iii. 8-11, and a variety of other passages of Scripture, where the perverse and ungrateful behaviour of the Israelites toward God, and his great patience with them, are represented as being so extraordinary as to deserve peculiar attention; and therefore, it seems, that reading ought to be preferred; as also, because it is supported by a much greater number of manuscripts and versions.

Verses 19, 20. *And when he had destroyed seven nations*—Enumerated Deut. vii. 1; *in the land of Chanaan*—Where they had been long settled, and had erected many kingdoms, defended by fortifications of great strength, as well as by numerous forces of horse and foot; *he divided their land*—Even the whole country; *to them by lot*—Or, *for an inheritance*, as *κατεκληρονομησεν αυτοις την γην*, seems rather to signify, and supported them in it for many generations. *After that he gave them judges*—By whose heroic interposition he delivered them from those repeated oppressions and miseries which their frequent revolts to idolatry had brought upon them; *until Samuel the prophet*—Who was the last of these extraordinary leaders and magistrates. *About the*

about the space of four hundred and A. M. 4049.
fifty years, ^e until Samuel the prophet. A. D. 45.

21 ^f And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

^d Judg. ii. 16.—^e 1 Sam. iii. 20.—^f 1 Sam. viii. 5; x. 1.

space of four hundred and fifty years—As the course of the sacred history will by no means permit us to imagine that the judges, in their succession, continued four hundred and fifty years after the settlement of Israel in Canaan, it being stated, (1 Kings vi. 1,) that Solomon began to build the temple in the four hundred and eightieth year after they came out of Egypt; therefore, Sir Norton Knatchbull (with whom Bengelius, Doddridge, and many other learned men agree) is of opinion, that the apostle is not to be understood as signifying, "*how long God gave them judges, but when he gave them.*" He therefore refers the first words of this verse, *και μετα ταυτα ως ετεσι τετρακοσιοις και πενηκοντα*, to the words going before, (verse 17,) that is, to the time when *the God of the children of Israel chose their fathers*: and points and renders them thus: *And afterward, about four hundred and fifty years, or, and about four hundred and fifty years afterward, he gave them judges, &c.*; according to which sense, he observes, the old Latin and the Ethiopic interpreters read the passage; adding, (*Annot. on some difficult Texts in the New Testament*, p. 131,) "*now this time, wherein God may properly be said to have chosen their fathers, about four hundred and fifty years before he gave them judges, is by them computed from the birth of Isaac, in whom God may properly be said to have chosen their fathers; for in his family the covenant was to rest. And, to make this computation evident: From the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, are sixty years; from thence to their going into Egypt, one hundred and thirty; from thence to their coming out, two hundred and ten; from thence to their entrance into the land of Canaan, forty; and from thence to the division of the land, the time wherein it had rest, (about which time, it is probable, they began to settle their government by judges,) seven years; which, altogether, make up four hundred and forty-seven. And if it should be reckoned from the year before, when God established his covenant between himself and Abraham, and all his seed after him, (Gen. xvii. 19,) then it will be four hundred and forty-eight years, which comes one nearer to our number of four hundred and fifty; and answers sufficiently the apostle's manner of expression, ως, about four hundred and fifty years.*"

Verses 21, 22. *Afterward they desired a king*—Being foolishly desirous of being like the neighbouring nations in that respect, and insensible of the favour which God had done them in assuming the character and relation of a king to them. *And God gave them Saul*—Whose government, with that of Samuel the prophet, lasted for *the space of forty years*—So Beza, Grotius, Limborch, and many other

A. M. 4049. 22 And ^a when he had removed him, ^{A. D. 45.} ^b he raised up unto them David to be their king: to whom also he gave testimony, and said, ^c I have found David the *son of Jesse*, ^d a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

23 ^e Of this man's seed hath God, according ^f to his promise, raised unto Israel ^g a Saviour, Jesus:

24 ^h When John had first preached, before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, ⁱ Who think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose.

26 ^j Men *and* brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fear-

eth God, ^k to you is the word of this A. M. 4049
A. D. 45. salvation sent.

27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, ^l because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets ^m which are read every sabbath day, ⁿ they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*.

28 ^o And though they found no cause of death *in him*, ^p yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

29 ^q And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, ^r they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre.

30 ^s But God raised him from the dead:

31 And ^t he was seen many days of them which came up with him ^u from Galilee to Jerusalem, ^v who are his witnesses unto the people.

^e 1 Samuel xv. 23; xxvi. 28; xvi. 1.—^f 1 Samuel xvi. 13. ^g Psa. lxxxix. 20.—^h 1 Sam. xiii. 14.—ⁱ Isa. xi. 1; Luke i. 32, 69; Chap. ii. 30.—^j 2 Samuel vii. 12; Psa. cxxxii. 11. ^k Matt. i. 21; Romans xi. 26.—^l Matthew iii. 1; Luke iii. 3. ^m Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 7; John i. 20, 27.—ⁿ *Easter* Tuesday, epistle, verse 26 to verse 42.—^o Matt. x. 6; Luke xxiv. 47;

Verse 46; Chap. iii. 26.—^p Luke xxiii. 34; Chap. iii. 17; 1 Corinthians ii. 8.—^q Verses 14, 15; Chap. xv. 21.—^r Luke xxiv. 20.—^s Matt. xxvii. 22.—^t Chap. iii. 13, 14.—^u Luke xviii. 31; xxiv. 44.—^v Matthew xxvii. 59; Mark xv. 46. ^w Matthew xxviii. 6.—^x Matthew xxviii. 16.—^y Chapter i. 11.—^z Chap. i. 8.

eminent critics. *And when he had removed him*—In his righteous displeasure, from reigning over Israel; *he raised up unto them David*—Hence they might understand that the dispensations of God admitted of various changes; *to whom he gave a more glorious testimony*—Than to Saul. See 1 Sam. xiii. 14; Psa. lxxxix. 20. *And said, I have found David, &c., 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 the respect here mentioned: he performed *all God's will*—In the particulars there spoken of. 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*.” So Mr. Wesley: and in the same sense Dr. Benson understands the words, observing, “when it is said that King David was *a man after God's own heart*, it ought to be understood of his public, not of his private character. He was a man *after God's own heart*, because he ruled his people Israel according to the divine will. He did not allow of idolatry; he did not set up for absolute power; he was guided in the government of the nation by the law of Moses, as the standing rule of government, and by the prophet, or the divine oracle, whereby God gave directions upon particular emergencies. That this was the meaning of David's being *a man after God's own heart*, will easily appear by comparing 1 Sam.

xv. 28; xxviii. 17, 18; 1 Chron. ix. 13, 14; Psa. lxxviii. 70, &c.; lxxxix. 20, &c.”

Verses 23–25. *Of this man's seed*—From that *rod out of the stem of Jesse*, that *branch out of his roots*; *hath God, according to his promise*, (Isa. ix. 6, 7; xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6,) *raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus*—So long foretold in the sacred oracles. *When John had first preached, before his coming*—Greek, *προ προσωπι της εισοδος*, *to introduce his appearance*: (so Doddridge:) *the baptism of repentance*—Even that baptism which, in token of their repentance, they were commanded by God to receive. Of John's preaching, see the notes on Matt. iii. 1, &c.; Luke iii. 7–17. He mentions the preaching of John in this incidental manner 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 in foreign countries, at least as remote as Pisidia. *As John fulfilled his course*—His work was quickly finished, and, therefore, *might well be termed, a course, or race*: *he said, Who think ye that I am? I am not he*—I am not the person whom you suppose me to be, that is, the Messiah. See the notes on John i. 20, 27.

Verses 28–31. *Men and brethren*—Even all you who are *children of the stock of Abraham*—Whether ye are my equals in years, or of more advanced age *And whosoever among you feareth God*—Of whatever family or nation you may be; *unto you is the word of this salvation sent*—A great and important salvation, which I am commissioned to preach and offer to mankind. *For they that dwell at Jerusalem, &c.*—He here anticipates a strong objection, “Why did not the people at Jerusalem, and especially their rulers, believe?” *They knew him not*

A. M. 4049. 32 And we declare unto you glad
A. D. 45. tidings, how that * the promise which
was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their
children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again;
as it is also written in the second psalm,
† Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten
thee.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up
from the dead, now no more to return to cor-
ruption, he said on this wise, † I will give you
the sure † mercies of David.

* Gen. iii. 15.—† Psa. ii. 7.—‡ Isa. lv. 3.—§ Gr. τὰ ὄντια,
holy, or, just things; which word the LXX., both in the place
of Isa. lv. 3, and in many others, use for that which is in the
Hebrew, mercies.

—Though God bore a most convincing testimony to
him by the wonderful miracles which he performed;
nor yet the voices of the prophets—They did not be-
lieve in him, because they understood not those very
prophets whose writings they read or heard contin-
ually. Their very condemning him, innocent as he
was, proves that they understood not the prophecies
concerning him. *And when they had*—Inadvertent-
ly, without intending any thing of the kind; *fulfilled
all that was written of him*—In such a circumstan-
tial detail of particulars as is truly astonishing; *they
took him down from the tree*—On which he had ex-
pired in the midst of ignominy and torture; *and
laid him in a sepulchre*—Permitted his friends to
bury him. *But God raised him from the dead*—
According to the prediction of the prophets, and also
his own prediction, frequently repeated, which they
had heard from him before; but the accomplish-
ment of which they were unable to hinder. *And he
was seen many days*—After he was risen from the
dead; *of them which came up with him from Gal-
ilee*—A little before his death. This last journey
both presupposes all the rest, and was the most im-
portant of all. *Who are his witnesses to the people*
—Of the Jews, among whom they still reside.

Verses 32-37. *And we declare unto you glad ti-
dings*—Tidings which should be in a particular
manner acceptable to the Jews; *that the promise
which was made unto the fathers*—And was the
hope and joy of their posterity through so many
succeeding ages; *God hath fulfilled unto us their
children*—Most signally and manifestly; *in that he
hath raised up Jesus again*—From the dead, and
thereby hath declared, in the most convincing man-
ner, that he is indeed his Son, the Messiah; *as it is
also written in the second Psalm*—By this it appears
that the Psalms were then placed in the same order
as they are now; and it is observable that this is the
only quotation of the Old Testament so circumstan-
tially made in the New. *Thou art my Son, this
day, &c.*—It is true, he was the Son of God before
his incarnation, yea, from eternity. See notes on
John i. 1-5; Heb. i. 2-12; vii. 3. The meaning
therefore, here is, I have this day declared thee to

35 Wherefore he saith also in an- A. M. 4049
other psalm, † Thou shalt not suffer A. D. 45.
thy Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, † after he had served his own
generation by the will of God, † fell on sleep,
and was laid unto his fathers, and saw cor-
ruption:

37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no
corruption.

38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and
brethren, that † through this man is preached
unto you the forgiveness of sins;

† Psalm xvi. 10; Chapter ii. 31.—‡ Or, after he had in
his own age served the will of God.—§ 1 Kings ii. 10; Chap.
ii. 29.—¶ Jeremiah xxxi. 34; Daniel ix. 24; Luke xxiv. 47;
1 John ii. 12.

be my Son, as (Rom. i. 4) Paul says, he was *declared
to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection
from the dead*. And it is with peculiar propriety
and beauty that God is said to have *begotten him*
when he raised him from the dead, as Jesus seemed
then to be born out of the earth anew. *And to show
that he raised him up, no more to return to corrup-
tion*—That is, to die no more; *he said, I will give
you the sure mercies of David*—The blessings
promised to David in Christ, which are sure, certain,
and firm to every true believer in him. Or, “mercies
by the resurrection of him whom I have now set upon
the throne of David, are made sure to you, and shall
prove eternal as his life and reign.” The resurrec-
tion of Christ, therefore, is implied in the words:
for without it those blessings could not have been
given. *Wherefore he saith also*, (namely, Psa. xvi.
10.) *Thou shalt not suffer thy Holy One to see
corruption*—Words which, it is evident, must refer,
not to the inspired writer himself, but to some other
person; for David—By whom this Psalm was writ-
ten; *after he had served his own generation, by the
will of God*—Or, as the words may be rendered, *had
served the will of God in his generation; fell asleep*
—That is, died; *and saw corruption*—In the same
manner as other human bodies do, when the soul is
separated from them. Observe, reader, the charac-
ter here given of David; *he served the will of God,
or, served his generation according to the will of
God*. This was his business here on earth: he lived
for this purpose. What is thy business? 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? O
remember, only he that doth the will of God *shall
enter the kingdom of heaven*, Matt. vii. 21.

Verses 38, 39. *Be it known unto you, therefore*—Be
persuaded of this as a most certain and momentous
truth, a truth infinitely consolatory; *that through
this man*—This seed of David, and Son of God; *is
preached unto you the forgiveness of sins*—The
free, full, and assured pardon of all your offences,
be they ever so great, and ever so aggravated. *And
by him*—By his mediation, by his sacrifice and in-

A. M. 4019. 39 And ¹ by him all that believe are
A. D. 45. justified from all things, from which
ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you
which is spoken of in ^m the prophets:

¹ Isa. liii. 11; Rom. iii. 28; viii. 3; Heb. vii. 19.

tercession; all that believe—Greek, *πας ο πιστων*, every one that believeth; namely, in him as the Messiah promised of old, the Saviour of the world, able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him; every one that relies entirely on him for salvation, present and eternal, and receives him in all his offices and characters, (of which see the note on John i. 12,) every one whose faith in him, and in the declarations and promises of his gospel, *worketh by love*, Gal. v. 6; *is justified from all things*—Has the actual forgiveness of all his sins, and is accounted righteous by and before God at the very time of his believing. Observe, *from all things*, not only from the guilt of smaller miscarriages, but even of those things which are in the highest degree criminal; and *from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*—By the whole or any part thereof, moral or ceremonial. Not only ye cannot now, but ye never could: for that law afforded no expiation for presumptuous sins, so that the offender should be exempted from temporal punishment, but he was to die *without mercy under two or three witnesses*, that is, if two or three witnesses attested his guilt; nor could the sacrifices of it remove the guilt of such sins, or indeed of any sin, before God, make an atonement to his justice, or procure the sinner's reconciliation with him. See Heb. x. 1–12. The Mosaic “law appointed sin-offerings to expiate smaller offences, so far as the offender who offered them should be free from all further prosecution on account of them. But this very view of them shows how absolutely necessary to the being of society it was, that they should not be admitted in cases of murder, adultery, &c. These crimes, therefore, were made capital; nor was the dying criminal, however penitent, allowed to offer them, which would have been quite inconsistent with the temporal pardon connected with them. But the expiatory sacrifice of Christ takes away the guilt of all sin,” with respect to the penitent that believe aright on him; “and though it by no means affects the manner in which offenders may stand in human courts, (which the Mosaic sacrifices did,) it delivers from the condemnation of God in the invisible world; with respect to which, those of the Mosaic law could have no efficacy at all,” except so far as penitent offenders, considering these sacrifices as typifying that of Christ, were brought, through them, to have a believing dependance on him and his sacrifice.

Verses 40, 41. *Beware, therefore*—A weighty and reasonable admonition with which the apostle enforces the very important doctrine which he had just delivered. No reproof is, as yet, added to it: *lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the*

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41 Behold, ye despisers, and wōn- A. M. 4049.
der, and perish: for I work a work A. D. 45.
in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise
believe, though a man declare it unto you.

42 ¶ And when the Jews were gone out of

^m Isa. xxix. 14; Hab. i. 5.

prophets—The apostle refers to Hab. i. 5, where the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Chaldeans is foretold, as an incredible and unparalleled destruction; and that prophecy is here, with the greatest propriety and correctness, applied to the destruction which was coming on that nation by the Romans, for rejecting the gospel of Christ. The apostle follows the Septuagint translation, which, reading, it seems, *βνρις*, *despisers*, instead of *βνγις*, *among the nations*, renders the clause, *Ιδετε οι καταφρονηται, και επιβλεψατε, και θαυμασατε θαυμασια, και αφανισθητε*, *See, ye despisers, and behold, and wonder with astonishment, and disappear, or perish*; words exactly the same with those used here by the apostle, according to Luke, save that the apostle omits *και επιβλεψατε*, and *θαυμασια*. It is as if the apostle had said, “See that the same thing do not happen to you which formerly happened to your ancestors, when the city and temple were destroyed, and they themselves were carried into captivity for despising God's blessings.” So Grotius. Or, as Dr. Hammond paraphrases the passage, “You are therefore nearly concerned to take heed and beware, that by your obstinately resisting and rejecting this way of salvation now preached, you do not bring destruction upon yourselves, and cause the gospel to be removed to the Gentiles, (verse 46,) which is a thing that will come to pass suddenly, though so incredible to you, that you will not believe it when the news of it shall come unto you by them that see it done.” The *work* here spoken of, which the apostle says they would not believe, though credibly attested to them, may be either, 1st, God's great work of redeeming the world by Christ, a work which the Jews would in no wise believe, according to Isa. liii. 1, *Who hath believed our report?* or, 2d, The work of their destruction as a nation; the dissolving of their polity; the taking of the kingdom of God from them, and giving it to the Gentiles; the destruction of their temple and city, and the dispersion of their people: an awful work of God this, which one would not have believed should ever have been wrought, considering how much they had been the favourites of Heaven. What was said (Lam. iv. 12) of the calamities which befell them by the Chaldeans, was more especially true of their last destruction: *all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem*, and have made such destruction, burning the city and temple, slaying upward of a million of people, and either carrying or selling the rest into captivity: so that no prophecy could be more properly applied, the former destruction being a lively emblem of the latter.

Verses 42, 43. *When the Jews were gone out*—Or
(49*) a

A. M. 4049. the synagogue, the Gentiles besought
A. D. 45. that these words might be preached to
them ⁵ the next sabbath.

43 Now, when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, ² persuaded them to continue in ^o the grace of God.

44 ¶ And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and ^p spake against

⁵ Gr. in the week between, or, in the sabbath between.—^a Chap. xi. 23; xiv. 22.—^b Tit. ii. 11; Hebrews xii. 15; 1 Pet. v. 12. ^c Chap. xviii. 6; 1 Pet. iv. 4; Jude 10.—^d Matt. x. 6; Chap.

rather, while they were going out, as the original expression means; of the synagogue—For probably many of them, not bearing to hear him, went out before he had done speaking; the Gentiles—Many of whom, it seems, were assembled on this occasion; besought that these words—Or the same doctrines; might be preached to them the next sabbath—Greek, εις το μεταξυ σαββατων, in the intermediate sabbath—That is, says Bengelius, “the sabbath that should occur within the remaining days about to be spent by Paul and Barnabas at Antioch.” But Grotius is confident that the reading ought to be, μεταξυ σαββατων, medio tempore inter duo sabbata, in the intermediate time between the two sabbaths, or in the course of the ensuing week; Mondays and Thursdays, or the second and fifth days of the week, being times in which the pious Jews were accustomed to meet together in the synagogue for the study of the law, in compliance, says Lightfoot, with the appointment of Ezra. It seems, however, to be fully determined, by verse 44, that our version gives the true sense of the expression: and Capellus and Whitby have shown that it is not an unexampled manner of speaking. And when the congregation was broken up—Or dispersed; many of the Jews also, and religious proselytes—Seriously impressed by what they had heard; followed Paul and Barnabas—Desirous to receive further instructions from them, or attached themselves to them as disciples; who, speaking to them—More familiarly; persuaded them to continue in the grace of God—That is, in the faith into which they were brought by the grace of God.

Verses 44, 45. And the next sabbath came almost the whole city together—Idolaters as well as proselytes; to hear the word of God—In consequence, it seems, of the report which the Gentiles had spread abroad of what had been delivered before, whereby an earnest desire had been awakened in many, of attending that repetition of their extraordinary message which the apostles had engaged themselves to make. But when the Jews—Of the more bigoted sort; saw the multitude—And considered what an encouragement it was to Paul to go on in his work; they were filled with envy—Greek, ζηλας, with zeal, namely, for the honour of their law and nation,

those things which were spoken by A. M. 4049. Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. A. D. 45.

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, ^q It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but ^r seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, ^s we turn to the Gentiles:

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, ‘I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

iii. 26; Verse 26; Rom. i. 16.—^r Exodus xxxiii. 10; Deut. xxxiii. 21; Isa. lv. 5; Matt. xxi. 43; Rom. x. 19.—^s Chapter xviii. 6; xxviii. 28.—^t Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 6; Luke ii. 32.

which they foolishly imagined to be disgraced and injured by this new sect; and with indignation and envy at the regard which the inhabitants of Antioch showed to Paul's doctrine, beyond what they had ever done to the Jewish religion; and spake against—Opposed; those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming—They contradicted Paul's doctrine concerning the sufferings and death of the Messiah, and reviled him, or rather Jesus, calling him an impostor, because he had not been able, they said, to deliver himself from death, though he pretended to be the Christ.

Verses 46, 47. Then Paul and Barnabas—Perceiving that no good impression could be made upon them; waxed bold—Used great freedom of speech; and said, It was necessary—According to the general instructions of our Divine Master; that the word of God should first be spoken to you—He shows that he had not preached to them from any confidence of their believing; but seeing ye put it from you, and—By that very action, in effect; judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life—Persons unfit to have it offered to you. This text plainly shows that persons may be said to be self-condemned, who furnish out matter of condemnation from their own words, though they do not actually pass sentence on themselves: for nothing was further from the thoughts of these Jews than to declare themselves unworthy of eternal life, because they did not believe the gospel; for they rather expected that life by rejecting it. They, indeed, judged none but themselves worthy of it; yet their conduct in rejecting the gospel, was the same as saying, We are unworthy of eternal life; as it effectually precluded their obtaining it. Lo, we turn to the Gentiles—Not that they intended entirely to desist from preaching to the Jews, for we find they continued to address them first in other places wherever they came; 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. For so hath the Lord commanded us—See Matt. xxviii. 19; chap. i. 8; in consequence of that prediction which was uttered by Isaiah in the name of God; saying—To his

A. M. 4049. 48 And when the Gentiles heard
A. D. 45. this, they were glad, and glorified the

* Chap.

Son, the Messiah; *I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles, &c.*

Verse 48. *And when the Gentiles heard this*—That such things had been prophesied concerning them many ages ago, and that the way was now open for their admission into covenant with the true God, and that the Lord Jesus had commanded his apostles to receive them into his church, and to admit them to all the benefits of the Messiah's kingdom, without subjecting them to the law of Moses; *they were glad*—And well they might be so, for they had now the door of faith set wide open to them; *and glorified the word of the Lord*—Which had invited them to share in all the blessings of his grace, and brought to them the knowledge of salvation. *And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*—From this expression some infer, that God's ordination, or decree, is the sole or principal cause of men's faith, and that he hath thereby fixed the number of those that shall believe, and whom he will finally save. But if so, consequently the want, or absence, of such ordination or decree, in behalf of others, is the sole or principal reason of their unbelief; and by God withholding it, he has fixed the number of those that shall not believe, and so shall finally perish. For if the reason why these persons believed was only, or chiefly this, that they were ordained to believe, and obtain eternal life, then the reason why the rest believed not must be only, or chiefly this, that they were not so ordained by God. And, if so, what necessity could there be, that *the word of God should first be preached to them*, verse 46. Was it only that their damnation might be greater? This seems to charge that lover of souls, whose *tender mercies are over all his works*, with the greatest cruelty, as it makes him determine from all eternity, not only that so many souls, as capable of salvation as any others, shall perish everlastingly, but also that the dispensations of his providence shall be such toward them, as shall necessarily tend to the aggravation of their condemnation. And what could even their most malicious enemy do more? What is it that Satan himself aims at by all his temptations, but the aggravation of the future punishment of sinners? Therefore, to assert that God had determined his word should be spoken to these Jews for this very end, (which assertion must follow from such an interpretation of the text,) is to make God more instrumental to their ruin than even the devil himself; and is certainly wholly irreconcilable with his declarations, that *he is not willing any should perish*, but *would have all men to be saved*. Further, the apostle gives this reason, why he turned from the Jews to the Gentiles, that the Jews had *thrust the word of God from them, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life*, verse 46; whereas, according to this doctrine, this could be no sufficient reason of his turning from them to the Gentiles; for it was only they among

word of the Lord: "and as many as A. M. 4049
were ordained to eternal life, believed. A. D. 45.

ii. 47.

the Jews whom God had not ordained to eternal life, who thus refused to believe, and obey the word of God. And as many among the Gentiles as were not thus ordained must necessarily do the same; and so there could be no sufficient reason why he should turn to the Gentiles on that account. Once more, "If as many as [in that assembly] were ordained to eternal life, believed under that sermon of Paul, [when almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God,] it follows, that all who believed not then were eternally shut up in unbelief: and that all the elect believed at once; that they who do not believe at one time, shall not believe at another; and that when Paul returned to Antioch, few souls, if any, could be converted by his ministry; God having at once taken as many as were ordained to eternal life, and left all the rest to Satan."—Fletcher. We are therefore obliged to look out for another sense of the word *τεταγμενοι*, and that is easily found. It is a passive participle of the verb *τασσω*, which, although it has various significations, is never used to express eternal predestination of any kind. It is rendered *ordained* here, and Rom. xiii. 1; (where the margin certainly more properly renders it *ordered*;) elsewhere, as chap. xv. 2, to *determine*; 1 Cor. xvi. 15, to *addict one's self*; and frequently to *dispose, place, or appoint*. In the Greek classics, in its passive form, it is generally used of men, who, having been appointed for some military expedition, (and set in their proper offices, as it is rendered, Luke vii. 8,) were drawn up in battle array for that purpose. So that it expresses, or refers, at once to the action of their commander, marshalling them, and to their own presenting themselves in their proper places, to be led on to the intended expedition. So Dr. Doddridge, who adds, "This I take to be precisely its sense here, and have therefore chosen the word *determined*, as having an ambiguity something like that in the original. The meaning of the sacred penman seems to be, that all who were deeply and seriously concerned about their eternal happiness, (whether that concern began now, or were of longer date,) *openly embraced the gospel*: for surely none could be said to believe who did not make an open profession of Christianity." In a similar sense, the clause is understood by Dr. Hammond, who renders it, *As many as were disposed for eternal life believed*: and by Dr. Heylin, whose translation and gloss upon it is, *As many as were in a fit disposition for eternal life believed*. Dr. Waterland also, and many of the most learned expositors, interpret it in the same manner, namely, as describing those who were, *at this time*, in a disposition to comply with the terms on which God, by his apostle, now offered them eternal life; that is, to repent, believe, and obey the gospel. In other words, "As many as were brought to a resolution of courageously facing all opposition in the way to it, believed, and openly embraced the Christian

A. M. 4049. 49 And the word of the Lord
A. D. 45. was published throughout all the re-
gion.

50 ¶ But the Jews stirred up the devout and
honourable women, and the chief men of the
city, and * raised persecution against Paul and

* 2 Tim. iii. 11.—† Matt. x. 14; Mark vi. 11; Luke ix. 5;

religion, as the best means to prepare them for an endless life of the greatest virtue and purity, as well as of the greatest glory and most perfect happiness.⁷⁷ The Syriac, likewise, one of the most ancient versions of the New Testament, has rendered the passage in the same sense, which is of great moment, as that translation was made before the meaning of this place was disputed by the different sects and parties of Christians. The sum is: All those, and only those, now believed, who yielded to, instead of resisting the convictions produced in their minds by the preaching of the truth, and the influence of the grace of God, which truth was preached with equal clearness to others, and which grace, in a similar way, visited and strove with others: for God had not reprobated the rest. It was his will that they also should have been saved, but by yielding to inclinations, affections, and passions, which they themselves knew to be sinful, and to which they were under no necessity of yielding, they rejected the counsel of God against themselves, and thrust salvation from them. For they who then repented and believed were not constrained so to do, but grace and mercy were then freely and copiously offered to them, and pressed upon them, and they did not put it away, but yielded to its influence. So that a great multitude, even of such as, it seems, had been idolatrous Gentiles, were converted. Those who wish for further satisfaction on this verse, may find it in Hammond, Whitby, and Dodd, upon it: in Sellon's *Arguments against General Redemption considered*. Works, vol. ii. p. 128: and in Fletcher's *Checks to Antinomianism*. Works, Am. ed., vol. ii. pp. 77, 78.

Verses 49–52. *And the word of the Lord was published throughout all that region*—Paul and Barnabas, it seems, during their stay at Antioch, made excursions into the neighbouring country, for the sake of preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles; or the people who came from the country to Antioch, and believed the doctrine preached by Paul and Barnabas, carried the glad tidings of salvation home

Barnabas, and expelled them out of A. M. 4049.
their coasts. A. D. 45.

51 † But they shook off the dust of their feet
against them, and came unto Iconium.

52 And the disciples * were filled with joy
and with the Holy Ghost.

Chap. xviii. 6.—† Matt. v. 12; John xvi. 22; Chap. ii. 46.

with them. From this time forth it appears in all the Gentile countries. Paul, after preaching to the Jews, constantly offered salvation to the Gentiles, and by so doing fulfilled the commission which he had received from Christ, when he made him his apostle to the Gentiles. *But the Jews stirred up the devout, &c.*—The unbelieving Jews in Antioch, greatly enraged at the success with which Paul and Barnabas preached to the Gentiles, *stirred up some women of considerable rank, who, having been proselyted to their religion, were peculiarly zealous for it; and the chief men of the city*—Also, who probably were the husbands of these proselyted women; *raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas*—Representing them, doubtless, as excitors of sedition, and innovators in religion, who might occasion danger to the state; *and expelled them out of their coasts*—Out of the territory belonging to Antioch. *But they shook off the dust of their feet*—For a testimony *against them*; as Christ had commanded his apostles to do, in token of the certain ruin which should befall such despisers of his gospel. See on Matt. x. 14. *And came unto Iconium*—Where they renewed the proclamation of those glad tidings, which many of the inhabitants of Antioch had so ungratefully rejected. This place lay on the western border of Lycaonia, and on the confines of Pisidia, Galatia, and Phrygia; to the latter of which it seems once to have belonged. See Raphelius. *And the disciples*—Who remained at Antioch; *were filled with joy*—That so blessed a message as that which Paul and Barnabas had brought them, had reached their ears, and been received by them; *and with the Holy Ghost*—With his enlightening, sanctifying, and comforting influences, and probably also with, at least, some of his extraordinary gifts; confirming them in the faith which they had newly embraced; and likewise qualifying them for carrying on the cause of Christ in that place, when the first planters of their church could no longer continue to cultivate and water it.

CHAPTER XIV.

In this chapter, (1.) After successfully preaching the gospel at Iconium, persecution causes Paul and Barnabas to flee to Lystra, Derbe, and the places adjacent, 1–7. (2.) At Lystra they heal a lame man; upon which the people could scarcely be restrained from worshipping them as gods, 8–18. (3.) Quickly after, instigated by the Jews, they stoned Paul till they thought he was dead, 19, 20. (4.) They visit the churches which they had lately planted, in order to appoint elders, or pastors, to feed and rule the flocks, 21–23. (5.) Returning to Antioch, they report what things the Lord had done by the gospel in their hands, 24–28.

A. M. 4019. **AND** it came to pass in Iconium, A. D. 45. that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude, both of the Jews, and also of the Greeks, believed.

2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, ^a which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs

^a Mark xvi. 20; Heb. ii. 4.—^b Chap. xiii. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Verse 1. *And it came to pass in Iconium*—Whither Paul and Barnabas were forced to retire from Antioch; *that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews*—To whom they were still disposed to make the first offer of the gospel: for though the Jews at Antioch had used them cruelly, yet they would not therefore decline preaching to the Jews at Iconium, who, perhaps, might be better disposed. Let not those of any denomination be condemned in the gross; nor any individuals of mankind, of whatever sect or party, suffer for the faults of others; rather let us do good to those whose friends and associates, or who themselves, have done evil to us; *and they so spake*—On the great subject of the gospel salvation; spake so plainly, so convincingly, so warmly, so affectionately, and with such manifest concern for the souls of men, and especially with such evident demonstration of the Spirit and power; *that a great multitude, both of the Jews and Greeks, believed*—By the *Greeks* here, we are to understand, not the *Hellenists*, or persons of Jewish extraction, who spoke the Greek language, but the Gentile Greeks, descended from heathen ancestors. Most of these, being now found in the synagogue of the Jews, were, without doubt, religious proselytes, though probably not circumcised; for few of the idolaters frequented the Jewish synagogues. It is not improbable, however, that the fame of such extraordinary teachers as Paul and Barnabas might, on this occasion, draw together many people who did not usually worship in the synagogues. From the Jews and proselytes being so numerous in Iconium, we may infer that it was a very great and populous city.

Verses 2-4. *But the unbelieving Jews*—Who were greatly provoked at the growing success of the gospel, and studied all they could to put a stop to its progress; *stirred up the Gentiles*—The idolatrous Gentiles, the heathen inhabitants of the place; *and made their minds evil affected*—Greek, *εκακωσαν τας ψυχας*, irritated; or, *exasperated their souls against the brethren*—Against the disciples of Christ, and especially against those celebrated teachers of a religion against which they had imbibed strong prejudices. *Long time, therefore, abode they*—Namely, Paul and Barnabas; *speaking boldly in the Lord*—Because the minds of the Gentiles

and wonders to be done by their hands. A. M. 4050. A. D. 46.

4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the ^b apostles.

5 And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews, with their rulers, ^c to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them,

6 They were ware of *it*, and ^d fled unto Lys- tra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about:

^c 2 Tim. iii. 11.—^d Matt. x. 23.

were so filled with prejudice and malignity against them, one would have thought, that therefore they should have withdrawn and hastened out of the way; or, if they had preached, should have preached cautiously, for fear of giving further provocation to those who were already sufficiently enraged: no, but the contrary; therefore they abode there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord: the more they perceived the spirit and rancour of the town against the new converts, the more they were animated to go on in their work, and the more needful they saw it to continue among them, to confirm them in the faith, and to comfort them. *Who gave testimony unto the word of his grace*—Which they delivered, working with them according to his promise, *Lo, I am with you always: and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands*—Which were of great use to confirm the faith of the new converts, and to prevail with many others to receive the gospel, and which might have convinced all the inhabitants, if they had exercised a becoming candour. *But the multitude of the city was divided*—Into two parties, and both very active and vigorous: among the rulers and persons of rank, and among the common people, there were some that *held with the unbelieving Jews*, and others that held with the apostles. It seems this business of the preaching of the gospel was so universally taken notice of with concern, that almost every adult person, even of the *multitude of the city*, was either for it or against it; none stood neuter: all were either for them or their enemies; for God or Baal; for Christ or Beelzebub.

Verses 5-7. *And when there was an assault made*—Or was about to be made; *both of the Gentiles, and the Jews*—Who, though generally at enmity with one another, yet were united against the Christians, as Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Pharisees and Sadducees, against Christ. If the church's enemies can unite for its destruction, shall not its friends, laying aside all personal feuds, unite for its preservation? *To use them despitefully*—To expose them to disgrace; and *then to stone, and put them to death*: and thus they hoped to ruin their cause. *They were aware of it*—When the project was just ripe for execution, Paul and Barnabas received intelligence of it, and prevented the bloody attempt by withdrawing from thence; they *fled unto Lystra first, and then to Derbe*; and after that to

A. M. 4050. 7 And there they preached the gos-
A. D. 46. pel.

8 ¶ And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.

9 The same heard Paul speak: who steadfastly beholding him, and ^fperceiving that he had faith to be healed,

10 Said with a loud voice, ^gStand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, ^hThe gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

^a Chap. iii. 2.—^b Matt. viii. 10; ix. 28, 29.—^c Isa. xxxv. 6.
^d Chap. viii. 10; xxviii. 6.—^e Dan. ii. 46.—^f Matt. xxvii. 65.
^g Chap. x. 26.

the region that lay round Lycaonia, namely, the region of Phrygia and Galatia. In thus fleeing from their persecutors they followed their Master's advice, who directed them, when persecuted in one city, to flee unto another: for though he enabled them to work miracles for the confirmation of the gospel, he gave them no power of working any to save themselves from persecution. *And there they preached*—*Κακει ησαν ευαγγελιζομενοι, and there they were preaching; the gospel*—And that, it appears, in a very successful manner, so that the church was still increased by the very methods taken to destroy it.

Verses 8–10. *And there sat, &c.*—To the general account of the apostle's labours given above, the historian here subjoins a particular relation of some memorable events which happened at Lystra. *There sat a man impotent in his feet*—Disabled, as the word is, to that degree, that it was impossible he should set his feet to the ground, or lay any stress upon them; *being*—As was well known, a cripple from his mother's womb. This same man heard Paul speak—Having, it seems, been laid in some place of public resort, to beg alms of such as passed by, near where Paul was discoursing; *who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving*—By the arduous and humility expressed in his countenance, or by the gift of discerning spirits which he possessed; *that he had faith to be healed*—Had a degree of confidence in his soul, that the Jesus whom Paul preached could and would heal him: Paul probably finding at the same time in himself that the power of Christ was to be displayed on this occasion; *said with a loud voice*—In the hearing of all that were assembled there, as one that was conscious of the divine authority by which he then acted; *Stand, &c.*—Or, as is certainly implied, and as some copies read, *I say unto thee, in the name of the Lord Jesus, stand upright on thy feet*—And power went along with this word; for the lame man immediately leaped and walked—Thus showing that he was perfectly cured.

12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, ⁱand would have done sacrifice with the people.

14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, ^kthey rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

15 And saying, Sirs, ^lwhy do ye these things? ^mWe also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from ⁿthese vanities ^ounto the living God,

^a James v. 17; Rev. xix. 10.—^b 1 Sam. xii. 21; 1 Kings xvi. 13; Jeremiah xiv. 22; Amos ii. 4; 1 Corinthians viii. 4.
^c 1 Thess. i. 9.

Verses 11, 12. *And when the people*—Who were present when this wonderful cure was wrought; *saw what Paul had done*—By merely speaking a word, being all in raptures of astonishment; *they lifted up their voices*—In loud acclamations; *saying, The gods are come down*—Which the heathen 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: but these heathen, seeing mere men work one miracle, were for deifying them immediately! *And they called Barnabas, Jupiter, &c.*—Chrysostom observes, that the heathen represented Jupiter as an old, but vigorous man, of a noble and majestic aspect, and large robust make; which, therefore, he supposes might be the form of Barnabas: whereas Mercury appeared young, little, and nimble, as Paul might probably do, for he was yet but a young man. The reason, however, given by Luke is different, namely; *because he was, ο ηγεμενος τυ λογη, the chief speaker, or, the leader of the discourse*; on which account, they thought it more probable that he was Mercury, their god of eloquence.

Verses 13–17. *Then the priest of Jupiter*—Who was esteemed the tutelary deity of that place, and whose statue stood just without the gate; *brought oxen, or bulls rather, and garlands*—To put on the victims; the usual offerings to Jupiter; *to the gates*—Of the place where Paul and Barnabas were; and *would have done sacrifice to them*—To acknowledge the obligation they were under to them for this condescending and beneficent visit, and to take this opportunity of imploring their continued protection in their public and private affairs. *Which when the apostles heard*—As they were leading on the sacrificial procession toward them; *they rent their clothes*—In token of that mixture of indignation and sorrow with which they beheld this strange abuse of a miracle, wrought to destroy that idolatry, which from thence they took occasion to practise;

A. M. 4050. ² which made heaven, and earth, and
A. D. 45. the sea, and all things that are therein :

16 ¹ Who in times past suffered all nations
to walk in their own ways.

17 ¹ Nevertheless he left not himself without
witness, in that he did good, and ² gave us
rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling
our hearts with food and gladness.

¹ Gen. i. 1; Psa. xxxiii. 6; cxlvi. 6; Rev. xiv. 7.—² Psa.
lxxi. 12; Chap. xvii. 30; 1 Pet. iv. 3.—³ Chap. xvii. 27;
Rom. i. 20.

and ran in among the people, crying—With the greatest vehemence, as in a fire, or other sudden and great danger; *Sirs, why do ye these things*—With regard to us? We are not what you imagine us to be; but *men of like passions with you*—Obnoxious to the same common infirmities of human life with yourselves; and *preach that ye should 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, and the sea—Each of which they supposed to have its own gods. *Who in time past*—He prevents their objecting, “But if these things were so, we should have heard them from our fathers;” *suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*—In the idolatries which they had chosen, without instructing them by divinely-inspired teachers; which was an awful, but just judgment upon them. Observe, the multitude of them that err, does not turn error into truth. Though all nations practised idolatry, yet every kind and species of it is founded on a lie. *Nevertheless*—Though even then; *he left not himself without witness*—Of his being, perfections, and providence, in any country. Besides the witness for God within them, the dictates of conscience, they had witnesses for God around them, in the bounties of his providence. Their not having inspired teachers among them, nor the Holy Scriptures, did in part excuse them; and therefore God did not destroy them for their idolatry, as he did the Jewish nation. But that did not wholly excuse them; notwithstanding it they were deeply criminal before God: for there were other witnesses for God, sufficient to inform them that he, and he only, was to be worshipped; and that to him they owed all their services, from whom they received all their comforts, and therefore were guilty of the highest injustice and ingratitude imaginable, in alienating their services from him. *In that he did good*—To all his creatures, with a bountiful hand, and especially to mankind. Even by punishments God testifies of himself: but more peculiarly by benefits. *And gave us*—All, whether Jews or Gentiles; *rain from heaven and fruitful seasons*—Which could not come by chance, nor were caused by the vain idols of the heathen. Observe, reader, 1st, All the powers of nature witness to us a sovereign power in the God of nature, from whom they are derived, and on whom they depend. It is not the heaven that gives

18 And with these sayings scarce A. M. 4050.
restrained they the people, that they A. D. 46.
had not done sacrifice unto them.

19 ¹ And there came thither *certain Jews*
from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded
the people, ² and having stoned Paul, drew
him out of the city, supposing he had been
dead.

¹ Lev. xxvi. 4; Deut. xi. 14; xxviii. 12; Job v. 10; Psa. lxx.
10; lxxviii. 9; cxlvii. 8; Jer. xiv. 22; Matt. v. 45.—² Chap.
xiii. 45.—³ 2 Cor. xi. 25; 2 Tim. iii. 11.

us rain, but God that gives us rain from heaven. 2d, The benefits which we have, by these powers of nature, witness to us that we ought to make our acknowledgments, not to the creatures that are made serviceable to us, but to the Creator, who makes them so. God seems to reckon the instances of his goodness to be more cogent proofs of his title to our homage and adoration, than the evidences of his greatness; for his goodness is his glory. “As a friend, in sending us frequent presents, expresses his remembrance of us and affection to us, though he neither speak nor write to us; so all the gifts of the divine bounty, which are scattered abroad on every side, are so many witnesses sent to attest the divine care and goodness, and they speak it in very sensible language to the heart, though not to the ear.” *And with these sayings*—Plain and reasonable as they were; *scarce restrained they the people*—From their purpose of sacrificing to them. So strongly were idolaters in love with their idolatrous practices!

Verse 19. *There came, &c.*—The sacred historian now proceeds to give us a remarkable instance of the fickleness of the multitude. Soon after Paul and Barnabas had put a stop to that undue respect which the people at Lystra would have shown them, on account of the above-mentioned miraculous cure which they had wrought, and had instructed them to worship none but the true God; *certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium*—Came thither, having heard, it is likely, of the respect that was shown there to Paul and Barnabas, and incensed the people against them, persuading them to disbelieve their doctrine, and representing them as impostors; perhaps as two wicked magicians, who were endeavouring to overturn every thing sacred, both among the Jews and the Gentiles; or, at least, as seditious and dangerous persons, who ought not to be harboured. In this way they soon prejudiced the minds of the populace to such a degree against them, that the very people who but just before would have adored them as deities, now rose in a tumultuous manner to put them to death as malefactors; being moved with equal ease either to adore or murder them. So short-lived are human passions not governed by reason and principle! Thus, Israel fell into idolatry within forty days from God's giving them the law from mount Sinai. Nor could Paul expect any better treatment, when he considered that the same multitude who applauded Christ as king of the Jews, and followed

A. M. 4050. 20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood
A. D. 46. round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 ¶ And when they had preached the gospel to that city, ² and ¹ had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch,

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and ⁷ exhorting them to continue in the faith, and

* Matt. xxviii. 19.—¹ Gr had made many disciples.—⁷ Chap. xi. 23; xiii. 43.

him with their acclamations, about six days after, petitioned Pilate that he might be crucified! *And having stoned Paul*—Not in consequence of a judicial sentence, passed by any magistrates, but in a popular tumult in the streets, they *drew*—Or dragged, *him out of the city, supposing he had been dead*—It seems, they left his body exposed to the open air, intending that he, to whom a few days before they would have sacrificed oxen, should be himself a prey to wild beasts or birds! Probably, says Dr. Doddridge, there might be something extraordinary in the appearance of his body in this circumstance, which led them to conclude he was dead while he was yet alive; for one can hardly imagine that they would have been contented with any very slight and transient inquiry whether he were dead or not. It is observable we read of no such injury offered to Barnabas, who seems to have had no share in the effects of this popular fury; probably Paul's distinguished zeal marked him out as the object of their distinguished cruelty. Thus, in his turn, did Paul suffer the very punishment which he had been so active in bringing upon the blessed martyr, Stephen! And, doubtless, the recollection of that affair helped very much to reconcile him to what had now befallen him.

Verse 20. *Howbeit, as the disciples stood round*—For there were some here at Lystra that became disciples, having found the mean between deifying the apostles and rejecting them. And though Paul's enemies left him for dead, yet these would not leave him, but *stood round about* his body, having courage to own him when he was thus cruelly treated, though sons that stoned him might stone them for many—they had reason enough to fear, that the same persecuting such regard for him. Probably they stood considering how they should perform the last office of affection to him, in bearing him to his funeral with proper respect. Unexpectedly, however, while they were considering of this, to their unspeakable surprise, *he rose up*—As in perfect health; and *went into the city*—That just after he had been stoned, dragged about the streets and left for dead, he should be able to rise and walk back into the city, must certainly be the effect of a miraculous cure, approaching as near as one can conceive to a resurrection from the dead. This was the more illustrated by his going the next day to Derbe; whereas, in the course of

that ^{*} we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of ^{A. M. 4050.} God. ^{A. D. 46.}

23 And when they had ^{*} ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

24 And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 And when they had preached the word in

* Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24; Luke xxii. 28, 29; Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12; iii. 12.—^{*} Tit. i. 5.

nature, he would then have felt his bruises much more than at first; and probably, after the best care that could have been taken of him, would hardly have been able to move. Probably by going into the city, and showing himself to the new converts, at least, if not to others, he hoped, as he reasonably might, to confirm their faith in, and their courageous attachment to, the gospel.

Verses 21, 22. *And when they had preached, and taught many*—Namely, at Derbe; and, it seems also, in Galatia and Phrygia: see Col. iv. 13. Greek, *μαθητευσαντες ικανες, having made many disciples; they returned again to Lystra, &c.*—Being doubtless directed so to do by the Spirit; *confirming the souls of the disciples*—Whom they had converted in their former journey; *exhorting them to continue in the faith*—With a steadfastness becoming the evidence and importance of it; and *testifying that we must through much tribulation*—Which will unavoidably lie in our way; *enter into the kingdom of God*—A kingdom which, however, will amply recompense us for all the sufferings that we shall meet with in our way to it. "The cross was eminently the way to the crown in those days: the Head, says Zanchy, having been crowned with thorns, it is not fit the feet should tread on roses:—an easy way to heaven is a false one."

Verse 23. *And when they had ordained elders*—Or, *presbyters*, termed *επισκοπος, bishops*, or *overseers*, chap. xx. 28; *in every church*—Out of those who were themselves but lately converted. So soon can God enable even a babe in Christ to build up others in the common faith; and *prayed with fasting*—That a blessing might attend their inspection and labours; *they commended them to the Lord*—To the direction, guardianship, and care of the Lord Jesus; *on whom they believed*—As able to guide and assist them in, and bless their endeavours for, the edification of his people. This custom of ordaining elders in the churches which he planted, Paul invariably observed, in order that the brethren, being united together, under the direction of stated teachers and leaders, might increase the more in grace, especially in mutual love, and be the better enabled to sustain persecution for the gospel.

Verses 24–26. *After they had passed through Pisidia, &c.*—Paul and Barnabas having, on their return from Phrygia and Galatia, visited all the cities

A. M. 4050. Perga, they went down into Attalia :
A. D. 46.

26 And thence sailed to Antioch, ^b from whence they had been ^c recommended to the grace of God, for the work which they fulfilled.

27 And when they were come, and had gather-

^b Chap. xiii. 1, 3.—^c Chap. xv. 40.—^d Chap. xv. 4, 12; xxi.

of Lycaonia and Pisidia, where they had formerly planted churches, they came at length to Perga, in Pamphylia—Where they spent some time in preaching the word; probably because they had remained there but a short space formerly. And having thus revisited all those cities, and given the churches in them their due form; they came down to Attalia—A sea-port town below Perga; and thence sailed to Antioch—In Syria; from whence they had—By the divine appointment; been recommended—In a very solemn manner; (chap. xiii. 2, 3;) to the grace of God—To his favour, aid, and blessing; for the work which they had fulfilled—And where, therefore, they were very desirous both of rendering a particular account of their ministry to their brethren in that church, and also of returning their grateful acknowledgments with them to the divine providence and grace, to which they owed their safety amidst so many extreme dangers, and their success in such difficult labours.

Verses 27, 28. And when they had gathered the church together—It is probable the Christians at

ed the church together, ^d they rehearsed A. M. 4050. all that God had done with them, and ^e how he had ^o opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

19.—^d 1 Cor. xvi. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 12; Col. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 6.

Antioch were more than ordinarily met, or could meet, in one place; but on this occasion they called together the leading persons of them, particularly the ministers and deacons, here termed the church, as the heads of the tribes are often called the congregation of Israel, in the books of Moses. Or, perhaps, as many of the people as the place of meeting could contain, came together on this occasion. They rehearsed all that God had done with, or by, them—In the whole of their voyages and journeys, in all the countries through which they had passed. The same expression is used chap. xv. 4; but it is explained, (verse 12) of the miracles and wonders which God had wrought among the Gentiles by them; of which wonders the chief, no doubt, was, that God had communicated the Holy Ghost to the Gentile converts, and thereby declared his acceptance of them without circumcision; and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles—Who had continued so long in ignorance, idolatry, and misery; making the gospel to shine into their hearts, and graciously receiving them into the number of his people.

CHAPTER XV.

Here, (1.) Some Jewish converts urging it as necessary that the Gentile Christians should observe the law of Moses, Paul and Barnabas go to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and elders upon that question, 1-5. (2.) A meeting of the apostles and elders being held to consider it, Peter declares against imposing such a yoke on the Gentile converts, 6-11. (3.) Paul and Barnabas give an account of their success among the Gentiles, and James delivers his judgment on the matter in debate, agreeing with Peter, 12-21. (4.) The apostles and elders approve of what Peter and James had proposed, and send letters by Judas and Silas, accompanying Paul and Barnabas to the churches, to acquaint them with the decision of the council, 22-29. (5.) The decree, being carried to Antioch, is received there by the disciples with great joy, 30, 31. (6.) Judas and Silas continue some time at Antioch, and preach to the people, as do also Paul and Barnabas, 32-35. (7.) Paul proposes to Barnabas to revisit the churches which they had planted: but not agreeing about taking Mark, they separate, and Barnabas, with Mark, sails to Cyprus; and Paul, taking Silas, goes through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches, 36-41.

A. M. 4055. AND ^a certain men which came down from Judea, taught the

A. D. 51.

brethren, and said, ^b Except ye be circumcised ^c after the man-

A. D. 51.

^a Gal. ii. 12.—^b John vii. 22; Verse 5; Gal. v. 2;

Phil. iii. 2; Col. ii. 8, 11, 16.—^c Gen. xvii. 10; Lev. xii. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

Verse 1. And certain men which came down from Judea—Probably such as had been of the Pharisees, (verse 5,) or, perhaps, of those priests which were obedient to the faith, chap. vi. 7. As they came from Judea, it is likely they pretended to be sent by the apostles at Jerusalem, or, at least, to be countenanced

by them. Designing to spread their notions among the Gentiles, they came to Antioch, because that city abounded with Gentile converts, and was the headquarters of those that preached to the Gentiles; and if they could but make an impression there, they supposed their leaven would soon be diffused to all the churches of the Gentiles. And said, Except ye

A. M. 4056. ner of Moses, ye cannot be sav-
A. D. 52. ed.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that ^d Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3 And ^e being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, ^f declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

^d Gal. ii. 1.—^e Rom. xv. 24; 1 Cor. xvi. 6, 11.—^f Chap. xiv. 27.

be circumcised after the manner of Moses—That is, Except ye keep the law of Moses, (see verse 5; Gal. v. 3,) *ye cannot be saved*—Can neither enjoy God's favour here, nor his kingdom hereafter. *Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation*—They strenuously opposed this doctrine; 1st, Because its direct tendency was to subvert the gospel, which they had preached, and which they knew was of itself sufficient for the salvation of men, without the works of the Mosaic law. And, 2d, Because it was a betraying of the natural rights of mankind, who, by the gospel, are left free, both to obey the good laws of the countries where they live, and enjoy whatever rights accrue to them from those laws. Whereas, by receiving the law of Moses, the Gentiles really made themselves the subjects of a foreign power; for that law included the civil or political law of Judea; and all who received it actually put themselves under the jurisdiction of the high-priest and council at Jerusalem. Hence Paul and Barnabas, as faithful servants of Christ, could not see his truth betrayed; they knew Christ came to free men from the yoke of the ceremonial law, to take down that wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and unite them both in himself, and therefore would not hear of circumcising the Gentile converts, when their instructions were only to baptize them. And, as spiritual fathers to them, they would not see their liberties encroached on. There being, therefore, much contention upon this account at Antioch, where there were several converts from among the Gentiles, to whom this doctrine could not but be very disagreeable, and, doubtless, many Jewish Christians, who approved of it; and the peace of the church and the unity of its members being in danger of being broken, to prevent this, if possible, it was judged advisable to get the best satisfaction they could, in an affair which affected the liberties and consciences of many. *They determined, therefore, that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others, should go to Jerusalem, about this question*—This is the journey to which 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 Paul, or some other person, relating to so important an affair. Important indeed it was, and necessary

4 And when they were come to Je- A. M. 4056.
A. D. 52. rusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and ^g they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 ¶ But there ^h rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed, saying, ⁱ That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

^g Verse 12; Chap. xiv. 27; xxi. 19.—^h Or, *rose up*, said they, *certain*.—ⁱ Verse 1.

that those 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 at Antioch undoubtedly knew that Paul was under an extraordinary divine direction, and therefore would readily have acquiesced in his determination alone; but as others might have prejudices against him, on account of his having been so much concerned with the Gentiles, it was highly expedient to take the concurrent judgment of all the apostles on this occasion; since their authority was supreme in the church, and their decision alone could put an end to the controversy. It appears from Gal. ii. 1, that Titus was one of those who accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem at this time. Him, it is probable, Paul had converted in the Lesser Asia: and, being a person of great piety and ability, he had taken him as his assistant in the room of John Mark, at Perga, and had brought him to Antioch; and he, being a Gentile, had consequently much interest in the determination of this question. See Doddridge and Macknight.

Verses 3-5. *And being brought on their way by the church*—That is, by several of its members; *they passed through Phenice and Samaria*—Which lay in their way; *declaring*—To their fellow-Christians, whom they met with in the several towns through which they passed; *the conversion of the Gentiles*—That is, of multitudes of them, by the blessing of God on their labours. *And they caused great joy unto all the brethren*—By the account they gave. *And when they were come, &c., they were received*—That is, solemnly welcomed by the church, and particularly by the apostles and elders who resided at Jerusalem, who all showed them every mark of respect. *And they declared all things*—That is, the principal things; *which God had done by them*—That by their ministry he had converted the Gentiles in many countries, and had bestowed upon many of them the Holy Ghost, in the plenitude of his gifts. *But, they added, that at Antioch there rose up certain of the Pharisees who believed*—Affirming that it was necessary to *circumcise them*; and that the brethren of Antioch had sent them to lay the matter before the apostles.

Verses 6-11. *And the apostles, &c., came together to consider of this matter*—As the apostles commonly

A. M. 4056. 7 ¶ And when there had been much
A. D. 52.

disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, ¹ Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago, God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8 And God, ² which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, ¹ giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us :

9 ^m And put no difference between us and them, ⁿ purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, ^o to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear ?

11 But ^p we believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they.

12 ¶ Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had

¹ Chap. x. 20 ; xi. 12.—² 1 Chron. xxviii. 9 ; Chap. i. 24.
¹ Chap. x. 44.—^m Rom. x. 11.—ⁿ Chap. x. 15, 28, 43 ; 1 Cor. i. 2 ; 1 Pet. i. 22.

resided at Jerusalem, the greater part of them may have come together on this occasion ; and the elders likewise, men most respectable for their grace and gifts, having been chosen to the office of elders from among those on whom the Holy Ghost descended on the day of pentecost. Many of the brethren, too, of the church of Jerusalem were present in this assembly. For the decree, which was passed on the question, runs in the name of the whole church. *And when there had been much disputing*—Occasioned by those of the sect of the Pharisees, who maintained the necessity of circumcision. It does not appear that this debate was among the apostles themselves ; but if it was, if they themselves really debated the matter 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*—And put the assembly in mind, how he had been ordered by God to preach the gospel to Cornelius and the other Gentiles who were with him ; and how *God, who knoweth the hearts* of men, *bare them witness*—That he accepted them without circumcision, having given them the Holy Ghost, even as to the Jews, *and put no difference between them*—And the Jews ; *purifying their hearts*—Not by the rites and ceremonies of the law, but *by faith*. *Now therefore*—Said he, why do ye not acquiesce in such a determination ? *Why tempt ye God to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples*—So grievous and burdensome, that *neither our fathers nor we were able to bear it*?—Why provoke ye God by making circumcision necessary to the salvation of the Gen-

^q wrought among the Gentiles by A. M. 4056.
A. D. 52.

13 ¶ And after they had held their peace, ^r James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me.

14 ^s Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets ; as it is written,

16 ^t After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down ; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up :

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

^o Matt. xxiii. 4 ; Gal. v. 1.—^p Rom. iii. 24 ; Eph. ii. 8 ; Tit. ii. 11 ; iii. 4, 5.—^q Chapter xiv. 27.—^r Chapter xii. 17
^s Verse 7.—^t Amos ix. 11, 12.

tiles, contrary to his declared will in this matter, and contrary to your own conviction. For *we*—Who have been educated in the Jewish religion, and especially we who are apostles, *believe, that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*—And not through obedience to the law of Moses, *we—Jews, shall be saved even as they*—The Gentiles, are to be saved ; in one and the same way, namely, through the grace of Christ alone.

Verses 12–18. *Then all the multitude kept silence*—Having nothing further to object to what had been advanced ; *and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul*—Who confirmed Peter's reasoning, by declaring what miracles God had wrought among the Gentiles—By their ministry ; of which, the chief miracle was, that he had amply conferred the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the believing Gentiles, although they were uncircumcised. *After they had done speaking, James, the son of Alphaeus, one of the apostles, answered those who were for subjecting the Gentiles to the law, by adding, in supplement to Peter's reasoning, that the prophets had foretold the conversion of the Gentiles ; so that it was always God's purpose to make them his people. The passage he appeals to, quoting it according to the reading of the Seventy, is Amos ix. 11, 12 ; where see the notes. It may be thus paraphrased : After this—After the Jewish dispensation expires ; I will return—To my people in mercy ; and will build again the tabernacle—That is, the house, or family, of David ; which is fallen down—Is in a low, degraded state ; I will do this by raising from his seed the Christ, who shall erect, on the ruins of his fallen tabernacle, a spiritual and eternal kingdom ; that the residue of men—And not the Jews alone ; might seek after the Lord—After an acquaintance with him, and the bless-*

A. M. 4056. 19 Wherefore ^a my sentence is, that
A. D. 52. we trouble not them, which from
among the Gentiles ^x are turned to God :

20 But that we write unto them that they abstain ⁷ from pollutions of idols, and ^z from fornication, and from things strangled, ^a and from blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, ^b being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22 ¶ Then pleased it the apostles and elders,

^a Verse 28.—^x 1 Thess. i. 9.—⁷ Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xx. 3, 23; Ezra xx. 30; 1 Corinthians viii. 1; Rev. ii. 14, 20; x. 20, 28.

ings consequent thereon; and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called—Or who shall be called by my name; who shall be my people. James adds, *Known unto God are all his works*—This 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 would have been nothing to his present purpose,) but of his dispensations toward 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 those dispensations are 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 dependant 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 thereto which man cannot solve.

Verses 19-21. *Wherefore my sentence*—My judgment in this matter; *is, that we trouble not*—With such observances as those now in question; *them which from among the Gentiles*—The ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles; *are turned unto God*—Are converted by divine grace to the knowledge and worship of the true God, and to obedience to his gospel. *But that we write unto them, that they abstain from all things grossly scandalous, and particularly from pollutions of idols*—From every species of idolatry: that they should have no manner of fellowship with idolaters in their idolatrous worship, or in the feasts they hold upon their sacrifices; see 1 Cor. x. 14; 2 Cor. vi. 14. *And from fornication*—Which even the philosophers among the heathen did not account any fault. It was particularly frequent in the worship of their idols, on which account these sins are here named together. *And from things strangled*—That is, from whatever has been killed without pouring out the blood; *and from blood*—When God first permitted man to eat flesh, he commanded Noah, and in him all his posterity, when-

with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed ^o Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren :

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles, and elders, and brethren, send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia.

^a 1 Cor. vi. 9, 18; Gal. v. 19; Eph. v. 3; Col. iii. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 3; 1 Pet. iv. 3.—^o Gen. ix. 4; Lev. iii. 17; Deut. xii. 16, 23.—^b Chap. xiii. 15, 27.—^c Chap. i. 23.

ever they killed any creature for food, to abstain from the blood thereof. It was to be poured upon the ground as water; doubtless, 1st, To be a token to mankind, in all ages, that they would have had no right to take the life of any animal for food, if God had not given them that right, who, therefore, to remind them of it, and impress it on their minds in all generations, denied them the use of blood, and required it to be spilt upon the ground. 2d, In honour of the blood of atonement, Lev. xvii. 11, 12. The life of the sacrifice was accepted for the life of the sinner; and blood made atonement for the soul; and therefore must not be looked upon as a common thing, but must be poured out before the Lord, (2 Sam. xxiii. 16,) and especially in honour of that blood which was in due time to be shed for the sins of the world. Now this prohibition of eating blood, given to Noah and his posterity, and repeated to the Israelites in the law of Moses, and which was never revoked, is here confirmed and made of perpetual obligation. See the notes on Gen. ix. 4. *For Moses hath, &c.*—The sense and connection here may be: To the Jews we need to write nothing on these heads, for they hear the law continually, and are there most solemnly and repeatedly enjoined to abstain from these things.

Verses 22, 23. *Then pleased it the apostles, &c.*—This advice was very acceptable to the apostles and elders, who unanimously declared their approbation of it; *with the whole church*—Who therefore had a part in this business; *to send chosen men*—Who might attest that this was the judgment of the apostles and all the brethren. *And wrote letters by them*—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, (verse 2,) or in the address of the messengers concerning it, (verse 4,) or in the letter which was written in answer. *The apostles, elders, and brethren*—These brethren, being neither apostles nor elders, were undoubtedly private Christians,

A. M. 4056. 24 Forasmuch as we have heard, A. D. 52. that ^d certain which went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law; to whom we gave no *such* commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul:

26 ^e Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

^d Verse 1; Gal. ii. 4; v. 12; Tit. i. 10, 11.—^e Chap. xiii. 50; xiv. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 30; 2 Cor. xi. 23, 26.

whom the apostles, in their great condescension, joined with themselves on this occasion, as well knowing that their declared concurrence would strengthen the obligation upon the church at Antioch, not only to acquiesce in this decree, but to support it; and it was the more prudent to do it, as the liberty this gave to the Gentile Christians would somewhat affect the secular interests of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Verses 24-27. *Forasmuch as we have heard, &c.*—The simplicity, weightiness, and conciseness of this letter, are highly observable; *that certain which went out from us*—That is, pretending to be sent out by us; *have troubled you with words*—By requiring you to be circumcised and to keep the law; *subverting your souls*—That is, unsettling your minds; *to whom we gave no such commandment*—No commission to make use of our names, or teach any such doctrine. *It seemed good unto us*—After duly considering the matter in a general assembly, called for the purpose; *to send chosen men unto you*—Men of our own body; *with our beloved Barnabas and Paul*—Whom we greatly respect, as men that *have hazarded their lives*—In repeated instances, and with great courage; *for the name of our Lord Jesus*—Such a testimony as this to the reputation of Paul and Barnabas was by no means a mere compliment, but exceedingly prudent, as it might tend to remove the prejudices conceived against them by the Jewish converts or teachers, who, as appears from many passages of the epistles, endeavoured as much as possible to lessen the character of these apostles. It would also be an evidence of the harmony subsisting between them and those of the circumcision. *We have sent therefore Judas and Silas*—Men that have heard our debates, and are perfectly acquainted with our judgment and decision. This precaution of sending approved witnesses along with the copy of the decree, which was delivered to Barnabas and Paul, was intended to prevent the zealous and bigoted Judaizers from affirming that the letter did not contain a just account of what was determined by the church. For these chosen men, having assisted at the council, would not only tell the brethren of Antioch the same things by mouth, but attest that it was the unanimous opinion of the whole assembly.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same things by ² mouth. A. M. 4056. A. D. 52.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 ^f That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and ^g from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

^f Gr. word.—^g Verse 20; Chapter xxi. 25; Rev. ii. 14, 20. ^h Lev. xvii. 14.

Verses 28, 29. *For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and, consequently, to us*—This may include the decision which the Holy Spirit had given by his descent on Cornelius and his friends, but seems more directly to express the consciousness which this assembly had of being guided by his influences on their minds in the present determination. It cannot, however, be extended to any ecclesiastical councils that have not inspired apostles to preside, as this here had. *To lay upon you no greater burden*—They allude to the yoke spoken of verse 10. So far were they from delighting to impose on the churches any mere human and unnecessary institutions, that they dreaded enjoining any thing which God had not required, and was not calculated to promote the faith and holiness of the new converts: *than these necessary things*—Some of the things here mentioned are of perpetual obligation upon Christians of all nations and ages, and they were all necessary for the peace of the church at that time, namely, to avoid giving offence to the converted Jews, and to promote brotherly love between them and the converted Gentiles. The first of them, however, was not necessary long, and the direction concerning it was therefore afterward repealed by the same Spirit, as we read in the former epistle to the Corinthians. With regard to abstaining from blood, concerning which there has been much controversy among divines, we may further observe here, that the eating of it was never permitted the children of God, from the beginning of the world. For, 1st, From Adam to Noah no man ate flesh at all; consequently, no man then ate blood. 2d, 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. 3d, God renewed this prohibition by Moses, which was not repealed from the time of Moses till Christ came. 4th, 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. 5th, From that time, those churches which acknowledged his authority held the eating of blood to be an indifferent thing. But, 6th, In all those churches which never did acknowledge the bishop of Rome's authority, it never

A. M. 4056. 30 So when they were dismissed, A. D. 52. they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.

31 *Which* when they had read, they rejoiced for the ³ consolation.

32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, ^b exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed *them*.

33 And after they had tarried *there* a space, they were let ⁱ go in peace

³ Or, *exhortation*.—^b Chap. xiv. 22; xviii. 23.—ⁱ 1 Cor. xvi. 11; Heb. xi. 31.

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 counsels, 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. The reader that wishes for further information on the subject of the prohibition of eating blood will find ample satisfaction in an excellent work of Dr. Delaney, entitled, *Revelation examined with Candour*; a work of great merit, although but little known. See vol. ii. p. 18, &c.

Verses 30-35. *So when they*—Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas; *came to Antioch, they gathered the multitude*—The private Christians, as well as the elders, and other official members of the church; for as they had all been concerned in sending them, they had all a right to be informed of the result of their mission; *and delivered the epistle*—Containing the apostolic decree; *which when they had read, they rejoiced*—Namely, to find that so venerable an assembly as that which had been held at Jerusalem, had concurred with Paul and Barnabas, in vindicating the liberty of the Gentile converts from the yoke of the Mosaic ceremonies. It must be observed, the church at Antioch consisted chiefly of converted proselytes; and their joy would be in proportion to the anxiety and suspense with which they had waited for the apostles' determination. *And Judas and Silas*—The special messengers from Jerusalem thither; *being prophets also themselves*—That is, preachers of the gospel, or teachers in the church; *exhorted the brethren with many words*—Did not only deliver the particular message with which they were charged, but, on the occasion of such a numerous and solemn auditory, each of them discoursed largely on the truths and duties of Christianity, exhorting them to adhere to the gospel they had embraced, and to adorn it by a corresponding conduct; *and confirmed them*—Not only in the belief

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from the brethren unto the apos- A. M. 4056. tles. A. D. 52.

34 Notwithstanding, it pleased Silas to abide there still.

35 ^k Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 ¶ And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren, ^l in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see how they do*.

^k Chapter xiii. 1.—^l Chapter xiii. 4, 13, 14, 41; xiv. 1, 6, 24, 25.

of their freedom from the law of Moses, as a term of salvation, but in every branch of Christian faith and practice. *And after they had continued there a space*—A competent time; *they were let go in peace*—Were dismissed, doubtless, with earnest prayers for the divine blessing upon them and their labours, and with all possible expressions of kindness and respect unto the apostles, *from whom they came*. *Notwithstanding, it pleased Silas*—Who, it seems, had formed an intimate friendship with Paul; *to abide there still*—To continue a while longer than his companion Judas, who had come with him from Jerusalem. *Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch*—It is probable that it was during this time Peter came to Antioch; and, after having conversed for some time freely with the Gentile Christians, separated himself from them, on the arrival of some Jewish zealots from Jerusalem, according to the account given Gal. ii. 11, &c., where see the notes.

Verse 36. *And some days after*—After they had continued a considerable number of days at Antioch; *Paul*—Whose active spirit was ever forming some new scheme for the advancement of Christianity; *said to Barnabas*—His former associate; *Let us go again and visit our brethren*—The churches we have planted; *in every city*—Wherever we have preached the word of the Lord; let us go and water the seed sown. Those who have preached the gospel should visit those to whom they have preached it; that they may see what effect their ministry has had, and whether any real and lasting fruit has been produced by it. *And see how they do*—How their souls prosper; how they grow in faith, hope, love; and what is the state of religion among them. And what else ought to be the grand and constant inquiry in every ecclesiastical visitation? As the apostle could not but be sensible of the great danger in which the Gentile converts, in distant countries, were of being perverted by the Jews, and as his zeal for the purity of the gospel would lead him to consider by what means they might most probably be confirmed in the truth, it is likely that another end which he had in view in proposing this journey was, to make these Gentiles acquainted with the decrees which had been ordained by the apostles, elders, and brethren in Judea. For no expedient could appear

A. M. 4057. 37 And Barnabas determined to take
A. D. 53. with them ^a John, whose surname
was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him
with them, ^a who departed from them from
Pamphylia, and went not with them to the
work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between

^a Chap. xii. 12, 25; xiii. 5; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem.

to him more proper than this, to preserve them
from being misled. Accordingly, as we find chap.
xvi. 4, he and his fellow-traveller delivered these
decrees to them as they went through the cities.

Verses 37-41. *And Barnabas determined*—Greek, *εβουλευσατο*, counselled, or advised; to take with them
—As their minister; *John*—His nephew, who had
set out with them before. *But Paul thought not
good*—Thought it not proper; to take him who
departed, &c.—Who had shown such cowardice or
fickleness as to desert them in Pamphylia; who had
shrunk from the labour and danger of converting
those whom they were now going to confirm. *And
the contention was so sharp*—Greek, *εγχερο παροξυσμος*, there was a paroxysm. It is a medical term,
signifying a fit of a fever; and here means, a sharp
fit of anger; but nothing in the text implies that the
sharpness was on both sides. It is far more prob-
able that it was not; that Paul, who had had the
right on his side, maintained it with love. The
strife, however, between these good men, which

them, that they departed asunder one
from the other: and so Barnabas
took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus.

40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, ^a be-
ing recommended by the brethren unto the
grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia,
^b confirming the churches.

24.—^b Chap. xiii. 13.—^c Chap. xiv. 26.—^d Chap. xvi. 5.

certainly was to be lamented, was made the occasion
of a more extensive spread of the gospel. For Bar-
nabas sailed with Mark into Cyprus, to visit the
churches which he and Paul had planted there in
their former journey: and Paul, choosing Silas, who
was himself a prophet, and a chief man among the
brethren, departed to pursue the course which he
had intended; *being recommended by the brethren
to the grace of God*—Which recommendation we
do not find that Barnabas waited for. *And he went
through Syria and Cilicia*—Which was his native
country, (as Cyprus was that of Barnabas,) *confirm-
ing the churches*—Which had been planted in those
parts, in their adherence to the Christian faith.
These churches in Cilicia had been formed before
the council held in Jerusalem, and probably by Paul.
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 Paul
as a companion in his labours, Col. iv. 10; Philem.
24; 2 Tim. iv. 11.

CHAPTER XVI.

(1.) Paul, finding Timothy at Lystra, circumcises him, takes him for his assistant, and, visiting the churches, delivers to them the decrees of the council, 1-5. (2.) The Holy Ghost prohibits their preaching in the proconsular Asia and Bithynia; they are directed by a vision to go to Macedonia, 6-12. (3.) Lydia, being converted at Philippi, entertains them kindly, 13-15. (4.) Paul casts out a spirit of divination from a young woman, for which he and Silas are scourged and imprisoned, 16-24. (5.) While they sing praises to God in the prison, the prison-doors are opened by an earthquake; and the jailer, after being on the point of murdering himself, is converted and his family, 25-34. (6.) Paul and Silas oblige the magistrates to liberate and dismiss them honourably, as Roman citizens, 35-40.

A. M. 4057. **T**HEN came he to ^a Derbe and
A. D. 53. Lystra: and beheld, a certain disci-
ple was there, ^b named ^c Timotheus, ^c the son

^a Chap. xiv. 6.—^b Chap. xix. 22; Rom. xvi. 21; 1 Cor. iv. 17;

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

Verses 1-3. *Then*—When he had passed through
the regions of Syria and Cilicia; *came he to Derbe
and Lystra*—At which places he had preached the
gospel in his former progress. *And a certain disci-
ple was there, named Timotheus*—As Paul (2 Tim.
iii. 10, 11) speaks of Timothy as having been a wit-
ness of his sufferings at Lystra, and we read nothing
of any remarkable sufferings which he endured in

of a certain woman which was a
Jewess, and believed, but his father
was a Greek:

Phil. ii. 19; 1 Thes. iii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2.—^c 2 Tim. i. 5.

this his second progress through these parts, it is
probable that Timothy was converted by him in his
former journey, and was a spectator of what he then
suffered at Lystra, (see chap. xiv. 19, 20,) and that
Paul then began to have some acquaintance with
him. *The son of a certain believing Jewess, but
his father was a Greek*—These circumstances are
mentioned as worthy of note, because he afterward
became a very considerable person in the church,

A. M. 4057. 2 Which ^d was well reported of by
A. D. 53. the brethren that were at Lystra and
Iconium.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and ^e took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek:

4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, ^f that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

^g Chap. vi. 3.—^h 1 Cor. ix. 20; Gal. ii. 3; v. 2.—ⁱ Chap.

as well as a faithful and useful friend to the apostle. *Who was well reported of, &c.*—Was spoken of; by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium—As an eminently serious and devout young man, who had been remarkable for his early piety, having been trained up by his good mother and his grandmother in an acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures from his childhood, 2 Tim. i. 5; iii. 15. *Him would Paul have to go forth with him*—As an assistant in his work, being directed herein by the Holy Ghost, 1 Tim. i. 18; and, to qualify him for the office, he conferred on him the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and had him solemnly set apart for the ministry by the presbytery, or eldership, of Lystra, 1 Tim. iv. 14. For, in his former journey, he and Barnabas had ordained elders in every city. Withal, designing to employ Timothy in preaching to the Jews, he circumcised him; because he knew the Jews would not have respected him as a teacher, if they had taken him for an uncircumcised Gentile. This is that Timothy, whose teachableness and tears made such an impression on the apostle's mind, that he never forgot them, 2 Tim. i. 4; who attended Paul in many of his journeys; and who, in respect of his love to Christ, and zeal for the advancement of the gospel, was like-minded with Paul, Phil. ii. 20; so that he was his *genuine son*; and, as a son serveth with his father, so he served with the apostle in the gospel. On all which accounts, he was of such consideration among the disciples, and also so exceedingly esteemed by Paul for his knowledge and piety, that he allowed him to join him in some of those epistles which he wrote to the churches: while, at the same time, the apostle so greatly honoured him, as to write to him two most excellent letters, found in the canon of Scripture, which bear his name.

Verses 4, 5. *And*—In order that peace might be secured among the brethren in these parts, and no unnecessary burden might be imposed upon the Gentile converts, through the arts of any Judaizing teachers; as Paul and his companions *went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep*—Committed to the custody of each church an exact and attested copy of the decrees, made by the council at Jerusalem. See chap. xv. 29: for, although these decrees were written in the form of a letter to the brethren of the Gentiles in Antioch,

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5 And ^g so were the churches esta- A. M. 4057
blished in the faith, and increased in A. D. 53.
number daily.

6 Now, when they had gone throughout Phrygia, and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia;

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

8 And they, passing by Mysia, ^h came down to Troas.

xv. 28, 29.—ⁱ Chap. xv. 41.—^j 2 Cor. ii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 13.

Syria, and Cilicia, they belonged equally to all the Gentile converts everywhere. *And so were the churches established, &c.*—The several churches where they came, being watered by such faithful labourers, and encouraged with so favourable a decision of the grand point then in question, were much confirmed in their adherence to the Christian faith; and increased more and more in number daily—For the burdensome yoke of the law of Moses being now broken, a great obstacle to the conversion of the Gentiles was removed.

Verses 6–8. *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia*—Greek, *διελθόντες δε την Φρυγιαν, και την Γαλατικην χωραν, having passed through Phrygia and the Galatian country*, and spoken there what was sufficient, and delivered to the churches in those parts the decrees above mentioned, in order to their establishment in the true faith of the gospel; and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost (probably by an inward dictate) to preach the word in Asia—That is, in the proconsular Asia: for, “as all the places mentioned in the former verses lay in Asia Minor, it is evident that the word *Asia* must be thus understood. The reason for this prohibition seems to have been, that the time for preaching in that province was not yet come. But it is certain that flourishing churches were afterward planted there, particularly at Colosse, Laodicea, Sardis, Thyatira, and Philadelphia. It seems therefore to have been the determination of Providence, respecting Paul and his companions, that, instead of going through this region now, by such a leisurely progress as that in which they proceeded in their former journey, through Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, &c., they should hasten to Europe directly, and preach the gospel first in Philippi, which was a Roman colony, and then in the neighbouring parts; while, in the mean time, the Asian provinces, now passed over, might hear some report of it from their neighbours, and so be prepared to receive, with greater advantage, the labours of the apostles, when they should return to them, as Paul afterward did, chap. xviii. 23, &c. By this means the spread of the gospel would, in any given time, be wider than (other circumstances being equal) it would have been, had they taken all the interjacent places in their way.”—Doddridge. *After they were come into Mysia*—

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A. M. 4057. 9 ¶ And a vision appeared to Paul
A. D. 53. in the night: There stood a ¹ man of
Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over
into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go ^k into Macedonia, assuredly gathering, that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came

¹ Chap. x. 30.—^k 2 Cor. ii. 13.—^l Phil. i. 1.

Which was the most western province of the Lesser Asia, and lay on the coast of the Ægean sea; they assayed to go northward into Bithynia—A country bounded on the west by a part of the Propontis and the Thracian Bosphorus, and on the north by the Euxine sea. Probably their intention was to visit the flourishing cities of Nice, Nicomedia, and Chalcedon, and so pass from thence into Europe. *But the Spirit suffered them not*—Forbidding them as before. Many manuscripts and versions of undoubted authority read here, *The Spirit of Jesus*. And so passing by the Lesser Mysia—Which separated Bithynia from the country of Troas; they came to the city Troas—A noted seaport, where travellers from the upper coasts of Asia commonly took ship to pass into Europe. Here Paul and his assistants were joined by Luke, (verse 10,) the writer of this history, and a native of Antioch, as is generally believed, who, to the profession of a physician, had joined that of a Christian minister, or evangelist.

Verses 9, 10. *And*—While they were in this place, undetermined, probably, to what coast of Europe they should sail, if, according to their intention, they crossed the sea; a vision appeared to Paul in the night—To direct them: it was not a dream, though it was by night. No dream is mentioned in the New Testament, except that of Joseph, and of Pilate's wife. *There stood a man of Macedonia*—Before him, probably an angel, clothed in the Macedonian habit, or using the language of that country, and representing the inhabitants of it; and prayed him—With great earnestness; saying, *Come over into Macedonia, and help us*—Against Satan, ignorance, and sin. *And after he had seen the vision*—And given an account of it to his companions; *immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia*—Willingly obeying the heavenly admonition; *assuredly gathering*—From this vision; that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel unto them—In that country. This is the first place in which 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, Col. 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

with a straight course to Samothracia, A. M. 4057. and the next day to Neapolis; A. D. 53.

12 And from thence to ¹ Philippi, which is ¹ the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

13 And on the ² sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

¹ Or, the first.—² Gr. sabbath day.

historians, who every one of them show the like amiable modesty.

Verses 11, 12. *Therefore, loosing from Troas, we came to Samothracia*—An island in these seas, famous for being the seat of certain religious mysteries, in equal estimation with those called Eleusinian. But it does not appear that they went ashore there, for they landed the next day at Neapolis—A seaport town of Macedonia. Nor did they make any stay even there, but went straight to Philippi; because it was the chief city of that part of Macedonia—And a Roman colony. Thus Paul, having preached first at Damascus, next at Jerusalem, after that throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles in Syria, Cilicia, and most of the countries of the Lesser Asia, went at length, by the particular commandment of Christ, among the Greek nations, to whom it was proper that the glad tidings of salvation should now be given. For, seeing the gospel was a revelation from the true God, and was supported by great and undeniable miracles, it was fit that it should, in due course, be proposed to those nations who were best qualified to judge of its nature and evidences; because if, upon an accurate examination, great numbers of men embraced the gospel, whose minds were improved by science, and every kind of culture, their conversion would render it indubitable, in after times, that the gospel was supported by those great and undeniable miracles, which the Christian records affirm were performed in every country, by the preachers of the gospel. Besides, God, in his infinite wisdom, was determined that the reigning idolatry should be utterly overthrown in those countries of Europe where it had the greatest support, from the ability and learning of its abettors; that no person might suspect, or affirm, in after times, that idolatry was destroyed, and Christianity established, merely through the ignorance and simplicity of the people among whom it was first preached.

Verses 13–15. *On the sabbath we went out of the city*—The Jews usually held their religious assemblies (either by choice or constraint) at a distance from the heathen; by a river side—The river Strymon, which ran between Philippi and Neapolis; where prayer was wont to be made—That is, where the Jews and their proselytes were wont to assemble for prayer. The original expression, which is peculiar and much controverted, *ἡ ἐνομιζέτο προσευχῆ εἶνα*, may be rendered, *Where a proseucha* (or place

A. M. 4057. 14 ¶ And a certain woman named
A. D. 53. Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city
of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us:
whose heart the Lord opened, that she attend-
ed unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her
household, she besought us, saying, If ye

¶ Luke xxiv. 45.—^a Gen. xix. 3; xxxiii. 11; Jud. xix. 21; Luke
xxiv. 29; Heb. xiii. 2.

for prayer) was by law allowed. And we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither—At first in a familiar manner; for Paul did not immediately begin to preach. It appears that most or all of the congregation were women; among whom there was one *Lydia, a seller of purple, who worshipped the true God*—After the Jewish manner; a native of *Thyatira*—Who had fixed her residence in Philippi, for the sake of commerce; whose heart the Lord opened—The word *διανοίξε*, here used, properly refers to the opening of the eyes; and the heart, or mind, has its eyes, Eph. i. 18. These are closed by nature; and to open them is the peculiar work of God. Lydia, it seems, was so strongly affected with what Paul said, that she embraced the gospel with the full assurance of faith, and with all her heart. And she was baptized—It seems, immediately upon her believing, and making a profession of her faith; and her household—Those of them that were infants (if any were such) in her right, as her children, the children of believing parents having a right to be admitted to that ordinance; and those that were grown up, through her influence and authority. She and her household were baptized, by the same rule whereby Abraham and his household were circumcised, because the zeal of the covenant belongs to the covenanters and their seed. As it is not probable, that in so many households and families as are said in the New Testament to have been baptized, there was no infant; so, neither is it likely that the Jews, who had so long been accustomed to circumcise their children, would not, when they embraced the gospel, devote them to God by baptism. She besought us—Earnestly entreated us. See how the souls of the faithful cleave to those by whom they are gained to God! saying, *If ye have judged me faithful to the Lord*—If you have considered me as being sincere in the profession I have made of believing in the Lord Jesus, and really regard me as a true Christian; come into my house and abide there—As long as you stay in this city. This she desired, 1st, To testify her gratitude to them, who had been God's messengers, and the instruments of his grace to her; imparting the knowledge of salvation, and producing a blessed change in her heart and life. 2d, She desired an opportunity of receiving further instruction. If she could but have them a while in her family, she might hear their heavenly discourse daily, and not only at the place of prayer on sabbath days; in her own house, also, she might not only hear them, but might make inquiries, and receive satisfaction, on many important subjects; and

have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there: and she constrained us. A. M. 4057. A. D. 53.

16 ¶ And it came to pass as we went to prayer, a certain damsel, ° possessed with a spirit ° of divination, met us, which brought her masters ° much gain by soothsaying :

° 1 Samuel xxviii. 7.—^a Or, of Python.—^b Chapter
xix. 24.

might have them to pray with and for her and her family daily, and thereby bring down the divine blessing upon herself and them. And she constrained us—By her importunity. The expression implies that they were reluctant to accept her invitation, being unwilling to be, in any respect, burdensome to the families of their friends, and studying to make the gospel without charge, in order that the unbelievers might have no occasion given them of reproaching the preachers of it as designing, self-seeking men; and that the Christians might have no reason to complain of the expenses of their religion. Lydia's pressing invitations, however, overcame their reluctance, and they at last consented to her request, and abode at her house as long as they continued at Philippi, which was many days: see verses 12, 18. During this time they laid the foundation of a numerous church, gathered both from among the Jews and the Gentiles; a church which, after the apostle's departure, increased so exceedingly, that, when he wrote his epistle to the Philippians, they had several bishops, or presbyters, and deacons, Phil. i. 1.

Verse 16. As we went to prayer—Or to the place of prayer, mentioned before; a certain damsel met us (that is, met Paul and his three companions) possessed with a spirit of divination—Greek, *εχουσαν πνευμα πυθωνος*, having a spirit of Python, or Apollo. This title, it is generally said, was given to Apollo, on account of his having destroyed a monstrous serpent that was called Python; or a person who for his cruelty was surnamed Python, that is, serpent or dragon, from whence Apollo had the name of Pythius. Plutarch tells us, that those who were inspired with this spirit were *εγγαστριμυθοι*, persons who spake as seeming to send the voice from their bellies; and Galen mentions the same fact. The manner in which Luke relates the story, plainly implies that he thought this to be a real possession, and that Paul himself viewed it in that light. Nor can the girl's behaviour, or his, or that of her masters afterward, be accounted for, without allowing this to have been the case. It is well known that the Hebrews called the spirit with which such persons were supposed to be agitated, *בזמ*, *ob*, because the bodies of those who appeared to be possessed by it were violently distended, like leathern bottles full of wine, and ready to burst. Compare Job xxxii. 18, 19. Which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying—That is, by pretending, with the assistance of a familiar spirit, to discover stolen goods, and to point out the concealed authors of mischiefs, and to disclose the general good or ill-fortune of

A. M. 4057. 17 The same followed Paul and us, A. D. 53. and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation.

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

19 ¶ And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place unto the rulers,

20 And brought them to the magistrates, say-

¶ Mark i. 25, 34.—Mark xvi. 17.—Chap. xix. 25, 26.
 ¶ 2 Cor. vi. 5.—Matt. x. 18.—¶ Or, court.

the persons who applied to her, and their success in particular affairs, with other secrets, for which many ignorant persons, in all countries, are willing to give money. See notes on Deut. xviii. 10, 11; 1 Sam. xxviii. 7.

Verses 17, 18. *The same followed Paul and us*—Luke, Silas, and Timothy; and cried, saying—With great earnestness of voice and gesture; *These men are the servants of the most high God, &c.*—A great truth: but they did not need, nor would accept of, such testimony. *And this she did many succeeding days.* But, at length, Paul being wearied with so tedious a circumstance, and grieved—Under an apprehension that this stratagem of Satan might lead the people to imagine that the preachers of the gospel acted in a confederacy with the evil spirit, to whom the heathen worship was addressed; turned—Toward the damsel; and said to the spirit—By whose emotion she spake; *I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ*—Whose gospel I preach; *to come out of her.* And he came out the same hour—So that she had never afterward such kind of supernatural agitations, nor pretended to any gift of prophecy for the future.

Verses 19–21. *And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone*—Was vanished with the evil spirit that was cast out. See here of how much evil the love of money is the root! If the preaching of the gospel ruin the craft of the silversmiths, (chap. xix. 24,) much more will it ruin that of the soothsayers and fortune-tellers. Hence here is a mighty outcry raised when Satan's power is broken. The power of Christ, which appeared in dispossessing the woman, and the great kindness done to her, in delivering her out of Satan's hand, made no impression upon them when they apprehended that they should lose money by it. *They caught Paul and Silas*—Timothy and Luke, it seems, not being so obnoxious to them; and drew them into the market-place—With a view to accuse them; unto the rulers—Or inferior magistrates, (as the word *ἀρχοντας* here means,) who held their court there. *And brought them*—Τοις στρατηγοῖς, to the pretors, or commanders of the army, who, it is probable, as

ing, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, A. M. 4057. A. D. 53.

21 And teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely.

24 Who having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

¶ 1 Kings xviii. 17; Chap. xvii. 6.—¶ 2 Cor. vi. 5; xi. 23, 25;
 ¶ 1 Thess. ii. 2.

this was a Roman colony, possessed the supreme authority in the city: saying, *These men, being Jews*—A nation peculiarly despised by the Romans; *do exceedingly trouble our city*—Disturb it in an insufferable manner; and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive—Being such as would lead us to renounce the gods of our country, and abstain from many things which the Roman laws require. The world has received all the rules and doctrines of all the philosophers that ever were; but gospel truth has something in it peculiarly intolerable to the world; neither to observe, being Romans—“Though there was, as yet, no express law of the senate, or of the emperor, against Christians, as such, yet there was an old law of the Romans forbidding them, ‘aut novos deos, aut alienigenas colere,’ either to worship new gods, or the gods of other nations; and requiring them to worship the gods of their country; from which Christianity dissuaded men, not suffering any to worship the gods of their fathers, but requiring them to turn from these dumb idols to the living God, 1 Thess. i. 10; chap. xiv. 15.”—Whitby. Perhaps, also, they alluded to something said by the apostle relating to the kingship of Christ, concerning which we know he preached afterward, at Thessalonica, chap. xvii. 7.

Verses 22–24. *And the multitude rose up against them*—Excited and inflamed by these accusations; and the magistrates—Or the pretors; rent off their clothes—That is, the clothes of Paul and Silas; for such was the Roman method of proceeding in such cases. Their magistrates were wont to command the lictors to rend open the clothes of the criminals, and to beat their bodies with rods; as Grotius here observes. *And when they had laid many stripes upon them*—Had severely scourged them; (either they did not immediately say they were Romans, or in the tumult it was not regarded;) they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely—Lest, among their numerous friends, a rescue should be attempted; who, having received such a charge—A charge so strict, and from persons of such great rank; thrust them into the inner prison—

A. M. 4057. 25 ¶ And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

26 * And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately * all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison-doors

* Chap. iv. 31.—* Chap. v. 19; xii. 7, 10.

Where he thought them perfectly secure; especially as he also *made their feet fast 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 kept them extended in a very painful manner. So that it is highly probable the situation of Paul and Silas here was much more painful than that of an offender sitting in the stocks among us, especially if they lay, as it is very possible they did, with their backs, so lately scourged, on the damp and dirty ground. These multiplied injuries, however, these servants of God, conscious of their integrity, and enjoying a sense of the divine favour, bore not only with entire resignation, but with great joy.

Verses 25–28. *At midnight Paul and Silas prayed*—Doubtless, for their persecutors as well as for themselves; *and sang praises unto God*—Notwithstanding weariness, hunger, stripes, and blood; *and the prisoners heard them*—Heard a song to which they had not been accustomed, and such as had never been heard in that prison before. *And suddenly*—While they were thus engaged; *there was a great earthquake*—A token of God's favour toward them, and threatening vengeance to their persecutors; *so that the foundations of the prison were shaken*—And probably of the neighbouring buildings also; *and immediately*—By the force of the earthquake; *all the doors were opened, and, in the same moment, every one's bands were miraculously loosed*—Yet the spirits of the prisoners were impressed with such astonishment, that none of them attempted to escape. *And the keeper of the prison*—Who, it seems, resided in a part of it, not far from the ward where Paul and Silas lay; *awaking out of sleep*—Upon this violent concussion of the earth; *and seeing the prison-doors open*—Was in such consternation, that *he drew his sword and would have killed himself*—If he had not been prevented by the apostle, to avoid a more severe punishment, supposing that all the prisoners had escaped. For by the Roman laws, in that case, the keeper was liable to the same punishment that awaited the criminals who had escaped. *But Paul cried, &c.*—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 hearing some desperate words that declared it, or by some immediate suggestion from God, which is by no means incredible; *with a loud voice*—Through

open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas;

30 And brought them out, and said, ^b Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

^b Luke iii. 10; Chap. ii. 37; ix. 6.

earnestness, and because he was at some distance; *Do thyself no harm*—Although the Christian faith opens a bright prospect into another life, yet it absolutely forbids, and effectually prevents, a man's discharging himself from this. *For we are all here*—And none of us will take the opportunity of escaping, while the hand of God is working thus awfully around us.

Verses 29, 30. *Then he, &c.*—The jailer, greatly terrified by the earthquake, and astonished at Paul's discovering his purpose to kill himself; *called for a light*—Greek, *φωτα*, *lights*, implying, it seems, that on this alarm several of his attendants came with torches, and were present at the inquiry which immediately followed; *and sprang in*—With a violent and impetuous motion, into the inner prison, and, in the presence of his domestics, *fell down trembling before Paul and Silas*—Begging them, doubtless, to forgive the injuries he had been obliged to do them; for he was now convinced that they were, what the possessed damsel called them, even the *servants of the most high God, who showed to men the way of salvation*. And then, in the most respectful manner, *brought them out*—From the inner prison, in which they were confined; *and said, Sirs*—*Κυριοι*, a style this in which he did not address them the day before; *what must I do to be saved?*—From the guilt I feel, and the vengeance I fear; probably referring to the testimony of the Pythoness, which had been so often and so publicly repeated. God, however, undoubtedly 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. Added to this, probably, “a vast multitude of ideas rushed into his mind at once. He saw by the earthquake the power and displeasure of God; and, together with this, the sweetness and joy of Paul and Silas in their bonds, their willing continuance in prison, when they might easily have escaped, and their generous solicitude for the life of one who had used them so ill, were all circumstances fit to strike powerfully on a mind so passionate as his seems to have been, and might all do their part toward convincing him that these men were indeed divine messengers, and that the divine displeasure was falling on the city, and particularly on himself, for persecuting them. Perhaps some kind and pious words, which Paul and Silas, who took all opportunities of doing good, might have ut-

A. M. 4057. 31 And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their stripes*; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, ^d he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

35 ¶ And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go.

^c John iii. 16, 36; vi. 47; 1 John v. 10.

tered while he was fastening their feet in the stocks, might throw further light on his mind, when recollected amidst such extremity of danger; and, no doubt, the Spirit of God added conviction and energy to all."—Doddridge.

Verses 31-34. *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*—Whom it is our office to preach as the great and only Saviour; and confide wholly in him for salvation; loving, obeying, and living to his glory. As Paul had preached a considerable time at Philippi, the jailer, before this, must have heard of Jesus Christ, perhaps oftener than once: *thou shalt be saved*—Now and for ever, from every evil; *and thy house too*, if they also believe. "The meaning cannot be, that the eternal salvation of his family could be secured by his faith, but that his believing in Christ would be the best security of his family from present danger; and that, if they also themselves believed, they would be entitled to the same spiritual and everlasting blessings with himself; which declaration Paul might the rather add, as it is probable that many of them, under this terrible alarm, had attended the master of the family into the dungeon." *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord*—That is, Paul declared more fully to them the contents and design of the gospel, giving them a brief account of the person and offices of the Lord Jesus, and of his life, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension; all which Silas confirmed by his testimony. And Paul's discourse on these subjects was so powerfully convincing, that both the jailer, and all the members of his family, became real converts to Christianity, *and were baptized straightway*. *And he took them the same hour, and washed their stripes*—Which still remained unhealed. It should not be forgotten, that the apostles had not the power of working miraculous cures when they pleased, either on themselves or on 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. *And when he had brought them into his house*—After the solemn rite of baptism had been performed; *he set meat before them, and rejoiced*—In the knowledge which he had obtained

A. M. 4057. 36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, "being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.

38 And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared when they heard that they were Romans.

^d Luke v. 29; xix. 6.—^e Chap. xxii. 25.

of Christ, and the way of salvation through him. Thus faith makes a man joyful, prudent, liberal: *believing in God*—In the one living and true God; a very different being from the gods in which he had before believed. *With all his house*—Who, it seems, were all equally impressed with Paul's sermon as the jailer himself was. Such were the transactions of this memorable night; and those of the next morning were not much less remarkable.

Verses 35-39. *When it was day, the magistrates*—Or pretors, being terrified, probably, by the earthquake, which had been felt all over the city, and having been informed of the miraculous opening of the prison-doors, which had changed their opinion of Paul and Silas; *sent the sergeants*—*Ραβδουχοι*, the rod-bearers, or lictors; *saying*—To the jailer; *Let these men go*—How different from the charge given a few hours before, and how great an ease to the mind of the jailer! *And the keeper told this saying to Paul*—Being glad that he might release them; adding, *Now therefore depart, and go in peace*—He does not say this as being desirous to be rid of them, but showing that they were at full liberty to go whenever they pleased, to preach the gospel and fulfil their ministry. *But Paul said*—Judging it proper to animadvert on the manner in which they had been used; *They have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being Romans*—Free citizens, as well as themselves; *and now they thrust us out privily*—Without making us any reparation for the injury they have done us. *Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out*—And, by their dismissing us openly, let them show the people that they imprisoned us unjustly. Paul does not always plead this privilege of being a Roman; but in a country where they were entire strangers, such treatment, if suffered without animadversion, might have brought upon them a suspicion of their having been guilty of some uncommon crime; and so have hindered the success of the gospel. Now when the pretors *heard that they were Romans*, they were afraid of being called to an account for their conduct toward them, well knowing that even to have torn the garments of a citizen, and much more to have scourged him, especially thus publicly, and

A. M. 4057. 39 And they came and besought
A. D. 53. them, and brought *them* out, and
desired *them* to depart out of the city.

40 And they went out of the prison, [†] and

[†] Matt. viii. 34.

without hearing his defence, was a crime which might have exposed them to very high penalties, if the person injured had entered a complaint against them in the legal forms. *They came*—Therefore, in their own persons, to the prison where Paul and Silas were, and besought *them*—Not to resent the injury that had been done them, or, as the word *παρεκαλεσθαι*, here rendered *besought*, is rendered in the next verse, *they comforted them*, namely, by acknowledging their innocence, and commending the patience and fortitude with which they had borne the punishment so rashly inflicted upon them, as well as by other kind and conciliating speeches. *And brought them out*—With the most respectful treatment; and *desired them to depart out of the city*—With all convenient speed, to prevent any of those popular tumults which might be the consequence of their longer abode in it.

Verse 40. *And they went out, &c.*—The servants of Christ, being honourably cleared from every crime by this public release, left the prison quietly, and went to the *house of Lydia*—With whom they had lodged before; and *when they had seen the brethren*—The disciples whom they had made; *they comforted them*—By rehearsing what God had done both for them and by them, in prison; and *exhorted them* (as the word also signifies) to steadfastness in the faith, and such exemplary conduct as Christianity always requires, and was peculiarly suitable to their

entered into *the house of Lydia*: A. M. 4057.
and when they had seen the bre- A. D. 53.
thren, they comforted them, and depart-
ed.

[‡] Verse 14.

present circumstances; and then they departed—Though many circumstances now invited their stay at Philippi; yet they showed great wisdom in complying 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.

We may observe here, that of all the churches planted by Paul, this at Philippi seems to have loved and respected him the most. The sufferings he had undergone in their city, for the sake of giving them the knowledge of the gospel, more precious than gold, greatly endeared him to them. Accordingly, while he was at Thessalonica, they sent him money twice, that, by making the gospel without expense to the Thessalonians, they might give the more heed to the things which Paul spake, when they found him a teacher of a different character from the Greek philosophers, who taught only for hire. They likewise sent him money during his first imprisonment at Rome, that he might want nothing necessary for him. In short, the injurious treatment which Paul and Silas met with in this first city of Europe, where they had preached, was abundantly compensated by the readiness of mind with which many of its inhabitants received the gospel; and by the excellent disposition which they showed after their conversion, in the great love which they all along expressed toward their spiritual father.

CHAPTER XVII.

- (1.) *Paul preaches at Thessalonica and Berea, but is soon chased from both these places by the violence of the unbelieving Jews, 1-14.* (2.) *Being conducted to Athens, he is greatly affected with the idolatry of that city, and disputes with the Jews in the synagogue, and with the philosophers in the forum, daily, 15-18.* (3.) *Being brought to Mars' hill, he discourses on the nature and attributes of the one living and true God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, who had been hitherto unknown to the Athenians, 19-29.* (4.) *He calls on them to repent of their idolatries, and other sins, assuring them that God would judge the world by Jesus Christ, whom he had raised from the dead for that purpose, 30, 31.* (5.) *Some mock, others propose to hear him again, and a few believe, 32-34.*

A. M. 4057. NOW when they had passed
A. D. 53. through Amphipolis and Apol-

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

Verse 1. *Now when they, &c.*—It appears by Luke's phraseology here, that he was left at Philippi; for here he ceases to speak of himself as one of Paul's company, saying, not when we, but *when they had passed, &c.* Nor does he resume his former manner of writing until chap. xx. 5, 6. It is therefore more than probable, that when Paul, Silas, and Timothy departed from Philippi, after having gathered a church

lonia, they came to Thessalonica, A. M. 4057.
where was a synagogue of the Jews. A. D. 53.

there, Luke remained with the new converts until the apostle, in his way from Corinth to Syria the second time, came to Philippi and took him with them. *Had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia*—The apostle having, as we have seen, successfully planted the gospel in Philippi, departed with his assistants, Silas and Timothy; and passing first through Amphipolis, a city built in an island formed by two branches of the river Strymon, (from

A. M. 4057. 2 And Paul, as his manner was, A. M. 4057.
A. D. 53. ^a went in unto them, and three sab- A. D. 53.
bath days reasoned with them out of the Scrip-
tures,

3 Opening and alleging, ^b that Christ must
needs have suffered, and risen again from the

^a Luke iv. 16; Chap. ix. 20; xiii. 5, 14; xiv. 1; xvi. 13;
xix. 8.—^b Luke xxiv. 26, 46; Chap. xviii. 28; Gal. iii. 1.

whence it had its name,) and a colony of the Athenians, and then through Apollonia, a colony of the Corinthians and Corcyreans, near the sea-side; *they came to Thessalonica*—Now the metropolis of all the countries comprehended in the Roman province of Macedonia. For it was the residence both of the proconsul and questor; so that, being the seat of government, it was constantly filled with strangers, who attended the courts of judicature, or who solicited offices. And as most of the Greeks about this time were extremely addicted to philosophy, so great a city as Thessalonica could not be destitute of men of learning, who were well qualified to judge of the gospel and its evidences. Moreover, its situation, at the bottom of the Thermaic gulf, rendering it fit for commerce, many of its inhabitants were merchants, who carried on an extensive trade with foreign countries; and who, as the apostle observes, (1 Thess. i. 9,) published in these distant countries the conversion of the Thessalonians, and the miracles by which they had been converted. The Jews, likewise, resorted to this city in such numbers as to form a numerous congregation, and had, as we here read, a synagogue; whereas, it does not appear that they had one in any other city of Macedonia. And, probably, the reason why the apostle made no stay at the two fore-mentioned cities was, that there was no synagogue in either of them, and perhaps even no Jews, whom he was wont first to address wherever he came. It appears, therefore, from the above account of Thessalonica, that it was a very proper theatre whereon to display the light of the gospel. Through the advantages of its situation this city still subsists under the name of *Salonichi*, and is a place of great resort and trade, but it is in the possession of the Turks.

Verses 2, 3. *And Paul, as his manner was*—Of doing all things, as far as might be, in a regular way; *went in unto them*—Entered their assembly; and *three sabbath days reasoned with them*—If any reader wishes to know more particularly the manner of the apostle's reasoning with the Jews, and the proofs which he brought from their own Scriptures, in support of the facts which he affirmed, he will find an excellent example thereof in the sermon which Paul preached in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, chap. xiii. 16–41; where see the notes. *Opening and alleging*—*διανοιγων και παρατιθεμενος*, explaining and evidently showing, that is, showing by clear and incontestable arguments: for the word signifies placing a thing before the eyes of spectators; *that Christ must needs have suffered*—That is, that it was necessary, according to the whole tenor of the

dead; and that this Jesus, ¹ whom I A. M. 4057.
preach unto you, is Christ. A. D. 53.

4 ^c And some of them believed, and consorted
with Paul and ^d Silas; and of the devout
Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief wo-
men not a few.

¹ Or, whom, said he, I preach.—^c Chap. xxviii. 24.—^d Chap.
xv. 22, 27, 32, 40.

prophecies, that the Messiah should suffer, and that no one could be the Messiah who did not suffer; and have risen again from the dead—The Scriptures having also clearly predicted that event; and that *this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ*—Having exactly fulfilled all these predictions of the Scriptures concerning the Messiah, and answered all the characters drawn in them of him.

Verse 4. *And some of them believed*—Notwithstanding Paul's arguments were all taken out of the Scriptures, his discourse did not make such an impression on the Jews as might have been expected; for only a few of them believed, and consorted with or adhered to, *Paul and Silas*. Of the religious proselytes, indeed, a great multitude were converted, among whom were many women of the first distinction in the city. Our freethinkers 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 in such circumstances, was a stronger evidence of the power of Him whose strength is perfected in weakness, as a greater assistance of the Holy Spirit was needful for them to overcome their natural fearfulness.

This is Luke's account of the success of the gospel at Thessalonica: but we learn from Paul himself, (1 Thess. i. 9,) that multitudes of the idolaters also believed, being greatly struck with the miracles which he wrought, and with the miraculous gifts which he conferred on the believers. We may therefore suppose, that when he found the Jews averse to his doctrine he left the synagogue, and preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, with whom he had great success, on account of his disinterestedness, as well as of his miracles. For neither he nor any of his assistants, all the time they were in Thessalonica, took the least reward, either in money or goods, from the disciples; but wrought with their hands, and by the profits of their labours maintained themselves, without being burdensome to any person, 1 Thess. ii. 9. None of the Thessalonians, therefore, could suspect that either Paul or his as-

A. M. 4057. 5 ¶ But the Jews which believed
A. D. 53. not, moved with envy, took unto them
certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, 'These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also ;

7 Whom Jason hath received : and these all

• Rom. xvi. 21.—¶ Chap. xvi. 20.—¶ Luke xxiii. 2 ;

sistants had come to make game of them, by converting them to the Christian faith.

Verses 5-7. *But the Jews which believed not, &c.*—Although many Jews at Thessalonica received and heartily embraced the truth, there were many who rejected it, and that, as it afterward appeared, with much malignity of heart. For the great success which Paul had in converting the idolatrous Gentiles, raised the envy and indignation of the unbelieving Jews to such a pitch, that, transported with a blind and furious zeal, they hired (*των ανομοιων τινας ανδρας πορνους*) certain dissolute fellows who frequented the market-place, and were prepared to do any thing, however bad, for a small reward. These gathered a company—Collected a mob ; and soon set all the city in an uproar—Threw it into the greatest confusion ; and assaulted the house of Jason—Where Paul and his assistants lodged ; and sought to bring them out to the people—Whom they had incensed and enraged against them, and by whom they hoped to see them pulled in pieces. *And when they found them not*—As they expected, in the house ; (the apostles, it seems, having been advised to withdraw, as being most obnoxious ;) *they drew Jason*—A converted Jew ; *and certain brethren*—Who were with him ; *unto the rulers*—To whom they represented them as very criminal, in having received and harboured dangerous persons, not fit to be tolerated, enemies to the public peace, who threw every thing into disorder wherever they came : *crying, These that have turned the world upside down*—With their new doctrine ; *are come hither also*—To create the same disturbance among us ; *whom Jason hath received*—Hath sheltered under his roof, and so hath made himself responsible for all the mischief they may do here ; *and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar*—Not to any particular decree, for there was as yet no law of the empire against Christianity ; but contrary to Cesar's power in general to make decrees ; *saying, that there is another king*—Not only a king of the Jews, as Christ was himself charged before Pilate with saying ; but a universal Monarch, a Lord of all, as Peter called him in the first sermon he preached to the Gentiles, Acts x. 36 ; for doubtless they alluded to the Christian doctrine concerning the Lordship, or universal dominion of Jesus, which they pretended was inconsistent with

a.

do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, A. M. 4057.
¶ saying, that there is another king, A. D. 53.
one Jesus.

8 And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason and of the other, they let them go.

10 ¶ And ^b the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea : who coming *thither*, went into the synagogue of the Jews.

John xix. 12 ; 1 Pet. ii. 15.—^b Chap. ix. 25 ; Verse 14.

the universal lordship of Cesar. It is true, the Roman government, both while it was a commonwealth, and after it came into the hands of the Cæsars, was very jealous of any governor under their dominion taking upon him the title of king, and there was an express law against it ; but Christ's kingdom was not of this world. His followers said, indeed, that Jesus was a king, but not an earthly king : not a rival with Cesar, nor one whose ordinances interfered with the decrees of Cesar ; but who made it a law of his kingdom, to render unto Cesar the things that were Cesar's. There was nothing in the doctrine of Christ that tended to the dethroning of princes, or the depriving of them of any of their prerogatives, as they knew very well ; and it was against their consciences that they laid any thing of this kind to the charge of Christ's disciples. And of all people, it ill became the Jews to do it, who hated Cesar and his government, and sought the ruin both of him and it ; and who expected a Messiah that should be a temporal prince, and overturn the thrones of kingdoms ; and were therefore opposing our Lord Jesus because he did not appear under that character.

Verses 8-10. *And they troubled the people and the rulers*—As the charge was formed in such a manner that their neglecting it might render them obnoxious to the Romans, both the multitude and the magistrates of the city were alarmed *when they heard these things*. They were not willing, however, to proceed to extremities against an inhabitant of the place, merely for harbouring persons who, whatever might be alleged against them, were in a manner strangers to him ; *and, therefore, when they had taken security of Jason, and the other*—Brethren who were brought before them, that they would behave as good subjects ; *they let them go*—Dismissed them for that time. This liberal conduct of the rulers of Thessalonica restrained the malice of the Jews for the present. *But the brethren*—Fearing some new tumult might arise, thought it prudent to send Paul and Silas—And probably Timothy also, verse 15 ; *away by night to Berea*—A populous city in the neighbourhood. Luke has not told us what time Paul and his assistants spent at Thessalonica. But there are circumstances mentioned in the apostle's epistles from which we may infer,

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A. M. 4057. 11 These were more noble than
A. D. 53. those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and ¹searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few.

13 ¶ But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached

¹ Isa. xxxiv. 16; Luke xvi. 29; John v. 39.

that they spent some months in planting a church there; such as that, during his abode at Thessalonica, he received money twice from the Philippians, (Philip. iv. 15,) and communicated the spiritual gifts to the brethren in plenty, (1 Thess. v. 19,) and appointed προισταμενους, presidents, or rulers, stately to exercise the ministry among them, (1 Thess. v. 12,) having formed them into a regular church; all which implies that he abode a considerable time in this city.

Verses 11-14. *These were more noble, &c.*—Greek, ευγενεστεροι, more ingenious, or generous; of a more excellent disposition, more open to conviction, as being less blinded by prejudice. To be teachable in the things of God, is true nobleness and generosity of soul. *Than those in Thessalonica*—The unbelieving Jews there; in that they received the word with all readiness of mind—When it was proved to them from the Scriptures to be the word of God. *And searched the Scriptures daily*—Using great candour and impartiality in the search; whether these things were so—Namely, the things which Paul preached concerning the sufferings and resurrection of the Messiah. Here we see that receiving the word with readiness, and the most accurate search into the truth, are things well consistent the one with the other. *Therefore many of them believed*—Finding how exact a correspondence there was between the words of these Christian preachers and those of their own prophets, to which they referred. *Also of honourable women*—Women of considerable rank; which were Greeks—That is, proselytes, as the word is frequently used by Luke; and of men not a few—Thus a numerous church was gathered in Berea likewise, consisting both of the Jews and of the Gentiles, but especially of the latter. *But*—An unhappy opposition soon arose, from the malice of their persecutors: for, when the Jews of Thessalonica understood that the word of God was preached at Berea—With such promising success, not content with what they had done to oppose it at home; they came thither also, and stirred up the people—Greek, σαλευοντες τις οχλους, agitating the multitudes, or, raising a storm among them; the expression properly signifying to agitate the sea violently. It admirably illustrates the rage and fury of a seditious multitude. They doubtless represented Paul and his associates as factious and turbulent persons, to whom it was dangerous to give any the least shelter or countenance. The

of Paul at Berea, they came thither A. M. 4057.
also, and stirred up the people. A. D. 53.

14 ^k And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul, to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.

15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and ¹receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

^k Matt. x. 23.—Chap. xviii. 5.

brethren, therefore, anxious for Paul's safety, sent him away to go as it were to the sea—Or by sea, to some of the southern cities of Greece. It seems they chose to direct him the road which led to the sea, that if he had not an opportunity of embarking, or did not think proper to do it, his malicious enemies might, at least, be discouraged from any further attempt to pursue him, which they might probably have done, if they had known he would have travelled by land. But Silas and Timotheus, whose characters were not so public, or their persons so obnoxious, did not go with him from Berea; but continued there a while longer, to settle the newly-planted church, and to instruct them more fully in the doctrine of the gospel.

Verse 15. *They that conducted Paul brought him*—By land, τις, as far as Athens—That celebrated, unequalled seat of learning among the Greeks. It is true, Athens had now passed the zenith of its political splendour, and had been declining in power and glory ever since the Romans, after conquering Greece, fixed the seat of their government at Corinth. Nevertheless, its fame for learning was still as great as ever. For, at the time Paul visited that city, it was full of philosophers, rhetoricians, orators, painters, statuaries, and of young persons who came to learn philosophy and the arts. But this sort of people, being generally very idle, were great talkers, and had an insatiable curiosity. So that the character which Luke has given of the Athenians, and strangers there, (verse 21,) is perfectly just. *And receiving commandment unto Silas, &c.*, that they should come to him with all speed—Probably that they might bring him information of the state of the new converts he had left behind him at Thessalonica and Berea. Or, perhaps, he wished to be joined by them before he began his ministry at Athens, which yet, observing the wretched state of the city, he was in haste to do. Whether Silas came to him while he was at Athens, is uncertain. Timothy, however, came and informed him, that the idolaters in Thessalonica, displeased to see so many of their countrymen deserting the temples and altars of their gods, had joined the Jews in persecuting the disciples, 1 Thess. ii. 14. On hearing this, Paul thought it good to be left at Athens alone, 1 Thess. iii. 1; and sent Timothy back to Thessalonica, to establish and comfort the brethren concerning their faith. While Paul “continued in

A. M. 4058. 16 ¶ Now, while Paul waited for
A. D. 54. them at Athens, ^m his spirit was stirred
in him, when he saw the city ² wholly given to
idolatry.

17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue
with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and
in the market daily with them that met with him.

^m 2 Pet. ii. 8.—ⁿ Or, full of idols.

this renowned city, the centre of polite learning, philosophy, and the fine arts, and, as it were, the university of the Roman empire and of the world, he took little notice of the sculpture and edifices, the fragments of which, to this day, are considered as the most perfect models in their kind; or of their paintings and exhibitions, and other curiosities of this sort." And yet "Paul is generally allowed to have been a man of fine taste and cultivated genius; but his thoughts were too much occupied about more sublime and interesting subjects, to make observations on these elegant or magnificent trifles."—Scott. For,

Verses 16, 17. *While he waited for them at Athens*—Namely, for Silas and Timothy; *his spirit was stirred in him*—Greek, *παρωξυνετο*, was disquieted, vexed, filled with grief and indignation; *when he saw the city* (a city which was thought to be more enlightened than any other, and in which learning and arts were carried to greater perfection than anywhere else in the world) *wholly given to idolatry*—Greek, *κατειδωλον*, full of idols, enslaved to idolatry in the most gross and shameful manner. That this was the case, all ancient writers attest. Pausanias says that "there were more images in Athens than in all Greece besides;" and that "they worshipped the gods," or *expressed more piety to them* "than all Greece:" and presently adds, as an evidence of their piety, that "they had altars (*αιδης, φημης, και ορηης*) erected to *shame, fame, and desire*;" and again, that "they exceeded all in their zeal for the gods." Sophocles bears the same testimony, observing, "This city exceeds all others in worshipping and honouring the gods." Hence Ælian called Athens *the altar of Greece*; and Xenophon said, that "it had twice as many sacred festivals as any other city." And no wonder, for the Athenians always imported the deities and superstitious of every nation along with their arts and learning; and, as Strabo says, "their hospitality to strangers extended to the gods too, being very ready to receive any strange objects or forms of worship." So that, as Petronius humorously says, "It was easier to find a god than a man there." Here then we have a full proof of the insufficiency of science and philosophy to guide men in matters of religion. "The barbarous Scythians, the wild Indians, nay, the stupid Hottentots," as Mr. Scott observes, "have never deviated further from truth, or sunk into grosser darkness, in respect to God and religion, than the ingenious and philosophical Athenians did!" The apostle, therefore, though, it seems, he had resolved not to begin preaching till Timothy and Silas ar-

18 Then certain philosophers of A. M. 4058.
the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, A. D. 54.
encountered him. And some said, What will this ³ babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

³ Or, base fellow.

rived, yet, seeing the city sunk so low in these various, complicated, and abominable idolatries, could forbear no longer; and therefore, as there was a synagogue of the Jews in Athens, he went to it without delay, and *disputed with the Jews and the devout persons*—Whom he found assembled there: thus offering the gospel to them, as his manner was, before he preached it to the Gentiles. But not content with this, he afterward discoursed *in the market-place daily with those that met with him*—Who were chiefly, doubtless, Athenian idolaters. See Dr. Hammond.

Verse 18. *Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him*—Greek, *συνεβαλλον αυτω*, opposed themselves to him. 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 sect, while, without expressly attacking either, he gives a plain summary of his own religious principles. *Some said, What will this babbler say?*—Such is the language of natural reason, full of, and satisfied with, itself. The expression, rendered *babblers*, *σπερμολογος*, (which properly signifies a contemptible person, that picks up scattered seed in the market, or elsewhere, and which Dr. Doddridge translates, *retailer of scraps*; and Mr. Fleming, *holder forth*.) admirably expresses the contempt which these philosophers had of this unknown foreigner, who pretended to teach all the several professors of their learned and illustrious body. Yet even here 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. Others said, *He seemeth to be a setter forth*—*Καταγγελευς*, a proclaimer (this expression he returns to them at verse 23) *of strange gods*—Such as are not known even at Athens. The original expression, *Ξενων δαιμονιων*, signifies *strange, or foreign demons*. By *demons*, however, they did not understand *devils*, or evil beings, as we do; but rather men, who had lived on earth, and were afterward deified; distinguishing them from the *θεοι*, or *gods*, who, they thought, were such by nature. *Because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection*—The former of which, through their negligence in attending

A. M. 4058. 19 And they took him, and brought
A. D. 54. him unto ⁴ Areopagus, saying, May
we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou
speakest, is?

20 For thou bringest certain strange things
to our ears; we would know therefore what
these things mean.

21 (For all the Athenians and strangers
which were there, spent their time in nothing

¹ Or, Mars' hill. It was the highest court in Athens.—² Or, the

they ridiculously took for a deified man, and the
other for a goddess. And, as stupid as this mistake
was, it is the less to be wondered at, since the Athe-
nians might as well count the resurrection a deity,
as *shame, famine, and desire*; or as the *fever*,
and some other things too scandalous to be here
named, were accounted deities among the Romans.

Verses 19-21. *And*—The crowd increasing to a
greater number than could conveniently hear him,
in the place where they then were; *they took and
brought him unto Areopagus*—Or, the hill of Mars,
dedicated to Mars, the heathen god of war, the
place where the Athenians held their supreme court
of judicature, of which the original number of
judges was twelve, but it was afterward increased
to three hundred, who were generally men of the
greatest families in Athens, and were famed for
justice and integrity. Paul, however, was cer-
tainly not carried thither to be tried as a criminal,
but to be heard discoursing concerning his new
doctrine: for they said, *May we know what this
new doctrine is? For thou bringest certain
strange things to our ears*—Exceedingly different
from what we have ever received from any of
those many professors, of various learning, which
this city has produced: *we would know, therefore,
what these things mean*—And wish to hear them
from thine own mouth, rather than by the uncer-
tain report of others. This course, it must be
observed, the Athenians took with Paul, not from
the love of truth, but from mere curiosity: for,
as the historian proceeds to observe, *all the Athe-
nians, and strangers sojourning there*—And catch-
ing their distemper; *spent their time in nothing
else but either to tell*—To others; *or to hear*—For
themselves; *some new thing*—Greek, *τι καινωτερον*,
literally, *some newer thing*. New things quickly
grew cheap, and they wanted those that were *newer*
still. The apostle, therefore, “being thus called to
declare the new doctrine whereof he spake, to an
assembly consisting of senators, philosophers, rhetor-
icians, and statesmen, willingly embraced the op-
portunity; and, in a most eloquent discourse, pre-
pared his illustrious auditors for receiving that
doctrine which appeared to them so strange, by
showing them the absurdity of the commonly-re-
ceived idolatry, and by speaking on that delicate
subject with an address, and temper, and strength
of reasoning, which would have done honour to the
greatest orators of Greece or Rome.”—Macknight.

else, but either to tell, or to hear some
new thing.)

22 ¶ Then Paul stood in the midst of ⁵ Mars'
hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive
that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your ⁶ devo-
tions, I found an altar with this inscription, **TO
THE UNKNOWN GOD**. Whom therefore ye
ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

court of the Areopagites.—⁶ Or, gods that ye worship. 2 Thess. ii. 4.

Verse 22. *Then Paul stood* (Greek, *σθεις*, *stand-
ing, or being placed*, rather, probably on some emi-
nence) *in the midst of Mars' hill*—An ample the-
atre! *said, Ye men of Athens*—Giving them a lec-
ture of natural divinity, with admirable wisdom,
acuteness, fulness, and courtesy. They inquire after
new things: Paul, in his divinely-philosophical dis-
course, 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, con-
cerning 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! *That in all things
ye are too superstitious*—This translation does not,
it seems, exactly express St. Paul's meaning; the
original expression, *κατα παντα ως δεισιδαιμονεστερους*,
as Dr. Hammond and others have proved, having a
good, as well as a *bad* sense; and here, probably,
signifying, as Doddridge and Wesley have rendered
it, *greatly addicted to the worship of invisible pow-
ers*. To take it in the sense of our translation,
would be to suppose that Paul began his discourse
in very offensive language. Whereas, to render it
as here proposed, makes him open his sermon, not
only in a manner inoffensive, but even conciliating;
which common sense would direct him to do, as far
as he could with truth. “He introduced his dis-
course,” says Macknight, “with a handsome com-
pliment to the Athenians in general: he told them
that he perceived they were extremely religious;
for, lest any god should be neglected by them, he
found they had erected an altar to the unknown
God; and from this he inferred, that it would not be
unacceptable if he should declare to them that God
whom they ignorantly worshipped.” *For, said he,*

Verse 23. *As I passed by*—Or, *passed along* the
streets of your city; *and beheld your devotions*—
Greek, *τα σεβασματα υμων*, the objects of your wor-
ship, *I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE
UNKNOWN GOD*—Because Paul here tells the Atheni-
ans, that the true God was he whom they ignorantly
worshipped under this title, some learned men
have supposed that the altar he speaks of was raised
to the God of the Jews; concerning whose power,
in the destruction of the Egyptians and Canaanites,
the ancient Athenians had received some obscure
reports; and that, because the Jews carefully con-
cealed his name, and had no image of him, the
Athenians erected no statue to him, but worshipped

A. M. 4058. 24 ^a God that made the world, and
A. D. 54. all things therein, seeing that he is
° Lord of heaven and earth, ° dwelleth not in
temples made with hands ;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands,
° as though he needed any thing, seeing ° he
giveth to all life, and breath, and all things ;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of
men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,

^a Chap. xiv. 15. — ° Matt. xi. 25. — ° Chap. vii. 48. — ° Psa.
l. 8. — Gen. ii. 7 ; Num. xvi. 22 ; Job xii. 10 ; xxvii. 3 ; xxxiii. 4 ;

him under the appellation of THE UNKNOWN GOD. Others think this altar was erected by Socrates, to express his devotions to the only true God, (while he derided the plurality of the heathen gods, for which he was condemned to death,) of whom the Athenians had no idea, and whose nature, he insinuated by this inscription, was far above the reach of human comprehension. See Dr. Wellwood's Introduction to his translation of *The Banquet of Xenophon*. *Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship—Greek, ον ου ανθρωποι ευσεβειτε, whom therefore ye worship, or, toward whom ye are piously disposed, not knowing him ; him declare I—Greek, τερου εγω καταγγελλω, 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 ; and alluding to their words, (verse 20.) he seemeth to be a proclaimer of strange gods.*

Verses 24–28. *God that 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. Seeing he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands—God hath no need of temples to dwell in, seeing he hath made the world, and is the Lord, or possessor, of the universe. Ye, therefore, greatly err in thinking, that by erecting magnificent temples and images, and by consecrating them, ye draw God down into them, and prevail with him to reside among you in an especial manner. That vulgar notion is unworthy of men whose minds are improved by science, and who, from God's having made the world, ought to know that his presence is not confined to temples made by men. Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing—Or, person, the word τινος equally taking in both : that is, Neither is the true God worshipped with sacrifices and meats prepared by men's hands, if these things are offered to him, as though he needed to be fed with the fruits of the earth, and with the flesh of beasts, and refreshed with the steams of sacrifices and incense : seeing he giveth to all—That live and breathe, whether men or beasts ; life—For in him we live ; and breath—In him we move ; and all things—For in him we are : whence it is evident that men can contribute nothing to his life or happiness. And hath made of one blood all nations of men—Hath from one man and woman multiplied the human race, so as to form those dif-*

and hath determined the times before A. M. 4058.
appointed, and ° the bounds of their A. D. 54.
habitation ;

27 ° That they should seek the Lord, if haply
they might feel after him, and find him, ° though
he be not far from every one of us :

28 For ° in him we live, and move, and have
our being ; ° as certain also of your own poets
have said, For we are also his offspring.

Isa. xlii. 5 ; lvii. 16 ; Zech. xii. 1. — ° Deut. xxxii. 8. — ° Rom.
i. 20. — ° Ch. xiv. 17. — ° Col. i. 17 ; Heb. i. 3. — ° Tit. i. 12.

ferent nations which cover the face of the whole earth ; and hath everywhere made a liberal provision for them, of all the necessaries of life. How then can ye fancy that he himself needs to be lodged, and clothed, and fed by men ! By speaking thus, the apostle also showed them, in the most unaffected manner, that though he was a Jew, he was not enslaved to any narrow views, but looked on all mankind as his brethren. *And hath determined the times before appointed—Hath also assigned to each of these nations their times of existence ; and the bounds of their habitations—By mountains, seas, rivers, and the like ; that is, the particular countries they were or are to inhabit, according as he had before appointed these things. By all which he shows, that he governs the world by a most wise providence, contrary to what you Epicureans teach, and also that his government is most free, contrary to the doctrine of the Stoics.*

Verses 27, 28. *That they should seek, &c.—As if he had said, This most wise and free government of the nations of men, God carries on through all ages for this purpose, that they may be led to seek the Lord—That is, to seek the knowledge, fear, and love of him ; to seek his favour, his Spirit, and communion with him : if haply—The way is open ; God is ready to be found ; but he will lay no force upon any man ; they might feel after him—Feeling is the lowest and grossest of all our senses, and is therefore applied to that low kind of the knowledge of God which some of the heathen possessed, and which is first attained before higher discoveries of him are made. Though he be not—Και τοι γε, and truly indeed he is not, far from any one of us—Therefore, though he be not the object of men's senses, we need not go far to seek or find him. He is very near us ; yea, in us. It is only blind, perverse reason which thinks he is far off. For in him—Not in ourselves ; we live, more, and have our being—This denotes his necessary, intimate, and most efficacious presence. The structure of our bodies, and the union of our souls to these exquisite pieces of material mechanism, together with the noble faculties of our minds, wherein we resemble God, and the admirable end for which this wonderful composition of soul and body is formed, afford to every man, not only an idea, but a proof of the Deity supporting and animating him : so that no words can better express, than these of the apostle*

A. M. 4058. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the
A. D. 54. offspring of God, * we ought not to
think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or
silver, or stone, graven by art and man's de-
vice.

30 And *the times of this ignorance
God winked at; but ^b now commandeth

* Isa. xl. 18.—^a Chap. xiv. 16; Rom. iii. 25.—^b Luke xxiv.
47; Tit. ii. 11, 12; 1 Pet. i. 14; iv. 3.

do, the continual and necessary dependance of all
created beings, in their existence and all their opera-
tions, on the first, the universal, 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, and who
also added another sentence, equally just and striking,
namely, *We are his offspring*, especially in re-
spect of intelligence, and other mental powers, simi-
lar to his, with which we are endowed. This poet,
Aratus, was an Athenian, who lived almost three
hundred years before this time. The words are also
to be found, with the alteration of one letter only, in
the hymn of Cleanthes to the Supreme Being, one
of the purest and finest pieces of natural religion in
the whole world of pagan antiquity.

Verse 29. *For as much then as we are the off-
spring of God*—*We*, with all the powers and facul-
ties of our rational nature, and since these bear but
a very imperfect and distant resemblance of those
original, consummate, and infinite glories which
shine forth in him; *we ought not surely to think*—
A tender expression; especially in the first person
plural: *that the Godhead is like unto gold and sil-
ver, &c., graven by art and man's device*—For such
things, conveying no idea of *mind*, if they be like-
nesses of God, they represent him as being mere
matter, void of intelligence; but if he be so, how
could he give intelligence, and all the other faculties
of mind to us? As if he had said, Can God himself
be a less noble Being than we who are his offspring?
Nor does he only deny here that these images are
like God, but he denies, also, that they have any
analogy to him at all, so as to be capable of repre-
senting him in any degree or respect.

Verses 30, 31. *And the times of this ignorance*—
What! Does he object ignorance to the learned and
knowing Athenians? Yes, and they acknowledged
it by this very altar; *God winked at*—Greek, *παραβλεψων*,
having overlooked, bearing with it, as if he did not
take notice of it: that is, in his great long-suffering,
he suffered mankind to go on in their course of ig-
norance and idolatry, without interrupting them in
it, by sending express messages to them, by divinely-
commissioned instructors, as he did to the Jews;
because he meant to show them experimentally the
insufficiency of their own reason in matters of religion;
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 everywhere to repent*—Of their ignorance,

all men every where to repent: A. M. 4058

31 Because he hath appointed a ^a
day, in the which ^b he will judge the world in
righteousness, by *that man whom he hath or-
dained: whereof* he hath ^c given assurance
unto all *men*, in that ^d he hath raised him from
the dead.

^e Chapter x. 42; Rom. ii. 16; xiv. 10.—^f Or, *offered faith*.
^g Chap. ii. 24.

idolatry, and wickedness. There is a dignity and
grandeur in this language of the apostle becoming
an ambassador from the King of heaven. And this
universal demand of repentance declared universal
guilt in the strongest manner, and admirably con-
fronted the pride of the haughtiest Stoic of them all.
At the same time it bore down the idle plea of fa-
tality. For how could any one repent of doing what
he could not but have done. *Because he hath ap-
pointed a day, &c.*—To persuade them more effect-
ually to repent, God hath set before mankind the
greatest of all motives, that of a future judgment.
He hath appointed a day—A great and awful day;
in which he will judge the world—Even the whole
world; *in righteousness*—And will pass a final sen-
tence of happiness or misery on each, according to
his true character and behaviour. How fitly does
the apostle speak thus in their supreme court of
justice! *By that man whom he hath ordained*—
For that important purpose. Thus he speaks, suit-
ing himself to the capacity of his hearers. *Whereof
he hath given assurance, &c., in that he hath raised
him from the dead*—The resurrection of Jesus from
the dead hath put the resurrection and judgment of
all men beyond dispute: 1st, Because it hath con-
firmed the doctrine of Christ, one important branch
of which was, that he would raise the dead and judge
all mankind. 2d, Because God raised him from the
dead, as on divers other accounts, so especially that
he might judge mankind by him. 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. *For when they heard of the resurrection of
the dead, some mocked*—Made a jest of it, as a de-
spicable and incredible tale, not worthy to be any
longer heard; thereby interrupting him. These
were probably the Epicureans, who took offence at
that which is a principal object of faith, from the
pride of reason. And having once stumbled at this,
they disbelieved all the rest; and so went down to
righteous condemnation, under the guilt of having
rejected a gospel, the proof of which they might
have learned in one single day, but would not give
themselves the trouble of examining: and this is the
condemnation to which many among us are exposed.
And others—More candid; *said, We will hear thee
again on this matter*—And having said this, they put
an end to the apostle's discourse, and to the assembly,
without allowing him an opportunity of showing
how the resurrection of Jesus renders the resurrec-

A. M. 4058. 32 ¶ And when they heard of the resur-
A. D. 54. rection of the dead, some mocked: and
others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.
33 So Paul departed from among them.

tion and judgment of mankind probable; or of explaining the other fundamental doctrines of the gospel.

Verses 33, 34. *So Paul departed from among them*—Leaving his hearers divided in their judgment, and the generality of them in that deplorable state of ignorance, folly, and superstition, in which he found them; being himself astonished, no doubt, that men who professed wisdom were so little able to discern truth. *Howbeit, certain men clave unto him*—And inquired further into the evidence of that extraordinary doctrine which he taught concerning Jesus and his resurrection; the consequence of which was, that they believed the gospel, and made a public and courageous confession of it. *Among whom was Dionysius the Areopagite*—One of the judges of that court; *and a woman named Damaris*—One of considerable rank and character in the city; *and others with them*—Whose names it is not necessary here to mention. These, it seems, were the only persons Paul met with in this famous mart of learning, capable of seeing and acknowledging the absurdity of the prevailing idolatry! It is not said that Paul

34 Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which
A. M. 4058. was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman
A. D. 54. named Damaris, and others with them.

wrought any miracles at Athens; and the little success with which he preached, gives reason to suppose that he wrought none. Doubtless, this was by divine appointment, and probably to try what reception the gospel would meet with from learned and inquisitive men, when offered to them merely on the footing of its own reasonableness. The truth is, if such an experiment was anywhere to be made, in order to confute those in after times who should affirm that the general reception of the gospel, in the first stage, was owing not to miracles, but to the absurdities of heathenism, and to the reasonableness of the gospel doctrine, Athens surely was the place where the trial could be made with most advantage, and Paul's oration in the Areopagus was the discourse which should have convinced reasonable men. Nevertheless, at Athens, where the human faculties were carried to the greatest perfection, the apostle was not able to convince his hearers of the folly of idolatry, nor of the reasonableness of worshipping and serving the one living and true God, by purity of mind and goodness of life!

CHAPTER XVIII

- (1.) Paul, going from Athens to Corinth, meets with Aquila and Priscilla, and works with them as a tent-maker, 1-3. (2.) He preaches first to the Jews in the synagogue, and, when they opposed and blasphemed, to the Gentiles with more success, 4-8. (3.) Being encouraged by a vision, he continues a year and a half teaching and preaching among the Corinthians, 9-11. (4.) He is accused by the Jews to Gallio, the Roman governor, who refuses to take cognizance of such matters as they complained of, 12-17. (5.) He returns by Ephesus to Jerusalem; goes from thence to Antioch, and, after spending some time there, revisits the churches he had planted in Galatia and Phrygia, 18-23. (6.) Apollos, coming to Ephesus, is instructed by Aquila and Priscilla; and with great eloquence, fervour, and force of argument, preaches the gospel there, and in Achaia, with great success, 24-28.

A. M. 4058. AFTER these things, Paul departed
A. D. 54. from Athens, and came to Corinth;

2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come
A. M. 4058. A. D. 54.

* Rom. xvi. 3; 1 Cor.

xvi. 19; 2 Tim. iv. 19.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

Verse 1. *And after these things Paul departed, &c.*—After having so unsuccessfully preached to the philosophers and others in Athens, the apostle judged it needless any longer to attempt the conversion of men so frivolous, easy, indolent, and wise in their own eyes. He therefore left them as incorrigible, and proceeded forward to Corinth, now become more considerable for the number, learning, and wealth of its inhabitants, than even Athens itself. Corinth was situated on an isthmus, or narrow neck of land, which joined Peloponnesus to Greece. On the east side of the isthmus were the ports of Cenchrea and Schænus, which received the merchandise of Asia, by the Saronic gulf; and on the west

side, the port of Lechæum received the merchandise of Italy, Gaul, and Spain, by the Crissæan gulf. Corinth, being thus conveniently situated for commerce, soon became extremely rich and populous; and being seated on the isthmus which joined Peloponnesus to Greece, it commanded both countries. In the course of the Achæan war, the Roman consul, Mummius, burned it to the ground; but Julius Cesar rebuilt it after it had long lain in ashes. When Achaia was made a Roman province, Corinth, becoming the seat of government, soon regained its ancient celebrity, in respect of commerce and riches, but especially in respect of the number and quality of its inhabitants. For, at the time the apostle arrived, it was full of learned men, some of

A. M. 4058. from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, A. D. 51. (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome,) and came unto them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, ^b and wrought, (for by their occupation they were tent-makers.)

4 ^c And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5 And ^d when Silas and Timotheus were

^b Chap. xx. 34; 1 Cor. iv. 12; 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8. ^c Chap. xvii. 2.—^d Chap. xvii. 14, 15.—^e Job xxxii. 18; Chap. xvii. 3; Verse 28.—^f Or, is the Christ.—^g Chap. xiii. 45; 1 Pet. iv. 4.

whom taught philosophy, rhetoric, poetry, and painting; others studied these sciences and arts; insomuch that there was no city in Greece where philosophy, and the fine arts, and learning were carried to greater perfection than at Corinth; no city in which there were more men of a cultivated understanding.

Verses 2, 3. *And found a certain Jew*—Afterward converted to the faith of Christ, (verse 26,) doubtless by the instrumentality of Paul; *born in Pontus*—A province of the Lesser Asia, not far from Galatia and Cappadocia; *lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla*—Who also became an eminent Christian; *because that Claudius*—The Roman emperor; *had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome*—All who were Jews by birth; whether they were Jews or Christians by religion, the Romans were too stately to regard; *and came unto them, because he was of the same craft*—Namely, that of tent-making. It being a rule among the Jews (and why is it not also among Christians?) to bring up all their children to some trade, were they ever so rich and noble. Paul, though intended to have a better education than ordinary, had learned this when young, and being now capable of exercising it, he found it of great use to him on many occasions, particularly at this time. For by the profits of his labour therein, he maintained himself all the while he abode at Corinth, without burdening the Corinthians in the least. The same course he had followed some time before this, while he preached in Thessalonica; (1 Thess. ii. 9;) and afterward at Ephesus, where, as also probably in many other places, he supported not only himself, but his assistants likewise, by his labour. See Acts xx. 34. The tents, or pavilions, which Paul and these his friends were employed in making, and which were formed of linen or skins, were much used, not only by soldiers and travellers, but by others in those hot countries.

Verse 4. *And he reasoned in the synagogue, &c.*—The Jews being numerous in Corinth, Paul, according to his custom, began his ministry in the synagogue; *and persuaded*—That is, endeavoured to persuade; *the Jews and Greeks*—It is probable that most of these Greeks, since they attended the Jewish synagogue, were a kind of proselytes. It is possible, however, that some of them might not be such, but Gentiles, who were drawn out of curiosity to

come from Macedonia, Paul was A. M. 4058 ^e pressed in the spirit, and testified to ^f the Jews *that Jesus ^g was Christ.*

6 And ^h when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, ⁱ he shook *his raiment*, and said unto them, ^j Your blood *be* upon your own heads: ^k I *am* clean: ^l from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one that*

^h Neh. v. 13; Matt. x. 14; Chap. xiii. 51.—ⁱ Lev. xx. 9, 11, 12; 2 Sam. i. 16; Ezek. xviii. 13; xxxiii. 4.—^j Ezek. iii. 18, 19; xxxiii. 9; Chapter xx. 26.—^k Chapter xiii. 46; xxviii. 28.

attend in the synagogue (though they did not commonly worship there) to hear such an extraordinary preacher as Paul was, especially considering the miracles which he wrought at Corinth, and to which he so often refers in the two epistles afterward written to the church formed there.

Verses 5, 6. *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia*—Silas seems to have stayed a considerable time at Berea; but Timotheus, having come to the apostle while he was at Athens, and having been sent back by him to comfort and confirm the church at Thessalonica, now left that city to join Paul at Corinth; and in his way calling upon Silas at Berea, they travelled together to Corinth, where they found the apostle, and gave him the agreeable information that the Thessalonian brethren stood firm in the faith, bare the persecution of the unbelievers with exemplary fortitude, and entertained a grateful remembrance of him their spiritual father, 1 Thess. iii. 5, 6. These tidings, it seems, filled the apostle with joy, and encouraged him to deal more plainly with the Jews at Corinth than he had hitherto done. *For he was pressed in spirit*—And the more probably from what Silas and Timotheus related; *and testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ*—Confirming his testimony by arguments brought from the Scriptures, and by the miracles which he wrought. *And when they opposed themselves*—To his doctrine; *and blasphemed*—Jesus, by affirming that he was not the Christ, but an impostor; *he shook his raiment*—To signify that from that time he would refrain from them, and that God would soon shake them off as unworthy to be numbered among his people; *and said, Your blood*—That is, the guilt of your destruction; *be upon your own heads: I am clean*—From it, agreeably to God's declaration, Ezek. xxxiii. 2-9. By this wilful impenitence and unbelief, you are your own murderers; and, as God and man can testify that I have done all in my power to prevent so sad an event, I now desist from any further attempts of this kind; *from henceforth*—While I continue in this city, leaving the synagogue, *I will go* and preach to the *Gentiles*—Who will readily receive that gospel which you so ungratefully reject.

Verses 7, 8. *He entered into a man's house, named Justus*—A Gentile, but a worshipper of the true God:

A. M. 4058. worshipped God, whose house joined
A. D. 54. hard to the synagogue.

8 ¹ And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.

9 ¶ Then ² spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

10 ³ For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

¹ 1 Cor. i. 14.—² Chap. xxiii. 11.—³ Jer. i. 18, 19; Matt.

and he preached there, though probably he still lodged with Aquila. He the rather chose to preach in the house of this religious proselyte, because, as it was near the synagogue, such of the Jews as were of a teachable disposition, had thereby an opportunity of hearing him. Accordingly, when he preached in this house, *Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed*—Whom Paul baptized; *with all his house.* And many of the Corinthians—The formerly idolatrous inhabitants of the city; *hearing*—The conversion of Crispus, and the preaching of Paul; *believed and were baptized*—Namely, by Silas and Timothy; for the apostle affirms that he baptized none of the Corinthians but Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanus, 1 Cor. i. 14, 16.

Verses 9-11. *Then spake the Lord*—The Lord Jesus; *in the night by a vision to Paul*—Who, probably, had been discouraged in view of the learning, politeness, and grandeur of many Gentile inhabitants of the city, to whom he was to speak, so that he was, as he himself expresses it, (1 Cor. ii. 3,) *among them in weakness and fear, and in much trembling*; which alarms were probably much increased by the violent assaults which had been made upon him in other places, and the contempt with which he had generally been treated: *Be not afraid, but speak*—My gospel boldly and courageously; *and hold not thy peace*—Be not silent through any present discouragement or future apprehension; *for I am with thee*—By my powerful and gracious presence, to protect, support, and comfort thee; *and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee*—A promise this which was fulfilled to Paul and also to others of God's servants; so that whatsoever troubles they met with, even when they were killed, they were not hurt, Rom. viii. 28, 36-39. *For I have much people in this city*—So he prophetically calls them that he foreknew would believe. *And he continued there a year and six months*—A long time! But how few souls are now gained frequently in a longer time than this by ministers of the gospel! Who is in the fault? generally both teachers and hearers. *Teaching the word of God among them*—It is probable this is not to be understood of the Corinthians alone, but of the inhabitants of the neighbouring parts of Achaia also. For it is reasonable to suppose that the apostle occa-

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11 And he ² continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 ¶ And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat,

13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.

14 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, ° If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness,

xxviii. 20.—² Gr. *sat* there.—° Chap. xxiii. 29; xxiii. 11, 19.

sionally left Corinth, and went into the adjacent country of Peloponnesus, where there were many synagogues of the Jews, especially in the chief cities; and that, having preached to the Jews and Gentiles in those cities, he returned again to Corinth. This supposition is countenanced by Paul himself, 2 Cor. xi. 10, where he intimates that he preached in the region of Achaia, and where, according to 2 Cor. i. 1, he made many disciples.

Verses 12, 13. *When Gallio was the deputy*—Greek, Γαλλιωνος ανθυπαρευοντος, *Gallio being 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! *The Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul*—His great success at Corinth, and in Peloponnesus, in converting the Gentiles to the faith of Christ, provoked the Jews to the highest pitch of rage, especially when they found he led his converts to despise the institutions of Moses, by assuring them that they might be justified and saved through faith in Christ, without the use of these institutions: *and brought him to the judgment-seat*—Of Gallio; *saying, This fellow*—The author of insufferable mischiefs, here and all over the country; *persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law*—It seems Paul had taught that, the law of Moses being now abrogated, men were no longer bound to worship God with sacrifices and washings, and other bodily services, but *in spirit and in truth.* And this doctrine being deemed contrary to the law of Moses, the unbelieving Jews, in this tumultuous manner, brought Paul, the teacher of it, before the proconsul, in order to have him punished, as one who, by opposing the law of Moses, had acted contrary to the laws of the empire, which tolerated the Jews in the exercise of their religion.

Verses 14-16. *And when Paul was now about to open his mouth*—To speak in his own defence; *Gallio*—Sensible of the futility of the charge; *said to the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness*—With which you charged the person you have now brought before me: that is, If you accused

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A. M. 4059. O ye Jews, reason would that I
A. D. 55. should bear with you :

15 But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it : for I will be no judge of such matters.

16 And he drave them from the judgment-seat.

17 Then all the Greeks took ^pSosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

p 1 Cor. i. 1.—^qNum. vi. 13 ;

this man of any injury done to particular persons, or of wantonly disturbing the peace of society; reason would—That is, it were reasonable; that I should bear with you—In this prosecution; and even that I should exert the power with which I am invested, to punish the offender in proportion to his crime. *But if it be a question of words*—Greek, *περι λόγου*, concerning discourse, or doctrine; and of names, and of your law—If your accusation respect opinions taught by Paul, which ye think heretical; and whether the names of the Christ, and the Son of God, which he hath given to any one, ought to be given to that person; and whether all who worship the God of the Jews, are bound to worship him according to the rites of your law; look ye to it—These are matters which belong to yourselves, and with which, as a magistrate, I have no concern. *I will be no judge of such matters*—Matters so foreign to my office. The apparent coolness and contempt with which Gallio speaks of the matters in debate between Paul and the Jews does not merit commendation, but the severest censure. The names of the heathen gods, and the institutions concerning their worship and service, were fables, shadows, and deceits; but the question concerning the name of Jesus, his person, character, and offices, and the worship and service of the living and true God, 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. *And he drave them from the judgment-seat*—Not regarding their clamorous importunity.

Verse 17. *Then all the Greeks*—Who were present, perceiving how little favour the Jews found from the court, and displeased with them for their turbulent, persecuting spirit, perhaps, thinking that Paul was thus insulted for the regards he had expressed for the Gentiles; *took Sosthenes*—The successor of Crispus, as chief ruler of the synagogue—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*—While Gallio looked on without hindering them. But though this was certainly a very irregular proceeding, Gallio cared for none of those things—Did not concern himself at all to interpose in the

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18 ¶ And Paul after this tarried ^{A. M. 4059.}
there yet a good while, and then ^{A. D. 55.}

took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having ^ashorn his head in ^rCenchrea: for he had a vow.

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not :

Chap. xxi. 24.—Rom. xvi. 1.

affair. Probably he was pleased with the indignity done by the Greeks to the chief magistrate of the Jews, whose bigoted and persecuting spirit he disliked. It seems what Sosthenes now suffered had a happy effect on him; for he afterward became a Christian.

Verse 18. *Paul after this*—After these tumultuous proceedings, and the opposition that was raised against him at Corinth by the Jews; *tarried there yet a good while*—Greek, *ημερας ικανας*, many days, after the year and six months, mentioned verse 11, to confirm the brethren. *And then took his leave, and sailed into Syria*—That is, in order to return thither; and with him Priscilla and Aquila—His two intimate friends; *having shorn his head in Cenchrea*—Commentators are much divided in opinion, whether this is spoken of Aquila or Paul. Chrysostom, Grotius, Heinsius, Hammond, and Witsius, with many others, refer it to the former; but Jerome, Augustin, Beda, Calmet, Whitby, Doddridge, Dodd, and Macknight, understand it of Paul. And it seems more probable from the construction, that this clause, and the beginning of the next verse, should refer to the same person, that is, to Paul. "Aquila being left at Ephesus, and not going up to Jerusalem as Paul did, hence I conclude," says Dr. Whitby, "that the vow was made by Paul." Macknight's paraphrase on the clause is, "They took ship at Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth, where Paul shaved his head, and thereby put a period to the duration of a vow which he had made, perhaps, on occasion of the great deliverance he had obtained, when the Jews made insurrection against him." What sort of a vow this was we are not informed. Salmasius has justly observed, it could not be a vow of Nazariteship, for then the hair must have been burned in the temple, under the caldron in which the peace-offerings were boiled, Num. vi. 18. It was the custom, it seems, on the accomplishment of vows, for persons to shave their heads, chap. xxi. 23, 24.

Verses 19–23. *And he came to Ephesus*—The ship in which they sailed probably having occasion to touch there. *And he entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews*—Upon whom his discourse made such an impression, that they desired him to tarry longer with them—However, as his vow made it necessary that he should offer the

(51*)

A. M. 4059. 21 But bade them farewell, saying,
A. D. 55. * I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, * if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

A. D. 56. 22 And when he had landed at Cesarea, and gone up and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.

23 And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, * strengthening all the disciples.

* Chap. xix. 21; xx. 16.—† 1 Cor. iv. 19; Heb. vi. 3; James iv. 15.—‡ Gal. i. 2; iv. 14.—§ Chap. xiv. 22; xv. 32, 41.

appointed sacrifice in Jerusalem at the ensuing feast, which, according to the general opinion, was the passover, he *consented not, but bade them farewell*—Promising, however, if God permitted, to return again to them; and the rather, because there seemed to be a probability of preaching the gospel there with success, both to the Jews and Gentiles. *And when*—After a safe voyage; *he had landed at Cesarea*—In such good time as to be able to keep the feast in Jerusalem, according to his resolution; *and had gone up and saluted the church* there, and completed his vow, knowing that there was no need of his labours in that city, where there were so many apostles and chief brethren, he did not stay long there; but, after keeping the feast, *went down to Antioch*—In Syria, where formerly he and Barnabas had laboured so successfully in the work of the ministry. *And after he had spent some time there*—He set out upon another journey: for his concern for the salvation of lost mankind, and the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ, would not suffer him to rest when he could do any thing to promote these important ends; *and went over the country of Galatia and Phrygia*—Spending, it is supposed, about four years in these parts, including the time he stayed at Ephesus; since it is here said he went over all those countries; *in order*—It is probable he did so for the purpose of visiting every church, and receiving those contributions which, in his former journey, he requested them to make for the saints in Judea. See 1 Cor. xvi. 1.

Verses 24–26. *And a certain Jew, &c.*—While Paul was thus visiting the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, there came to Ephesus a Jew, named *Apollos*—A native of Alexandria in Egypt; *an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures*—Namely, those of the Old Testament. Observe, reader, every talent may be of use in the kingdom of Christ, if joined with the knowledge of the Scriptures, and fervour of spirit. *Now this man was instructed*—Though not perfectly; *in the way of the Lord*—In the doctrine of Christ; *and being fervent in spirit*—That is, earnestly desirous of promoting the pro-

24 ¶ And a certain Jew, named A. M. 4060.
Apollos, born at Alexandria, an elo- A. D. 56
quent man, *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord: and being * fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, * knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

† 1 Cor. i. 12; iii. 5, 6; iv. 6; Tit. iii. 13.—‡ Rom. xii. 11. § Chap. xix. 3.

gress of truth, and the conversion of souls; *he spake and taught diligently*—Greek, *ακριβως*, *accurately*, or with exactness, according to the best light he had; *knowing only the baptism of John*—That is, what John taught those whom he baptized, namely, the nature and necessity of repentance toward God, and faith in a Messiah shortly to appear. It is thought he had heard John the Baptist preach, and had become his disciple in Judea: if so, as John was beheaded more than twenty years before this time, and as Apollos seems to have had little or no knowledge of the Christians, it is probable he had not remained in Judea, but had returned to Alexandria, his native city, after he had been baptized by John, and had continued there till nearly the time of his coming to Ephesus. Hence he had had no opportunity of being fully acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel, as delivered by Christ and his apostles. *And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue*—Pleading the cause of God and real vital religion with an earnestness becoming the importance of the subject, as well as freely reproving the Jews for their vices, which were so commonly practised among them, and showing the vanity of those hopes which, as the seed of Abraham, and the disciples of Moses, they were so ready to entertain. *Whom when Aquila and Priscilla*—Being then at Ephesus; *had heard*—Perceiving that he manifested an upright mind, and great zeal for the worship and service of the living and true God; *they took him unto them*—Probably to their house; *and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly*—By informing him that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, whose coming John had announced, and by assuring him that John had even pointed him out as the Christ to his disciples. Besides, these well-instructed Christians, who, during Paul's abode with them, had gained a perfect knowledge of the gospel, doubtless gave Apollos a particular account of the supernatural conception and birth, of the doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus; and informed him that he had proved himself to be the Christ, not only by his miracles and resurrection, but by his baptizing his disciples *with the Holy Ghost and with fire*, as John had foretold.

A. M. 4060. 27 And when he was disposed to
A. D. 56. pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote,
exhorting the disciples to receive him: who,
when he was come, ^bhelped them much

^b 1 Cor. iii. 6.

Verses 27, 28. *And when*—Having received this more perfect instruction in the Christian faith; *he was disposed to pass into Achaia*—That he might preach the word at Corinth, and other places in that province; *the brethren*—Of Ephesus; *wrote, exhorting the disciples there to receive him*—With all affection and respect, as a person whose character well deserved it. *And when he was come*—To Corinth; *he helped them much which had believed*—Was eminently serviceable in edifying and confirming those who had embraced the gospel; (for Apollos did not plant, but water; which was the peculiar gift he had received;) *through grace*—Through which only any gift of any one is rendered profitable to another. *For he mightily convinced the Jews*—Which, from his great knowledge of the Scriptures,

which had believed through grace. A. M. 4060.
A. D. 56. 28 For he mightily convinced the
Jews, and that publicly, ^cshowing by the Scriptures, that Jesus ³was Christ.

^c Chap. ix. 22; xvii. 3; Verse 5.—³ Or, is the Christ.

he was better able to do than to convert the heathen. Greek, ενθουως τοις Ιουδαιοις διακατηλεγγετο, *he strongly, or vehemently, confuted the Jews*; and that not only in private converse, but by *public preaching*; *showing by the Scriptures*—By appealing to many striking passages of them, which he quoted; *that Jesus was Christ*—The true and only Messiah; and that the salvation of men, of the Jews as well as Gentiles, depended upon their receiving and submitting to him. It seems Apollos tarried some time at Corinth, and became so zealous and useful a preacher there, that the fame of his labours reached the apostle during his abode in Ephesus; and occasioned him, in the letter which he wrote from that city to the Corinthians, to say, (1 Cor. iii. 6,) *I have planted, Apollos watered.*

CHAPTER XIX.

Here, (1,) Paul, coming to Ephesus, instructs some of John's disciples, whom he found there, and who, by the laying on of his hands, received the Holy Ghost, 1-7. (2,) He preaches three months in the Jewish synagogue; but meeting there with great opposition, he withdrew from thence and preached two years in the school of Tyrannus, confirming his doctrine by miracles, 8-12. (3,) Some Jewish exorcists, presuming to make use of Christ's name in casting out devils, are confounded; and many other practisers of diabolical arts are convinced of the wickedness of their actions, and converted to the faith of Christ, 13-20. (4,) Paul defers his intended journey through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, and his visit to Rome, 21, 22. (5,) Demetrius and his silversmiths raise a mob against Paul, to support the worship of Diana, and their profitable traffic, 23-34. (6,) The town-clerk, by a sensible remonstrance, setting forth Paul's innocence, and their own irregularity, appeases and disperses them, 35-41.

A. M. 4060. AND it came to pass, that while ^aApol-
A. D. 56. los was at Corinth, Paul, having

^a 1 Cor. i. 12;

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIX.

Verse 1. *While Apollos was at Corinth*—Preaching with considerable success, chap. xviii. 27, 28; *Paul, having passed through the upper coasts*—Of the Lesser Asia, namely, Galatia and Phrygia; *came to Ephesus*—According to his promise, chap. xviii. 19, 21, with a purpose of making some stay there. Ephesus, at this time, was the metropolis of the province of Asia, and an exceedingly populous city. For, not to speak of its native inhabitants, who were very numerous, a great concourse of strangers always resorted to it, some to worship the goddess Diana, whose rites were celebrated with great magnificence, in a temple erected to her there at the expense of all Asia; others to learn the arts of sorcery and magic, which were taught and practised at Ephesus with such reputation, that the magical words, or sentences, used in the practice of these

passed through the upper coasts, came to A. M. 4060.
Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, A. D. 56.

iii. 5, 6.

arts, had their names from Ephesus; being called Εφεσια γραμματα, *Ephesian letters*: others came to prosecute law-suits, or to solicit offices from the Roman governor of the province, who had his residence there; others took Ephesus in their way to and from Europe; and others, after the manner of the easterns, abode there occasionally for the sake of commerce. Ephesus, therefore, being a place of such general resort, and the very throne of idolatry, superstition, and magic, the apostle, when he formerly left that city, resolved, as we have seen, to return and attack these impieties in their strongest hold. Wherefore, having discharged his vow in Jerusalem, he made no stay there, nor even at Antioch, but travelled through Syria and Cilicia, and the countries above mentioned, as expeditiously as was consistent with his purpose in visiting them, and then came to Ephesus, where he abode three years, and

A. M. 4060. 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, ° We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, ^dUnto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, ° John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

^c Chap. viii. 16; 1 Sam. iii. 7.—^d Chap. xviii. 25.—^e Matt. iii. 11; John i. 15, 27, 30; Chap. i. 5; xi. 16; xiii. 24, 25.

gathered a very numerous church; the members of which were peculiarly dear to him, as is manifest from his epistle to them, and the discourse addressed to their elders, chap. xx. 17, &c.

Verses 2-7. Having found *certain disciples*—Who had been formerly baptized by John the Baptist, and since imperfectly instructed in Christianity, *he said, Have ye received the Holy Ghost?*—The extraordinary gifts, as well as the sanctifying graces of the Holy Spirit; *since ye believed*—These disciples were converts to the Christian faith, that is, they believed that Jesus was the Christ; but Paul inquires whether they had received the Holy Ghost, whose operations on the minds of men for their illumination, conviction, conversion, sanctification, and comfort, were revealed some time after the doctrine of Jesus being the Christ was made known. He asks whether they had been acquainted with this revelation; and had been made partakers of this blessing. This was not all. Extraordinary gifts of the Spirit had been conferred upon the apostles, and other disciples, presently after Christ's ascension, and these had been frequently communicated since upon certain occasions; and he inquires whether they had received these; whether they had had that seal of the truth of Christ's doctrine in themselves. Observe, reader, although we have now no reason to expect any such extraordinary gifts as were given then, the canon of the New Testament having been long since completed and ratified, and it being our duty to depend upon that as the most sure word of prophecy; yet there are graces of the Spirit, given to all true believers, which are to them seals of the truth of their faith, and earnest of their future inheritance in their hearts, (2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 13,) and it concerns us all, who profess the Christian faith, seriously to inquire whether we have received these. The Holy Ghost is promised to all believers, who sincerely, earnestly, and importunately ask his influences, Luke xi. 13. But many are deceived in this matter, and think they have received the Holy Ghost, when really they have not. As there are pretenders to the *gifts* of the Spirit, so there are to his *graces* and *comforts*. We should therefore strictly examine ourselves on this subject; and inquire whether *we* have received the Holy Ghost since *we* believed? The tree is known by its fruits. Do we bring forth the fruits of

5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized ^fin the name of the Lord Jesus. A. M. 4060. A. D. 56.

6 And when Paul had ^glaid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and ^hthey spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

8 ¶ ⁱAnd he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things ^kconcerning the kingdom of God.

^f Chap. viii. 16.—^g Chap. vi. 6; viii. 17.—^h Chap. ii. 4; x. 46.—ⁱ Chap. xvii. 2; xviii. 4.—^k Chap. i. 3; xxviii. 23.

the Spirit, love, joy, peace, &c., *all goodness, righteousness, and truth. Are we led by the Spirit? Do we live and walk in the Spirit? Do we experience his renovating power, and are we under his government? See Gal. v. 22, 25; Eph. v. 9; Rom. viii. 14; Tit. iii. 5. We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost*—They had heard and knew that the Holy Ghost was promised in the Old Testament, to be given in the days of the Messiah, and they did not doubt that that promise would be fulfilled in its season; but they had been so much out of the way of receiving information in this matter, that they had not yet heard that the Holy Ghost had actually been communicated to any, especially in his extraordinary gifts. It is probable that they were Hellenist Jews, natives of a remote country, who, having been in Judea (perhaps attending some of the feasts at Jerusalem) upward of twenty years since, had heard John preach, and had received his doctrine concerning the Messiah; but, having returned to their own country, had not been made acquainted with the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of pentecost, and with the progress of Christianity since that period. *And he said, Unto what were ye baptized?*—Into what dispensation? to the sealing of what doctrine? It seems, those who were baptized by the apostles, commonly received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. *They said to him, Unto John's baptism*—We were baptized by John, and believe what he taught. *Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance*—John called sinners to repentance, to prepare the way of the Lord, and admitted the penitent to the baptism of water, *saying, that they should believe on him that should come after*—That is, the whole baptism and preaching of John pointed at Christ. After this John is mentioned no more in the New Testament. *When they heard this*—Their hearts were so impressed with it, that they readily complied with the direction and advice of the apostle, and *were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*—So that they were baptized twice, but not in the same manner, or with the same baptism; John did not baptize in the manner Christ afterward commanded, that is, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *And*—After their baptism; *Paul laying his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came*

A. M. 4061. 9 But ¹ when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil ^a of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10 And ^a this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

¹ 2 Tim. i. 15; 2 Pet. ii. 2; Jude 10.—^a Chap. ix. 2; xxii. 4; xxiv. 14; Verse 23.—^a Chap. xx. 31.—^a Mark xvi. 20;

upon them; and, as a proof of it, they spake with tongues and prophesied. These brethren being the first in Ephesus who received the Holy Ghost in his extraordinary gifts, it is probable the apostle afterward ordained, at least, some of them, elders of that church. If so, they may have been among those elders of Ephesus who came to Miletus, and received from Paul the pathetic exhortation recorded Acts xx. 18-35.

Verses 8-10. *And he went into the synagogue*—As he used to do in other places; and *spake boldly*—Greek, *επαρρησιαζετο*, he spake with freedom and confidence; for the space of three months, disputing—Greek, *διαλεγόμενος*, reasoning, or discoursing; and *persuading, &c.*—That is, reasoning in proof of the things which concerned the gospel dispensation, and persuading the Jews to believe these things. *But when divers were hardened, and believed not*—But still continued in their infidelity and rebellion, perceiving, probably, the drift of his discourses to be, that men were justified by faith in Christ and his gospel, without obeying the law of Moses; and *spake evil of that way*—The Christian way of worshipping God; *before the multitude*—The people in the synagogue; representing it as utterly subversive of the revelation made by Moses and the prophets; *he departed from them*—Leaving them and their synagogue to themselves; and *separated the disciples*—From the Jews, whom he found to be incorrigible; and *discoursing in the school of one Tyrannus*—Who was either himself converted, or let his school to the apostle for hire to preach in. In this school, which we do not find was any otherwise consecrated than by preaching the gospel there, Paul *discoursed daily*, and not on the sabbaths only. *And this continued*—This was done by Paul, and was his daily practice, for the space of two years, so that all they which dwell in the proconsular Asia—That is, all the inhabitants of the country who desired it; *heard the word of the Lord*—Though for some peculiar reason he had been forbidden to preach it there in his former journey, chap. xvi. 6; *both Jews and Greeks*—It seems the fame of the apostle's doctrine and miracles brought multitudes to Ephesus from distant parts; and these, by what they heard and saw, being converted, preached the gospel when they returned to their own cities, and founded those churches which the apostle tells the Colossians, (chap. ii. 1,) had not seen his face in the flesh.

11 And ^o God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: A. M. 4061. A. D. 57.

12 ^p So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs, or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

13 ^q Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, ^r took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of

Chap. xiv. 3.—^p Chap. v. 15; 2 Kings iv. 29.—^q Matt. xii. 27.—^r Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 49.

Verses 11, 12. *And God*—To add the greater efficacy and success to this important doctrine; *wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul*—Who, as he abode longer at Ephesus than at any other city we read of, so he wrought more and greater miracles than in any other. *So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs, or aprons*—Greek, *σθόρια ἢ σιμικινθία*, *sthoria vel semicinctia*. These two words, originally Latin, have been differently rendered, but the etymology of the first plainly determines it to signify pieces of linen with which they wiped the sweat from their faces, and the latter word signifies things round their waists, doubtless girdles or sashes. Aprons made no part of the ordinary dress of the Greeks; yet they might possibly be occasionally used, both by men and women, to preserve their clothes clean, while they were engaged in some particular kind of work. Dr. Macknight thinks, that these handkerchiefs and aprons belonged to the sick, from whom they were brought to touch Paul's body, and then taken back to them, when they had the effect here mentioned. *And the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits*—Which occasioned many of these diseases, though they might appear purely natural; *went out of them*—In this respect Paul was equal to Peter, whose shadow, as he passed by, overshadowing the sick, who were laid on couches in the streets of Jerusalem, cured them of their distempers, Acts v. 15. Hence we may infer, that it was in a great measure owing to the multitude and greatness of Paul's miracles, that so many of the inhabitants of Ephesus, and of the province of Asia, embraced the gospel.

Verses 13-16. *Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists*—Dr. Whitby, and several other critics, have produced many passages from Irenæus, Origen, Epiphanius, and Josephus, to prove that several of the Jews, about this time, pretended to a power of casting out devils, particularly by some arts or charms derived from Solomon. These men are called *vagabond Jews*, and *exorcists*, because they strolled through the countries of the Lesser Asia, practising that magic which was in such vogue among the heathen. But when they came to Ephesus, hearing of the wonderful things which Paul performed in the name of Jesus, and, perhaps, seeing some of them, they *took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord*

A. M. 4062. the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you
A. D. 58. by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

14 And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and

* Luke i. 65; vii. 16; Chap. ii. 43; v. 5, 11.

Jesus—Vain undertaking! Satan laughs at all those who attempt to expel him, either out of the bodies or souls of men, except by divine faith. *Saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth*—They do not say whom we believe in, or depend upon, or have authority from; but *whom Paul preacheth*—As if they had said, We will try what that name will do. The exorcists in the Roman Church, who pretend to cast the devil out of melancholy people, by spells and charms which they understand not, and for which they have not any divine warrant, and, therefore, cannot use them in faith, are the followers of these vagabond Jews. *There were seven sons of one Sceva*—A Jewish chief priest, who did this, desirous of the honour or profit which they thought would redound from such cures, and imagining there was some secret charm in the name of Jesus, to which these infernal agents would submit. *But the evil spirit*—Contemning their adjuration; *answered, Jesus I know, and Paul I know*—I know the authority and power of Jesus and Paul, and am ready to obey them; *but who are ye?*—What power have you to command us in his name? Or, who gave you any such power? *And the man, in whom the evil spirit was, leaped, or sprung, on them, and overcame them*—To such a degree, as to tear off their clothes from their backs, and beat them with great violence; *so that they fled out of the house*—In which they had attempted the cure; *naked and wounded*—And became public spectacles of scorn and derision, in a city where these things were peculiarly regarded. This is written for a warning to all those who name the name of Christ, but do not depart from iniquity. The same enemy, that overcomes them with his temptations, will overcome them with his terrors, and their adjuring him in Christ's name to let them alone, will be no security to them. If we resist the devil by a true and lively faith in Christ, he will flee from us; but if we think to resist him by the bare using of Christ's name, or any part of his word, as a spell or charm, or by merely professing his religion, he will prevail against us.

Verses 17–20. *And this*—Acknowledgment of the divine authority of Jesus and Paul, made in the absence of both; or this fact, concerning the possessed

Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus: and A. M. 4062.
*fear fell on them all, and the name of A. D. 58.
the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and 'confessed, and showed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all *men*; and they counted the price of them, and found *it* fifty thousand *pieces* of silver.

20 ^a So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed.

^a Matt. iii. 6.—^a Chap. vi. 7; xii. 24.

man, thus prevailing against the sons of Sceva; *was known to all the Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus*—And became, doubtless, the common subject of conversation; *and fear fell on them all*—For in this instance they saw a striking proof of the malice of the devil, whom they served, and of the power of Christ, whom they opposed; and both were awful considerations. They saw that the name of Christ was not to be trifled with, or taken into their mouths rashly, nor his religion confounded with the pagan superstitions. Hence his name, by which his faithful servants cast out devils and cured diseases, without any resistance, *was* the more *magnified*—For now it appeared to be a name above every name. *And many*—Who had formerly been professors of unwarrantable arts, but who now *believed*—Being strongly impressed by what had happened, and struck with the power of the evil spirit over the sons of Sceva; *came*—To Paul, of their own accord; *and confessed*—That they had attempted to cure diseased persons by charms and other magical practices; *and showed their deeds*—The devices by which they had deceived the multitude; or made a public declaration of their unlawful practices. *Many of them also, who used these curious arts*—Magical arts, to which that soft appellation was given by those that practised them, now firmly believing the gospel; *brought their books*—In which the different forms of incantation for different diseases were prescribed, the method of making these incantations was showed, the herbs and other medicines to be used with these incantations were pointed out, and the seasons for using them were fixed. *And burned them before all men*—Who were present; *and*—A great many of them being judged of high value in that place; *they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver*—If these be taken for Jewish shekels, and valued at three shillings each, (which are the principles of Dr. Benson's computation,) the sum will amount to seven thousand five hundred pounds sterling; or, setting it at two shillings and sixpence, to six thousand two hundred and fifty pounds. Nevertheless, the owners of them made a willing sacrifice of them to truth and piety; because the arts themselves being unlawful, it was not fit that the books which taught them should be

A. M. 4063. 21 ¶^a After these things were ended,
A. D. 59.

Paul^b purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia, and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

22 So he sent into Macedonia two of^a them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and^b Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

23 And^c the same time there arose no small stir about^d that way.

24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for

^a Rom. xv. 25; Gal. ii. 1.—^b Chap. xx. 22.—^c Chap. xviii. 21; xxiii. 11; Rom. xv. 24-28.—^d Chap. xiii. 5.—^e Rom.

in the possession of any person whatever. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed—So remarkable was the triumph of the gospel over all considerations of honour or interest that could be opposed to it on this, or on any other occasion.

Verses 21, 22. After these things, &c.—After the extraordinary cures performed, and conversions made, at Ephesus, which have been mentioned above, Paul, being much concerned about the spiritual welfare of his former converts, and very solicitous to promote the progress of the gospel; purposed in spirit, διελευσων, having passed through Macedonia and Achaia—Where he had planted so many flourishing churches some time ago; to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome—That I may bear my testimony to the gospel in that metropolis of the world. "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, have enlarged his heart even as the sand of the sea."—Bengelius. Providence, accordingly, brought Paul to Rome, though in a manner different from that in which he had expected to visit it. So he sent Timotheus and Erastus into Macedonia—To give the churches notice of his intending to visit them, and to get their collection ready for the poor Christians in Judea. And soon after, he wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians, designing to follow it himself, as appears, 1 Cor. iv. 17-19. For the present, however, he himself stayed in Asia—In the country about Ephesus, founding churches and instructing the new converts.

Verses 23-27. The same time there arose no small stir—Ταραχος εκ ολιγος, no small tumult, about that way—The way of worshipping God, and securing a happy immortality, which Paul taught. For Demetrius, a silversmith—A man of considerable influence; who made silver shrines for Diana—Greek, ναυς αργυρουσ Αρτεμιδος, literally, silver temples of

Diana, brought^e no small gain unto^f the craftsmen;

25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth:

26 Moreover, ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands.

27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should

xvi. 23; 2 Timothy iv. 20.—^g 2 Cor. i. 8.—^h Chapter ix. 2.
ⁱ Chap. xvi. 16, 19.—^j Psa. cxv. 4; Isa. xlv. 10, 20; Jer. x. 3.

Diana; that is, silver models, or representations in miniature, of the temple of Diana, and of the image which, as they said, fell down from Jupiter. The tabernacles of Moloch, mentioned Acts vii. 43, which the Israelites carried about in the wilderness, seem to have been things of the same kind with Diana's shrines. See Hammond and Whitby. These little temples, or shrines, were in great request, not only in Ephesus, but in other parts of Asia, as being curious and beautiful ornaments, and used for idolatrous purposes. And in this business, it appears, Demetrius employed a great number of workmen, much to their advantage as well as his own. But, perceiving there would be an end of the trade if Paul's doctrine were suffered to spread, he called together—Those whom he employed; with the workmen of like occupation—Employed by others; and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft—This manufacture of silver shrines; we have our wealth—Not only our subsistence, but riches, and, therefore, on no account must we suffer this craft to grow into contempt. It is natural for men to be jealous for that, whether right or wrong, by which they get their wealth: and many have, for this reason alone, set themselves against the gospel of Christ, because it calls men off from those employments which are unlawful, how much wealth soever is gotten by them. Moreover, ye see and hear—That is, ye see what is done in Ephesus, and ye have information of the state of things in other places; that this Paul hath persuaded much people—Greek, ο μόνον Εφεσου, αλλα αχιδου πασης της Ασιας, not only of Ephesus, but of all Asia; and turned them away—From the established religion; saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands—And could any truth be more plain and self-evident than this affirmed by Paul? or any reasoning more cogent and convincing than that of the prophet, The workmen made it, therefore it is not god? The first and most genuine notion that we have of God is, that he has his being of himself, and depends upon none; but that all things have their being from him, and their dependence on him: from which it must follow, that those are no gods which are the creatures of men's fancy,

A. M. 4063. be despised, and her magnificence
A. D. 59. should be destroyed, whom all Asia,
and the world worshippeth.

28 And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught [†] Gaius and [‡] Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

30 And when Paul would have entered in

[†] Rom. xvi. 23; 1 Cor. i. 14.

and the work of men's hands; and yet, what is here said manifestly shows that the contrary opinion did in those ages generally prevail, namely, that there was a real divinity in the images of their supposed deities; though some of the latter heathen have spoken of them just as the Papists do now. *So that not only our craft is in danger to be set at naught*—To come into disgrace and be ruined, which must be the necessary consequence of Paul's success; *but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised*—No wonder a discourse should make a deep impression, which was edged both by interest and superstition; *and her magnificence, or 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, as the goddess of hunting, of travelling, child-birth, enchantments, &c.; as Luna, Hecate, Lucina, Proserpine, and so on. Under one or other of which views, she had, undoubtedly, a vast number of votaries. Her temple, raised at the expense of all Asia, was two hundred and twenty years in building, and was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, two hundred and twenty broad, and supported by one hundred and twenty-seven marble pillars, erected by so many kings. It was also adorned with many most beautiful statues, and was considered as one of the seven wonders of the world. It was burned down on the day on which Socrates was poisoned; then again on the night when Alexander the Great was born, by Erostratus, purely that he might be remembered in after ages; and destroyed the last time in the reign of Constantine, pursuant to the edict of that emperor, commanding all the heathen temples to be demolished.

Verses 28, 29. *And when they heard, &c., they were full of wrath*—The inflammatory speech of Demetrius, addressed to the superstition and avarice of the multitude, immediately produced the desired effect; the craftsmen, and all who were employed about the temple, were exasperated to the highest degree: and, enraged to think that both their trade and their religion were in danger, they ran about the city; *and cried out*, with great violence,

unto the people, the disciples suffered
him not. A. M. 4063.
A. D. 59.

31 And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him desiring *him* that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And

[‡] Chap. xx. 4; xxvii. 2; Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24.

Great is Diana of the Ephesians—Elsner has shown how frequently this epithet of *great* was given by the heathen to Jupiter, Diana, and others of their superior deities. *And the whole city was filled with confusion*—The common and natural effect of an intemperate zeal for a false religion; *they rushed with one accord*—Demetrius and his company, with the multitude that was gathered about them; *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 Paul had done before.

Verses 30–32. *When Paul would have entered in to the people*—Being above all fear, to plead the cause of his companions, and prove they were not gods which were made with hands; *the disciples suffered him not*—Because, if he had gone in, there would have been no possibility of restraining the multitude. *And certain of the chief of Asia*—Greek, τῶν Ἀσιαρχῶν, of the *Asiarchs*, or principal officers of Asia, probably priests of Diana, who presided over the public games, which, it is thought, they were then celebrating in her honour; *who were his friends*—Not converts to Christianity, or his disciples, which they could not have been, and yet have remained Diana's priests; but friendly to him, as an ingenuous, benevolent man. For, although they derived both dignity and profit from the established idolatry, yet their love of order, and attachment to good morals, led them to befriend Paul on this occasion; *sent, desiring that he would not adventure himself into the theatre*—Since the rage of the people was such, that it would have been with the utmost hazard of his life. *Some therefore*—As they stood together in the theatre; *cried one thing, and some another*—According as their passions influenced them, or as the zeal of others prompted them. *For the greater part knew not wherefore they were come together*—Which is commonly the case in such an assembly.

Verses 33, 34. *And they*—Namely, the artificers and workmen; *drew*—Greek, προεβίβασαν, *thrust forward*; *Alexander*—Probably some well-known Christian whom they saw in the crowd; *the Jews*—Whom he had offended by embracing the gospel;

A. M. 4063. ⁱ Alexander ^k beckoned with the hand, A. D. 59. and would have made his defence unto the people.

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

35 And when the town-clerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is ¹ a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter ?

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be

¹ 1 Tim. i. 20; ² 2 Tim. iv. 14.—^k Chap. xii. 17.—^l Gr. the

pushing him forward—To expose him to the enraged multitude, as one who was active in destroying the established religion. *And Alexander, beckoning with his hand*—In token of desiring silence; *would have made a defence*—For himself and his brethren. But, *when they knew he was a Jew*—And consequently an enemy to their religion and the worship of images, they would not suffer him to speak; *but all with one voice* (the whole multitude uniting as one man) vociferated, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*—This was all the cry for two hours together; and it was thought a sufficient confutation of Paul's doctrine, *that they are no gods which are made with hands!* and thus the most sacred truths are often run down with nothing else but noise and clamour and popular fury! It was said of old, (Jer. l. 38,) concerning idolaters, that they were *mad upon their idols*; and here is an instance of it: Diana made the Ephesians great, for the town was enriched by the vast concourse of people from all parts to her temple there, and therefore they are concerned, by all means possible, to keep up her sinking reputation, and hope to do it effectually with, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!*

Verses 35–41. *And when the town-clerk*—Greek, ο γραμματεως, the scribe; probably the proconsul's secretary, to whom the direction of the affairs of the city was committed; *had appeased the people*—So far as to produce a degree of silence, the rioters, by their violent outcries so long continued, having spent their rage; *he said, What man is there in the world, that has any intelligence of things at all, that knoweth not that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper*—Greek, νεωκορον, the temple-keeper, of the great goddess Diana—The expression is compounded of words which, taken together, signify to sweep or clean a temple, being used of a priest or priestess, or other person, whose business it was to look after the temple of any god or goddess, and see that it was not only kept in good repair, but also neat and clean, and beautified in a proper manner. This title was given also to those cities which had the care of the games celebrated in honour of any god or goddess. *And of the image which fell down from Jupiter*—

spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, A. M. 4063. and to do nothing rashly. A. D. 59.

37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38 Wherefore, if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, ² the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39 But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a ³ lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause

temple-keeper.—² Or, the court days are kept.—³ Or, ordinary.

They believed that very image of Diana, which stood in their temple, fell down from Jupiter in heaven. Perhaps this town-clerk, or secretary, designed to intimate that this image, as falling down from Jupiter, was not made with hands, and so was not of that sort of idols which Paul had said were no gods. *Seeing then these things cannot be denied*—But are plainly incontestable; *ye ought to be quiet*—Gentle in your proceedings; *and to do nothing rashly*—By which you may run yourselves into vast inconveniences and dangers before you are aware. In this speech, the secretary took hold of the multitude by their prejudices; for without speaking any thing concerning Paul's doctrine, that images made with hands were no gods, he desired the Ephesians to consider that their privileges, as keepers of the temple of Diana, and of her heaven-descended image, were so universally acknowledged, that there was no danger of their losing that honour through any thing Paul had spoken. *For ye have brought these men, Gaius and Aristarchus, hither, which are neither robbers of churches*—Greek, ιεροσυλες, robbers of temples, or sacrilegious persons; *nor yet blasphemers of your goddess*—The apostles had simply preached the one God, and the vanity of idols in general. The secretary further told them, that the men whom they had brought into the theatre were not yet proved to be guilty of those crimes which they appeared to lay to their charge; *because, though they might have spoken against the images made by the craftsmen, they had said nothing against the image which Jupiter had given them: and added, that if Demetrius and the craftsmen had these, or any other crimes, to lay to their charge, of which they could prove them guilty, there were deputies*—Roman proconsuls, to whom they might apply, as the proper judges in such cases; *and the courts of law were open*—Where the matters might be fairly tried. *But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters*—If ye inquire whether the temple of Diana or her worship be in danger, or what persons or religions should be tolerated in the city, these are public matters, which should be determined in a lawful assembly—An assembly regularly

A. M. 4063. whereby we may give an account of
A. D. 59. this concourse.

appointed, and such as has authority to judge in religious and political affairs. *For we are in danger to be called in question by the Romans for this day's uproar*—Greek, *εγκαλεισθαι ζασης*, to be accused of sedition; there being no cause—No sufficient cause; whereby we may give an account of—May justify; this concourse—He wisely calls it by an inoffensive name. Fire, inundations, the sudden invasion of enemies, &c., might have excused a sudden concourse of people rushing together with some violence: but the secretary, with great propriety, observes that there was no such cause, nor any other adequate one, to be assigned in this instance. It must be observed, there was a Roman law which

41 And when he had thus spoken, A. M. 4063.
he dismissed the assembly. A. D. 59.

made it capital to raise a riot: *Qui cœtum et concursum fecerit capite puniatur*. And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly—And set Gaius and Aristarchus at liberty. The secretary's conduct on this occasion shows that he had a good opinion of the Christian preachers. We may therefore believe, that in preaching against the established worship, Paul and his assistants had spoken nothing against Diana in particular, though their doctrine struck at all the heathen deities in the general: and even that in speaking against the established idolatry, they had used a becoming decency of language. The secretary, therefore, observing their prudence, entertained a good opinion of the cause they were engaged in.

CHAPTER XX.

Here, (1.) Paul, accompanied by some friends, travels through the country of Macedonia into Greece, where he abides three months, and returning back again through Macedonia, takes ship at Philippi, and so comes to Troas, 1-6. (2.) Tarrying here seven days, he preaches, and administers the Lord's supper, and raises Eutychus from the dead, 7-12. (3.) He sets forward on his way to Jerusalem till he comes to Miletus, to which place he calls together the elders of the church of Ephesus, and by representing his own faithfulness, disinterestedness, and diligence, he charges them, in a most solemn manner, to take the like care of their church, 13-35. (4.) He takes a most solemn and affectionate farewell of them, 36-38.

A. M. 4063. AND after the uproar was ceased,
A. D. 59. Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*, and ^a departed for to go into Macedonia.

^a 1 Cor. xvi. 5; 1 Tim. i. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

Verse 1. *After the uproar, Paul called unto him the disciples*—To comfort and encourage them; and departed—From Ephesus, after the long abode he had made there; to go into Macedonia—To visit the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. This, however, does not necessarily imply his immediate departure: he may have remained in Ephesus and its neighbourhood some months after the riot, to comfort the disciples, and establish the churches of Asia, whose salutation he sent in the conclusion of his first letter to the Corinthians. Besides, from Paul's own account, it appears that he remained in the neighbourhood of Ephesus, waiting for the coming of Titus from Corinth. But Titus not arriving within the time appointed him, the apostle became impatient, and went forward to Troas, in the hope of meeting with him there. But being disappointed in that expectation also, he passed over into Macedonia, where at length Titus came to him.

Verse 2. *And when he had gone over those parts*—Zealously pursuing everywhere the work in which he was engaged; and had given much exhortation—To the Christians whom he found there, or had exhorted them with much discourse; he came into Greece—That part of it which lay between Macedo-

2 And when he had gone over those A. M. 4064.
parts, and had given them much ex- A. D. 60.
hortation, he came into Greece,

3 And there abode three months. And ^b when

^b Chap. ix. 23; xxiii. 12; xxv. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 26.

nia and Achaia. In going through Macedonia, the apostle had those outward fightings and inward fears, of which he speaks, 2 Cor. vii. 5. But, after great anxiety in his mind, he was at length comforted by the coming of Titus, who brought him a pleasing account of the state of affairs at Corinth. And in particular, what he said of their liberal disposition gave the apostle reason to glory in them, and to excite the Macedonians to imitate their generosity in assisting the contribution he was now raising for the poor Christians in Judea, which was one part of his business in this journey, 2 Cor. ix. 2; viii. 1-14. The second epistle to the Corinthians was therefore written from Macedonia at this time, as these passages manifest, and was sent by Titus, who, on this occasion, returned to get the collection in still greater forwardness. This journey through the different towns of Macedonia, in which churches were established, of course took up several months; and no doubt many circumstances occurred, at most of these places, which made his presence with them for a while highly expedient. Perhaps also it was at this time that he preached the gospel on the confines of Illyricum, as mentioned, Rom. xv. 19.

Verse 3. *And there*—Namely, in Greece; he abode three months—Meeting, it seems, with business there

A. M. 4064. the Jews laid wait for him, as he was
A. D. 60. about to sail into Syria, he purposed
to return through Macedonia.

4 And there accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

5 These going before, tarried for us at Troas.

6 And we sailed away from Philippi, after

* Chapter xix. 29; xxvii. 2; Col. iv. 10.—† Chapter xix. 29.
* Chapter xvi. 1.—† Eph. vi. 21; Col. iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 12; Tit. iii. 12.—† Chap. xxi. 29; 2 Tim. iv. 20.

as he often did in other places, which detained him longer than he expected. During this time, he received from the churches of Achaia the money which they had collected for the saints in Judea, agreeably to his direction to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xvi. 1-3. At this time also he wrote his epistle to the Romans, of whose affairs he had heard by Aquila and Priscilla. For, it plainly appears, that epistle was written before his imprisonment at Rome; and in it he speaks of a collection made by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, with which he was hastening to Jerusalem, Rom. xv. 25-27; a circumstance which fixes it to this time. It appears, also, from Rom. xvi. 21, that Timothy and Sospater (or Sopater, one of the noble Bereans) were with him when that epistle was written, which agrees with verse four of this chapter, by which we find they both attended him into Asia. *And when the Jews had laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he*—Upon this account; *purposed*—*Εἰς τὸ πλοῦν*, the thought, or design, occurred, or he conceived the intention; *to return through Macedonia*—The fact seems to be, that having finished all his matters in Greece, he had proposed to sail directly into Syria. But the Jews, who had heard of the money he was carrying to Jerusalem; and who, besides, hated him as an enemy to their religion, lying in wait for him in Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth, where he was to embark, he changed his resolution. So that avoiding that port, which was about nine miles from Corinth, he returned by land, through Macedonia, in such time that he left Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and so began his voyage into Syria.

Verses 4-6. *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea, &c.*—The several persons mentioned in this verse are thought by some to have been joined with Paul as *messengers of the churches*, in carrying their contributions to the poor brethren at Jerusalem. We know but few particulars of most of them. *Sopater* is thought to be the same with Sospater, mentioned by Paul as his kinsman, Rom. xvi. 21. *Aristarchus and Secundus* are the Macedonians of whom he speaks, 2 Cor. ix. 4; and *Gaius of Derbe*, the person who, with Aristarchus, was hurried into the theatre at Ephesus during the riot; he was baptized by Paul at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14; and entertained him as his host, while he abode there,

^b the days of unleavened bread, and A. M. 4064. came unto them ¹ to Troas in five A. D. 60. days; where we abode seven days.

7 ¶ And upon ^k the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together ¹ to break bread, Paul preached unto them, (ready to depart on the morrow,) and continued his speech until midnight.

8 And there were many lights ^m in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

^b Exod. xii. 14, 15; xxiii. 15.—¹ Chap. xvi. 8; 2 Cor. ii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 13.—^k 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10.—¹ Chap. ii. 42, 46; 1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 20, &c.—^m Chap. i. 13.

Rom. xvi. 23; and afterward John directs his third epistle to him. Of *Timothy*, see chap. xvi. 1, &c. *Tychicus* of Asia, was often sent on messages by Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 12; Tit. iii. 12; and more than once is recommended by him to the churches, as a *beloved brother, and fellow-servant in the Lord*, whom he employed, not only to acquaint them with *his own affairs*, but that he *might know their state*, and comfort their hearts, Eph. vi. 21, 22; Col. iv. 7, 8. *Trophimus*, who was of Ephesus, appears to have been a Gentile convert, whom we find afterward with Paul at Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 29; and who attended him in other journeys, till he left him at Miletum sick, 2 Tim. iv. 26. These two last, being distinguished here from Timothy and Gaius, who were of Lystra and Derbe, which lay in Asia Minor; and yet being said to be Asiatics, must have been so called, because they were natives of the proconsular Asia. *These, going before, tarried for us at Troas*—It appears from the construction of the original, that this refers not to all the persons mentioned in the preceding verse, but only to the two last named, Tychicus and Trophimus. *And we sailed from Philippi*—Some time after the forementioned persons left us; (Luke was now with Paul again, as we learn from his manner of expressing himself;) *after the days of unleavened bread*—That is, after the passover week was ended; and *came to Troas in five days*—Paul, in his former progress, crossed over from Troas to Philippi in two days; *where we abode seven days*—Conversing with the Christians there. This Paul might choose to do so much the rather as he had declined such great views of service as were here opened to him, when he passed through it before, in his way to Macedonia. See 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13.

Verses 7-10. *And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples*—As was usual with them on that day; *came together*—From different parts; *to break bread*—That is, to celebrate the Lord's supper. It is well known the primitive Christians administered the eucharist every Lord's day, and as that was the most solemn and appropriate, as well as the concluding act of their worship, it is no wonder that it should be mentioned as the end of their assembling. *Paul preached unto them*—With great fervency, being now to take his leave of them, and *depart on*

A. M. 4064. 9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and ^a fell on him, and embracing *him*, said, ^o Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

13 ¶ And we went before to ship, and sailed

^a 1 Kings xvii. 21; 2 Kings iv. 34.—^o Matt. ix. 24.—^p Chap. xviii. 21; xix. 21; xxi. 4, 12.

the morrow—And his heart was so enlarged in love to his hearers, and concern for their salvation, that he *continued his speech until midnight*—Through uncommon fervour of spirit. *And there were many lights*—Or lamps; *in the upper chamber where they were assembled*—For, whatever the malice of their enemies might insinuate, the Christians held not their assemblies in darkness, but took all prudent precautions to avoid every circumstance that might incur censure, or even suspicion. *And there sat in a window*—Kept open to prevent heat, both from the lamps and the number of people; *a young man, named Eutychus*, who, having fallen into a deep sleep, *as Paul was long preaching, fell down from the third loft*—And no wonder, if, like the eastern windows, described by Chardin, this was very large, and even with the floor; *and was taken up dead*—Really and properly so; *and* (the whole assembly, doubtless, being thrown into disorder) *Paul*—Breaking off his discourse; *went down and fell on him*—It is observable, our Lord never used this gesture, but Elijah and Elisha did, as well as Paul; *and embracing him*—In his arms; *said, Trouble not yourselves*—Be not in any disorder about it; *for his life is in him*—He is come to life again. Paul, doubtless, restored him to life by a miracle. *When he therefore was come up again*—Into the chamber where the assembly met; (for, having composed and quieted their minds, he returned to his work;) *and had broken bread*—And conversed a considerable time; *even till break of day, he departed*—From Troas, without taking any rest at all. *And they brought the young man alive*—And well into the room; *and were not a little comforted*—At so happy an event; and the rather, as they might apprehend that some reproach would have been occasioned by his death, if he had not been so recovered, because it happened in a Christian assembly, which had been protracted so long beyond the usual bounds of time, on this extraordinary occasion. But, alas! how many of those that have allowed themselves to sleep under ser-

unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot.

14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.

15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for ^p he hasted, if it were possible for him, ^q to be at Jerusalem ^r the day of pentecost.

17 ¶ And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

^q Chapter xxiv. 17.—^r Chapter ii. 1; 1 Corinthians xvi. 8.

mons, or, as it were, to dream awake, have perished for ever, with the neglected sound of the gospel in their ears; have slept the sleep of eternal death, and are fallen to rise no more!

Verses 13–16. *And we went before to ship*—Namely, those that were to go with Paul; *and sailed unto Assos*—A city to the south of Troas; *there intending to take in Paul*—Who went thither on foot—The place being much nearer by land than by sea; and in order that, being alone for a while, he might employ himself in meditation and prayer, his public work allowing him little time for retirement and private devotion: or, perhaps, he might intend to call on some friends by the way. *And when he met us*—At Assos, according to his own appointment; *we took him in, and came to Mitylene*—The chief city of the island of Lesbos, about seven miles distant from the Asiatic coast; *and came the next day over against Chios*—The island so famous for producing some of the best Grecian wines. The day following they touched at Samos, and, making a short stay at Trogyllium, *came the next day to Miletus*—A city of Caria, south of Trogyllium. *For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus*—Which lay on the other side of the bay, without calling there; *because he would not spend the time in Asia*—Having now no time to spare; *for he hasted to be at Jerusalem, by the day of pentecost*—Knowing that a great concourse of people from all parts of Judea, and from distant provinces, would be there, as usual, (Acts ii. 1–5,) to celebrate that festival, and that he should thus have an opportunity of testifying the gospel of the grace of God to many, both Jews and proselytes, and of thereby enlarging the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Besides, the feast of pentecost had been rendered particularly famous among the Christians, by the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Spirit at that time.

Verse 17. *And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus*—Though Paul's concern to be at Jerusalem by the feast of pentecost, prevented his going in person to

A. M. 4064. 18 And when they were come to
A. D. 60.

him, he said unto them, Ye know,
* from the first day that I came into Asia, after
what manner I have been with you at all sea-
sons,

19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind,
and with many tears and temptations, which
befell me * by the lying in wait of the Jews :

* Chap. xviii. 19; xix. 1, 10.—† Ver. 3.—‡ Ver. 27.—§ Chap.
xviii. 5.

visit the Christians at Ephesus, yet, as he was now
only about ten miles distant from that city, and was
desirous to know the state of the church there, and
to contribute all in his power to its prosperity, he
called the elders of it to come to him, that he might
receive from them such information as he wished to
obtain, and might give them such instructions and
admonitions as he judged to be needful, and calcul-
lated to encourage and excite them to zeal and dili-
gence, in the execution of their important office.
And, on this occasion, he spake to them one of the
most pathetic and edifying discourses which was
ever delivered to a company of ministers; a dis-
course which the sacred historian has accurately
recorded, and which, like the precepts of Moses,
deserves to be written on the door-posts of the
houses of all ministers, that, in going out and in,
they may have it continually in their view, and
adjust their conduct by it, as in a looking-glass.

Verses 18, 19. *And he said, Ye know, &c.*—
Happy is that minister who can thus appeal to the
consciences of his hearers; *from the first day that
I came into Asia*—From the first time of my appear-
ing among you; *after what manner I have been
with you*—How I have conducted myself toward
God, toward you, and toward all men; *at all
seasons*—*Τὸν πάντα χρόνον, the whole time*; every
day and hour, in private and public; *-serving the
Lord*—Not only instructing men in the principles
of divine truth, but in the whole tenor of my con-
duct serving the Lord Jesus Christ; seeking, not my
own honour, interest, or pleasure, but his honour,
the interest of his kingdom, and the pleasing of him;
making his will my rule, and his glory my end, in
all my actions; *with all humility of mind*—In all
instances of condescension, modesty, and self-abase-
ment; conscious that I am unworthy to be permitted
to serve him, that he does me a great and undeserved
honour to employ me in his service, and that my best
services are utterly unworthy of his acceptance;
and with many tears—Of tender affection and deep
concern for your present and eternal salvation; and
in sympathy with you under your trials and troubles.
Though Paul's acquaintance with them was of late
standing, yet, so near did they lie to his heart, that
he wept with them that wept, and mingled his tears
with theirs upon every occasion; *and temptations*
—*Πειρασμῶν, trials*; namely, of his faith, patience,
and courage; such trials as, perhaps, were sometimes
temptations to him, if not to desist from, yet to abate
of his zeal and diligence in the work of the Lord;

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20 And how * I kept back nothing A. M. 4064.
that was profitable unto you, but have A. D. 60.
showed you, and have taught you publicly, and
from house to house,

21 * Testifying both to the Jews, and also
to the Greeks, † repentance toward God, and
faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now behold, * I go bound in the spirit

† Mark i. 15; Luke xxiv. 47; Chap. ii. 38.—‡ Chapter
xix. 21.

which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews—
Who were still plotting some mischief or other
against him. These three things, humility, tears,
and trials, are the concomitants of the true and faith-
ful service of Christ in the ministry of the gospel.
The service itself is described more particularly in
the two following verses. The humility here spoken
of, he recommends to the Ephesians themselves,
Eph. iv. 2. His tears are mentioned again, verse 31;
as also, 2 Cor. ii. 4, and Phil. iii. 18. These passages
laid together supply us with the genuine character of
Paul. Holy tears, from those who seldom weep on
account of natural occurrences, are no mean speci-
men of the efficacy, and proof of the truth of Chris-
tianity; yet joy is well consistent therewith, (verse
24,) for the same person may be *sorrowful, yet
always rejoicing*.

Verses 20, 21. *How I kept back nothing that was
profitable*—Nothing that was calculated to instruct,
renew, or comfort you—to render you wise and
good, holy and happy; Greek, *ὅθεν περιελαβὼν τῶν
συμφορῶν, τὸ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι, I have
withheld nothing, or none, of the things advan-
tageous to you*; that is, which could be of any
service to your edification; *so as not to declare to
you the whole gospel of Christ, and teach you all
its truths, duties, privileges, and blessings; publicly*
—In worshipping assemblies; *and from house to
house*—As God gave me opportunity; inculcating, in
visits and in private meetings, the same great doc-
trines which I declared in the synagogue and other
places of concourse and resort. *Testifying*—In the
most serious and solemn manner, and with the
greatest earnestness and affection; *both to the Jews
and also to the Greeks*—To all descriptions of per-
sons, the great importance and absolute necessity of
repentance toward God—To be evidenced by *fruits
worthy of repentance, and faith in our Lord Jesus
Christ*—As the only Saviour of lost sinners, the in-
fallible Teacher, prevalent Mediator, and righteous
Governor of his church and people, and the final
Judge of all mankind; a faith living, cordial, and
powerful. Observe, reader, if the apostle had neg-
lected thus to act, if he had not taught *from house
to house*, as well as *publicly*, he would not have
been pure from the blood of these people. Even
he, though an apostle, could not discharge his duty
by public preaching only; how much less can an
ordinary pastor!

Verses 22–24. *And behold I go bound in the spirit
unto Jerusalem*—Strongly impelled by the Spirit,

A. M. 4064. unto Jerusalem, not knowing the
A. D. 60. things that shall befall me there :

23 Save that ^a the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions ¹ abide me.

24 But ^b none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, ^c so that I might finish my course with joy, ^d and the ministry ^e which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

25 And now behold, ^f I know that ye all,

^a Chap. xxi. 4, 11; 1 Thess. iii. 3.—¹ Or, wait for me.
^b Chap. xxi. 13; Rom. viii. 35; 2 Cor. iv. 16.—^c 2 Tim. iv. 7.
^d Chap. i. 17; 2 Cor. iv. 1.—^e Gal. i. 1; Tit. i. 3.—^f Verse 38; Rom. xv. 23.

which intimates my duty to me in such a manner, that I can neither omit nor delay it. I am, therefore, fully resolved to proceed, being well assured that it is by a divine direction and influence that I am so, and not from any humour, fancy, or will of my own. Or, the expression may mean, "foreseeing by the Spirit that I shall be bound," as it follows in the next verse. So Grotius and Whitby understand him. *Not knowing*—Particularly; *the things that shall befall me there*—What I shall suffer in that city, or what shall happen to me when I come thither; *save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth*—Namely, by other persons; (for it was God's good pleasure to reveal these things to him, not immediately, but by the ministry of others;) *in every city*—Almost, through which I passed; *saying*—By the mouths of divinely-inspired prophets; *that bonds and afflictions abide*—Or *await, me*—This I know in the general, though the particulars of those sufferings I know not; such as, whence they shall spring, what shall be the occasion of them, what the circumstances, and to what degree they shall rise. These things God had not thought fit to reveal to him. Reader, it is for our good to be kept ignorant of future events, that we may be always waiting on God, and waiting for him. *But none of these things move me*—Greek, *ἀλλ' ὀδενος λόγον ποιῆσαι*, I make no account of any of those things; *neither count I my life dear*—*τιμῶν*, precious; *to myself*—On such an occasion. It adds a 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 the truth of their assertions. *So that I might finish my course*—Of duty and of suffering, as a Christian and an apostle; *with joy*—Arising from the testimony of my own conscience, that *in simplicity and godly sincerity I have had my conversation in the world*; from evidences of my having pleased God, and been accounted faithful by him, and from a lively expectation of being approved of

among whom I have gone preaching A. M. 4064.
the kingdom of God, shall see my face A. D. 60.
no more.

26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* ^a pure from the blood of all men,

27 For ^b I have not shunned to declare unto you all ¹ the counsel of God.

28 ² Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost ¹ hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, ^m which he hath purchased ⁿ with his own blood.

^a Chap. xviii. 6; 2 Cor. vii. 2.—¹ Verse 20.—¹ Luke vii. 30; John xv. 15; Eph. i. 11.—¹ 1 Tim. iv. 16. 1 Pet. v. 2.
¹ 1 Cor. xii. 28.—^m Eph. i. 7, 14; Col. i. 14; Heb. ix. 12; 1 Pet. i. 19; Rev. v. 9.—ⁿ Heb. ix. 14.

by him in the day of final accounts, and of enjoying felicity and glory with him for ever; *and the ministry*—The infinitely-important ministry; *which I have received of the Lord Jesus*—With which he has graciously intrusted me; *to testify the gospel of the grace of God*—To which grace, free and abundant as it is, I am myself obliged beyond all expression, and beyond all the returns I can ever make by any labour or sufferings I may undergo in its service.

Verses 25-27. *I know that ye all*—Though you may have letters from me; *shall see my face no more*—He wisely observes this, that what follows might make the deeper impression. It is probable the apostle had received some particular revelation, that if he should ever return to these parts of Asia again, (as from Philem. verse 22 it seems likely he might,) yet that he should not have an opportunity of calling at Ephesus, or of seeing the elders whom he now addressed. *Wherefore*—Seeing my ministry is at an end with you, it concerns both you and me to reflect on our past conduct respecting it; and *I take you to record*—Greek, *μαρτυροῦμαι ὑμῖν*, I testify to you, and affirm, and I dare appeal to yourselves concerning it; *that I am pure from the blood of all men*—From the guilt of destroying men's souls; if any of you, or of the people under your care, perish, it will not be through my default, having faithfully showed you and them the way of life, and earnestly persuaded you all to walk in it. See notes on Ezek. iii. 19-21. *For I have not shunned*—Declined, or omitted; *to declare unto you all the counsel of God*—Respecting your salvation; God's purpose finally to save all that believe in Christ with their hearts unto righteousness; or, the whole doctrine of Christianity, relating to our redemption and salvation by Christ, and the way to eternal happiness through him; and this I have done in the most plain and faithful manner, whatever censure, contempt, or opposition I might incur by so doing.

Verse 28. *Take heed therefore*—I now devolve my care upon you; first, *to yourselves*—That you thoroughly understand all the doctrines, experience all the graces, enjoy all the blessings, and practise

A. M. 4064. 29 For I know this, that after
A. D. 60. my departing ° shall grievous wolves
enter in among you, not sparing the
flock.

30 Also ° of your own selves shall men arise,

° Matt. vii. 15; 2 Pet. ii. 1.—¶ 1 Tim. i. 20; 1 John ii. 19.

all the duties of genuine Christianity; and that you fully understand and faithfully execute every part of your important office. *And to all the flock*—That they may possess the same Christian knowledge and experience, may enjoy the same blessings, and perform the same duties; may be *wise unto salvation*, holy and useful; not living unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again. *Over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers*—Greek, *επισκοπος*, bishops, or inspectors. It seems evident from every part of the New Testament, that there was no distinction, when the Acts and the Epistles were written, between *elders*, or *presbyters*, and *bishops* in the Christian Church. All the elders were *bishops*, *inspectors*, or *overseers*. Thus, (1 Pet. v. 1, 2,) *The elders which are among you I exhort, feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof*, Greek, *επισκοπουντες*, acting the part of *bishops*, or inspectors. It is probable, however, that when, in any city or district, the elders became numerous, it was found expedient to appoint some to take the oversight of the rest, and see that they did their duty. The apostle's expression here, *The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers*, implies that no man, or number of men, can constitute an *overseer*, *bishop*, or any Christian minister. To do this is the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost; *to feed the church of God*—That is, the believing, loving, obedient, holy children of God, only such being true members of the church of Christ; *which he hath purchased with his own blood*—How precious is it then in his sight! Here the blood of Christ, the only begotten of the Father, is termed the blood of God; for it is the blood of the Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, John i. 1.

Verses 29, 30. *For I know this*—As if he had said, Wonder not that I give you this charge in so strict a manner; for, besides the weighty reasons for it which I have already intimated, I know, *that after my departure*—From the churches in these parts, or my removal out of this life, notwithstanding all I have done to preserve discipline and truth among you; *grievous wolves shall enter in*—From without, that is, seducing teachers, who shall endeavour to make a prey of you, and, by introducing false and heretical doctrines, shall divide and scatter you, as wolves make a prey of, divide, and scatter the sheep. He seems to mean those Judaizing and false teachers, who, though they had before this time done much mischief at Corinth and elsewhere, had not yet got any footing at Ephesus; *not sparing the flock*—Having no mercy on them, but, with voracious eagerness, and overbearing violence, making terrible havoc of God's church, out of a mean and

speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. A. M. 4064
A. D. 60.

31 Therefore watch, and remember, that ° by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

° Chap. xix. 10.

wicked regard to their own private and secular interests. *Also of your own selves*—From within; *shall men arise*—Proud and factious men; *speaking perverse things*—Broaching false and pernicious tenets, which they will endeavour to establish by perverting the Scriptures; *to draw away disciples after them*—From the purity of the gospel, and the unity of the body; or to make a party for themselves, that shall admire, be led by them, and contribute to their support and exaltation. By these, distinguished from those termed *grievous wolves*, in the foregoing verse, the apostle may mean such as Phygellus, Hermogenes, Hymeneus, and Philetus: as also those that afterward introduced the Nicolaitan principles and practices, of which Christ complains as prevailing here, (Rev. ii. 6,) as well as in the neighbouring city Pergamus, Rev. ii. 14, 15.

Verse 31. *Therefore watch*—With all diligence and care; take heed yourselves, and warn others to take heed; *and remember, that by the space of three years*, (for so long had he been preaching at Ephesus and the parts adjacent,) *I ceased not to warn every one*—To whom I had access; *night and day with tears*—This was watching indeed! Who copies after this example? Let it then, as if he had said, be your care, that a church planted by me with so much labour and solicitude, may not be ravaged and overthrown by the enemy, but that it may long continue to flourish. Observe here, reader, 1st, Paul, like a faithful watchman, had warned them publicly, by preaching, and by the warnings he thus gave them was instrumental in prevailing with them to receive the truth and turn to God. 2d, He warned every one. Besides the public warnings he gave to all in general that attended his ministry, he applied himself to particular persons, according as he saw their case called for it. 3d, He was constant in giving warning; he warned them *night and day*, his time was filled up with this work. 4th, He was indefatigable in it, he *ceased not to warn*; though some might be obstinate and persist in sin, disregarding his warnings, yet he persevered, hoping, that at length, by the grace of God, they would be reformed. And though others might appear to comply with his warnings, yet still he did not desist, fearing lest, although they were now righteous, they should, through the power of temptation, be overcome in some unguarded hour, and turn from their righteousness, Ezek. iii. 18–21. 5th, He addressed them, whether in public or private, with a great deal of affection and concern; he warned them *with tears*, namely, with tears of compassion; thereby showing how much he was himself affected with the danger and misery of those who were in a sinful state and

A. M. 4064. 32 And now, brethren, I commend
A. D. 60. you to God, and ^r to the word of his
grace, which is able ^s to build you up, and to
give you ^t an inheritance among all them which
are sanctified.

33 ^u I have coveted no man's silver, or gold,
or apparel.

34 Yea, ye yourselves know, ^v that these
hands have ministered unto my necessities,
and to them that were with me.

35 I have showed you all things, ^w how that

^r Heb. xiii. 9.—^s Chap. ix. 31.—^t Chap. xxvii. 18; Eph. i. 18; Col. i. 12; iii. 24; Heb. ix. 15; i. Pet. i. 4.—^u 1 Sam. xii. 3; 1 Cor. ix. 12; 2 Cor. vii. 2; xi. 9; xii. 17.—^v Chap. xviii. 3; 1 Cor. iv. 12; 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8.

false way; or with tears of love and gratitude to God in behalf of those who were savingly converted to him and adorned his gospel.

Verse 32. *And now, brethren*—Since the providence of God is calling me away, and appointing me other scenes of labour or suffering; *I commend you to God*—To his watchful providence and grace, for guidance, protection, support, preservation, and the supply of all your wants, ghostly and bodily; *and to the word of his grace*—That word which is the grand channel of his grace to believers as well as unbelievers. He recommends them to attend to this in their public ministrations and private conversation, and that, not only as the foundation of their hope here and hereafter, and the source of their joy, but as the rule of their doctrine and practice; *I commend you to God as the master you are to serve, and to the word of his grace, as the means by which you are to know your work, and to govern your conduct; which is able to build you up*—To confirm and increase your faith, love, and holiness. God can thus build us up without the ministry of his word, or the instrumentality of any teachers. But he does in fact build us up by them, and we must beware of supposing that we have less need of human teachers after we know Christ, and are made partakers of his salvation, than before. As the apostle was speaking here to ministers, he must be considered as signifying that, in preaching the word of God's grace, and in all their ministerial duties, they were to have a regard to their own edification, as well as to that of those to and for whom they ministered. *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. It seems that the words *ὁ δυναμεν, who is able*, refer to God, the last person named, and not *the word* by which God works, but which, without him, can affect none of the things here mentioned.

Verses 33–35. *I have coveted no man's silver, &c.*—Here the apostle begins another branch of his farewell discourse, in terms like those of old Samuel, taking his leave of the children of Israel, 1. Sam. xii. 3. As if he had said, I have a testimony in my own

so labouring ye ought to support the A. M. 4064.
weak, and to remember the words of A. D. 60.
the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed
to give than to receive.

36 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he
^x kneeled down, and prayed with them all.

37 And they all wept sore, and ^y fell on Paul's
neck, and kissed him,

38 Sorrowing most of all for the words ^z which
he spake, that they should see his face no
more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

^x Rom. xv. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 12; 2 Cor. xi. 9, 12; xii. 13; Eph. iv. 28; 1 Thess. iv. 11; v. 14; 2 Thess. iii. 8.—^y Chap. vii. 60; xxi. 5; 2 Chron. vi. 13; Dan. vi. 10; Luke xxii. 41; Eph. iii. 14.—^z Gen. xiv. 14; xvi. 29.—^a Verse 25.

conscience and in yours, that I have not directed my ministry to any mercenary views of pleasing any, how distinguished soever their circumstances might be, nor sought by any methods to enrich myself among you. *Yea, ye yourselves know, that*—Far from having any secular or worldly designs in preaching the gospel; *these hands*—Callous as you see with labour; *have ministered to my necessities*—Have procured me food and raiment, and even have assisted in supporting them that were with me—Who is he that envies such a bishop or archbishop as this? *I have showed you*—Elders or bishops, by my example; *all things*—And this among the rest; *that so labouring*—So far as the labours of your office allow you time; *ye ought to support the weak*—Or to assist in supporting them, namely, 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 them; *the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said*—When he conversed with his disciples; *It is more blessed to give than to receive*—To imitate God, and have him, as it were, indebted to us. This is a true and precious monument of apostolical tradition, which, by being written in this authentic memoir, is happily preserved. Without doubt, his disciples remembered many of his words which are not recorded.

Verses 36–38. *When he had thus spoken, he kneeled down*—The posture generally used by the apostles and first Christians in prayer, as it had been also by our Lord himself, and by holy men of old; see the margin. And it is a posture peculiarly proper, as being expressive of humility before God, of reverence for him, and submission to him. *And prayed with them all*—Doubtless in the most fervent and affectionate manner. *And they all wept sore*—The old as well as the young, the men as well as the women. Anciently 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. *Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more*—In those parts

where they had so long enjoyed the benefits of his ministry, inspection, and converse. Think, reader, what sorrow will be in the great day when God shall say to all who are found on the left hand, that

they shall see his face no more! *And they accompanied him unto the ship*—Commending his person to the protection, and his labours to the blessing, of his great Master.

CHAPTER XXI.

(1.) Paul and his friends, sailing southward from Miletus, touch at Patara, Tyre, and Ptolemais, and arrive at Cesarea, 1-8. (2.) There they lodge in Philip the evangelist's house, and Paul's friends, upon Agabus's prediction of his sufferings, earnestly urge him to forbear going up to Jerusalem, but in vain, 8-14. (3.) Coming to Jerusalem, he salutes the brethren, gives an account of his success in preaching the gospel, and, by their advice, purifies himself according to the ceremonial law, to prevent the Jewish Christians, or others, from being prejudiced against him, 15-26. (4.) Some Asiatic Jews observing him in the temple, with great fury incense the multitude to apprehend him as a criminal, 27-30. (5.) Being in danger of his life, the Roman chief captain rescues him from the mob, and gives him liberty to speak for himself, 31-40.

A. M. 4064. **AND** it came to pass, that after we
A. D. 60. were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the *day* following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara :

2 And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.

3 Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden.

4 And finding disciples, we tarried there

* Verse 12; Chap. xx. 23.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXI.

Verses 1-3. *And after we were gotten*—Greek, *προσπαρευρας*, were torn away; from them—Not without doing violence both to ourselves and them; we came with a straight course to Coos—Or Cos, now commonly called Lango, one of the islands termed Cyclades, famous for the worship of Æsculapius, and the temple of Juno; and for being the birth-place of Hippocrates, an eminent physician, and Apelles, a celebrated painter; and the day following unto Rhodes—Another island in the same sea, famous for the worship of the sun, and its Colossus, a prodigiously large brazen statue, erected across the mouth of the harbour, and dedicated to Apollo, or the sun, so high that ships, in full sail, could pass between its legs. The artificers were twelve years in making it; and it was deemed one of the seven wonders of the world. Sixty-six years after its erection, and about two hundred and twenty-four years before Christ, it was thrown down by a terrible earthquake, and lay prostrate almost nine hundred years. When the Saracens took possession of the island, about A. D. 660, they sold this image to a Jew, who, it is said, loaded nine hundred camels with the brass of it. *And from thence unto Patara*—A noted seaport town of Lycia, beautified with many temples, of which one was dedicated to Apollo, whose oracle therein, for

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seven days: * who said to Paul A. M. 4064.
through the Spirit, that he should not A. D. 60.
go up to Jerusalem.

5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed, and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and ^b we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.

6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned ^c home again.

^b Chap. xx. 36.—^c John i. 11.

credit and wealth, was not much inferior to that of Delphi. Here, finding a ship bound for Phenicia, they went on board, and leaving Cyprus on the left, sailed for Syria, and arrived at Tyre, where she was to unlade—Concerning Tyre, see the notes on Isa. xxiii. That there should be Christians in Tyre, was foretold Psa. lxxxvii. 4.

Verses 4-6. *Finding disciples, we tarried there seven days*—In order to spend a sabbath with them. *Who said to Paul, through the inspiration of the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem*—The meaning seems to be, that these disciples foreseeing, through the spirit of prophecy, the troubles which Paul would meet with in Jerusalem, if he went thither, themselves advised him not to go. It is necessary to understand the words thus, to account for Paul's conduct; for had the Spirit absolutely forbidden his journey to Jerusalem, he doubtless would have obeyed, and not have gone thither. But he, considering it as being their own advice only, rejected it and went. Indeed, they seemed to have understood their prophetic impulse to be an intimation from the Spirit, that Paul, if he were so minded, might avoid the danger and trouble of which they warned him, by not going to Jerusalem. *And when we had accomplished those days*—Namely, the seven spoken of above; *we departed and went our way*—

(52*)

A. M. 4064. 7 And when we had finished our
A. D. 60. course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

8 And the next *day*, we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cesarea; and we entered into the house of Philip ^d the evangelist, ^e which was *one* of the seven; and abode with him.

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, ^f which did prophesy.

10 ¶ And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named ^g Agabus.

^d Eph. iv. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 5.—^e Chap. vi. 5; viii. 26, 40.
^f Joel ii. 28; Chap. ii. 17.

Fully purposing, notwithstanding all these admonitions, to embark again and proceed to Jerusalem; Paul deliberately judging that all the sufferings he might meet with in the course of his ministry would tend to the furtherance of the gospel; and that it was his duty to fulfil his engagements to the churches, in delivering their alms to the brethren there, whatever might happen. *And they all brought us on our way, &c.*—For though Paul did not yield to the persuasions of these his friends at Tyre, yet they showed him every imaginable token of respect; *with their wives and children*—Attending him and his company till they were out of the city, and had reached the shore—Where, before they parted, they kneeled down and prayed together—And then took leave of one another, as Paul and the elders of Ephesus had done.

Verses 7-9. *And when we had finished our course*—By sea; *we came to Ptolemais*—A celebrated city to the south of Tyre, on the same coast of the Mediterranean sea, anciently called *Acco*. It was enlarged and beautified by the first of the Egyptian Ptolemies, from whence it took its new appellation. It was the scene of many celebrated actions in that series of mad expeditions which was called *the holy war*. The Turks, who are now masters of all that region, call it *Acca*, or *Acra*; and when Maundrel was there, in 1697, like many other noble ancient cities, it was only a heap of ruins. Since then, however, it has again revived by the industry of Daher; and the works erected by Dejezzar, in his own time, have rendered it one of the principal towns on that coast. In 1799, aided by the British, under Sir W. S. Smith, it withstood a severe siege by the French, under General Bonaparte, who raised the siege, after failing in a twelfth assault, made over the putrid bodies of his soldiers. *And saluted the brethren*—For the disciples of Christ were now grown so numerous as to be found in every city of any note: *and abode with them one day*—After which they travelled by land to *Cesarea*—Where they abode many days with *Philip the evangelist*, and one of the seven deacons—Who, it seems, had for

11 And when he was come unto us, A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60. he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, ^h So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.

12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, ⁱ What mean ye to weep, and to break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

^g Chap. xi. 28.—^h Verse 33; Chap. xx. 23.—ⁱ Chap. xx. 24.

some years been settled there. Concerning him and his labours in those parts, as also of Cesarea, see the notes on chap. viii. 5-40. *The same man had four daughters*—Unmarried, who prophesied; the miraculous gifts of the Spirit being sometimes communicated to women, as well as to men.

Verses 10-14. *And as we tarried there many days*—There being many disciples in that city, the fruit, as appears, of the ministry and miracles of Philip; *there came from Judea a prophet named Agabus*—Paul, and some part of his company, had become acquainted with this prophet some years before, at Antioch, where he foretold the famine which afterward happened in the days of Claudius Cesar, chap. xi. 28. *And when he was come unto us*—Several of the disciples of Cesarea and Paul's friends being together; *he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet*—In the manner that malefactors were wont to be bound when apprehended; *and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost*—By whose inspiration I now speak and act; *So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle*—Thus Agabus, like the prophets of old, accompanied his prediction with a significant prophetic symbol: and thus the nearer the event was, the more express and impressive were the predictions intended to prepare Paul for it. *When we*—Of Paul's company; *and they of that place*—The brethren of Cesarea; *heard these things*—And believed if he went to Jerusalem the prediction would be fulfilled; *we besought him not to go*—In the most pressing manner, and with many tears of sincere and fervent affection, verse 13; being ignorant, it appears, that this and the former prediction were intended, not to hinder him from going to Jerusalem, but to make him the more courageous, by signifying to him beforehand what was to befall him, (chap. xx. 22, 23,) and that he would not be put to death at Jerusalem. *Then Paul*—Sensibly touched with the concern which they expressed on his account, and yet resolutely bent upon following what he apprehended to be the call of duty, whatever sufferings it might expose him to; *answered, What mean ye to weep and*

A. M. 4064. 14 And when he would not be
A. D. 60. persuaded, we ceased, saying, ^k The
will of the Lord be done.

15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.

16 There went with us also *certain* of the disciples of Cesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

17 ¶ ^l And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

18 And the *day* following Paul went in with

^k Matt. vi. 10; xxvi. 42; Luke xi. 2; xxii. 42.—^l Chap. xv. 4.
^m Chap. xv. 13; Gal. i. 19; ii. 9.

break my heart?—By these affectionate salutations? Observe, reader, the admirable mixture of tenderness and firmness of spirit manifested in this answer. *I am ready, not to be bound only*—And cast into prison; *but also to die at Jerusalem*—Or wherever else I may be called to it; *for the name of the Lord Jesus*—For he feared neither sufferings nor death in any form, if he might thereby defend the gospel, and promote the glory of its Author, which were the ends he had chiefly in view in all his labours and sufferings, and which he preferred to all other things whatever. *And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased*—It was not obstinacy in Paul that hindered his yielding to their persuasions, but true Christian resolution, not to relinquish what he believed to be the line of duty. We should never be persuaded either to do what we know to be evil, or to omit what we believe to be good, when it is in our power: *saying, The will of the Lord be done*—Which they were satisfied Paul knew.

Verses 15, 16. *And after those days*—Spent at Cesarea, how many there were is not said; *we took up our carriages, and went*—Or, their baggage, which probably went by sea before; containing, doubtless, the alms they were carrying to Jerusalem, chap. xxiv. 17. And they had in their company some of the brethren of Cesarea, together with *one Mnason, of Cyprus, an old disciple*—Who lived in Jerusalem, and probably had been converted, either by Christ or the apostles, at the first opening of the gospel there. With him they were to lodge, which they were the more willing to do, as he was a person of established character and reputation in the church; and as, in those days, there were no inns for the accommodation of travellers, as with us.

Verses 17-19. *The brethren received us gladly*—The alms which they brought with them might be one, but certainly were not the only or the chief reason of the welcome reception they met with. *The day following, Paul*, and those who had attended him in his journey, waited on *James*—Commonly called James the Less, or the Lord's brother, the only apostle then presiding over the churches in Judea. See notes on chap. xv. 18. *And all the elders were present*—To receive so important a visi-

us unto ⁿ James: and all the elders A. M. 4064.
were present. A. D. 60.

19 And when he had saluted them, ⁿ he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles ^o by his ministry.

20 And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all ^p zealous of the law:

21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the

ⁿ Chap. xv. 4, 12; Rom xv. 18, 19.—^o Chap. i. 17; Chap. xx. 24.
^p Chap. xxii. 3; Rom. x. 2; Gal. i. 14.

tant, of whose arrival and errand they had doubtless been informed. *And when he had saluted them*—With cordial affection, and presented to them those that were of his company; *he declared particularly what God had wrought among the Gentiles*—Since he last left Jerusalem, informing them how many of the idolatrous Gentiles, in all the great cities of the Lesser Asia, Macedonia, and Greece, had embraced the gospel through his ministry; that he had planted churches in those cities, and that the gifts of the Holy Ghost had been communicated to many believers in every church; mentioning also his having visited most of them a second time, as well as taken a review of those in Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lystra, and other parts of Asia, with the plantation of which they had formerly been made acquainted, Acts xv. 4. Moreover, in this account we may be sure he did not forget to mention the liberal contributions which the churches of the Gentiles through Asia and Europe had made for the poor of the saints in Judea, and which they had sent by *his hands* as a testimony of their gratitude for the knowledge of the true God, communicated to them by men of their nation. The collection, Paul, no doubt, now delivered, in presence of the messengers of the churches, to James and to the elders, to be by them distributed to the poor of the Jewish Christians, who by that expression of the good-will of the Gentile believers, ought to have been disposed to think favourably of them as their brethren.

Verses 20, 21. *When they heard it, they glorified the Lord*—The Lord Christ, for this wonderful demonstration of his presence and grace, with his servant; *and said, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe*—Many of these, doubtless, had come from different parts of the country, and some, probably, from remote provinces to Jerusalem, on occasion of this feast. Well might our Lord compare his religion to a grain of mustard-seed, seeing it had spread so extensively in so short a time. Its beginning was small, the instruments employed in propagating it apparently mean, the prejudices and obstinacy of the Jews very great, and yet, in about twenty-eight or thirty years after the ascension, the number of those who had

A. M. 4064. Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying
A. D. 60. that they ought not to circumcise
their children, neither to walk after the cus-
toms.

22 What is it therefore? the multitude must
needs come together: for they will hear that
thou art come.

23 Do therefore this that we say to thee:
We have four men which have a vow on them;

24 Them take, and purify thyself with them,
and be at charges with them, that they may
shave *their* heads: and all may know that

¶ Num. vi. 2, 13, 18; Chap. xviii. 18.—¶ Chap. xv. 20, 29.

embraced it, and were at one time in the same city,
is stated at many thousands, or rather *myriads*,
(*μυριάδες*), or ten thousands. *And they are all zealous
for the law*—For the whole Mosaic dispensation,
as supposing it to be of perpetual obligation on
all the Jewish nation, without excepting those that
had embraced Christianity. *And they are informed
of thee*—Through the prejudice and falsehood of
thine enemies; *that thou teachest all the Jews to
forsake Moses, &c.*—This, it appears, was a false
charge brought against Paul. We have no proof
that he taught the *Jews* to forbear circumcising their
children, or to forsake the law of Moses. On the
contrary, it seems, knowing that law to be the civil
or political law of Judea, he always enjoined them
to comply with its institutions, as the means of pre-
serving their political rites and privileges, till Jeru-
salem should be destroyed, (which he foresaw it
would be,) and their commonwealth dissolved;
even as he enjoined the converted Gentiles to obey
the good laws of the countries where they resided.
What he really taught concerning the law of Moses
was, that neither Jew nor Gentile could be saved by
its institutions, which was the doctrine likewise of
James, and of the elders, and of all the more intelli-
gent members of the church at Jerusalem; as is im-
plied in what James says, verse 25; *as touching the
Gentiles which believe, we have concluded that they
observe no such thing.* For if the Gentiles did not
need to observe the law of Moses, obedience thereto
could not be necessary to the salvation of any per-
son whatever.

Verses 22-25. *What is it therefore*—Which may
not be apprehended on such an occasion? Or, what
is to be done? *the multitude must needs come to-
gether*—They will certainly be gathered together in a
tumultuous manner, unless they be some way paci-
fied. *For they will hear that thou art come*—And
will immediately form their judgment of the truth
or falsehood of the information they have received,
by what they discover in thy present behaviour, of
regard or disregard to the Mosaic ceremonies. *Do
therefore this, &c.*—To show them, how far soever
thou art from imposing the Mosaic ceremonies on
any Jews or Gentiles, as necessary to salvation, or
teaching men to seek justification by them, yet thou

those things whereof they were in- A. M. 4064.
formed concerning thee, are nothing; A. D. 60.
but *that* thou thyself also walkest orderly, and
keepest the law.

25 As touching the Gentiles which believe,
we have written *and* concluded that they ob-
serve no such thing, save only that they keep
themselves from *things* offered to idols, and
from blood, and from strangled, and from for-
nication.

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next
day purifying himself with them, entered into

¶ Chap. xxiv. 18.

dost not think there is any intrinsic evil in them, nor
teach it as a matter of duty, that believers in Christ,
of Jewish extraction, should disuse and reject them;
do this that we say to thee—As the best expedient
we can think of, for immediately taking off any ill
impressions which might otherwise be apprehended.
We have four men—Converts to the gospel; *which
have a vow on them*—Of Nazariteship; *take them*—
As thy companions and partners; *and purify thyself
with them*—According to the Jewish ritual; *and be
at the necessary charges with, (or, rather, for,) them,
that they may shave their heads*—And offer the sac-
rifices which the law has appointed in that case.
These sacrifices are specified Num. vi. 13, &c.,
by which it appears, that the charges of these four
would be the price of eight lambs and four rams, be-
sides oil, flour, &c., and it was not uncommon
among the Jews; for the rich to assist those Nazar-
ites that were poor in bearing these charges: *and all
may know*—Namely, all that come up to the temple,
and see thee in these circumstances; *that those
things whereof they were informed are nothing*—
Have no reality or truth in them; *but that*—Instead
of forbidding the observance of these ceremonies to
others; *thou thyself walkest orderly, and keepest
the law*—Avoiding all unnecessary occasion of of-
fence. "It is evident from hence, that whatever
might have passed between Paul and James on this
head in private, (Gal. ii. 2,) James and the brethren
thought it most regular and convenient, that the
Jewish ritual should still be observed by those of the
circumcision who believed in Christ; and consider-
ing what tribulation the church at Jerusalem must
otherwise have been exposed to from the sanhedrim,
who, no doubt, would have prosecuted them to the
utmost as apostates, and also how soon Providence
intended to render the practice of it impossible, and
to break the whole power of the Jews, by the de-
struction of the temple, and city, and nation; it was
certainly the most orderly and prudent conduct to
conform to it, though it were looked upon by those
that understood the matter fully, (which it was not
necessary that all should,) as *antiquated and ready
to vanish away*, Heb. viii. 13." Locke and Dod-
dridge.

Verses 26-28. *Then Paul took the men*—Agree-

A. M. 4064. the temple, [†]to signify the accomplish-
A. D. 60. ment of the days of purification, until
that an offering should be offered for every one
of them.

27 ¶ And when the seven days were almost
ended, [‡]the Jews which were of Asia, when
they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the
people, and [§]laid hands on him.

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help. This is
the man [¶]that teacheth all *men* everywhere
against the people, and the law, and this place:
and further, brought Greeks also into the temple;
and hath polluted this holy place.

29 (For they had seen before with him in

[†] Numbers vi. 13.—[‡] Chap. xxiv. 18.—[§] Chapter xxvi. 21.
[¶] Chap. xxiv. 5, 6.

ably to the advice which he had received from
James and the elders. *And the next day, purifying
himself with them*—According to the rites of the law;
entered into the temple, to signify—To the priest;
the accomplishment—That is, their resolution to ac-
complish the seven days of purification—Till all the
sacrifices should be offered which the Mosaic law
required. *And when the seven days of purification
were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia*—
Where Paul had preached so long, and who were
especially enraged against him; *when they saw
him in the temple*—Utterly disregarding this proof
of his respect for the law; *stirred up all the people*
—Greek, *συνεχεν παντα τον οχλον*; *threw into confu-
sion the whole multitude*; and *laid hands on him*—
In a violent and outrageous manner; *crying out*—To
all that were present; *Men of Israel, help*—If ye be in-
deed men of Israel, that have a concern for your reli-
gion and your country, now is your time to show it by
helping to seize an enemy to both. *This is the man
that teacheth all men everywhere*—In all parts of
Asia and Greece; *against the people*—By telling the
Jews that they ought not to circumcise their children,
and by assuring the Gentiles that they may be saved
without becoming proselytes to Judaism; *and the
law and this place*—By predicting that both shall
be destroyed. Every thing contrary to the law
would be justly interpreted as contrary to the temple,
which was so evidently supported by a regard
to it: but perhaps Paul might have declared that
the time of the destruction of the temple was ap-
proaching, a declaration which, we know, was
charged on Stephen as a great crime, chap. vi. 14:
and brought Greeks also into the temple—Any for-
eigner might worship in that part which was called
the court of the Gentiles; but these zealots, upon an
uncertain conjecture and rumour, and without any
proof, imagined Paul had brought some uncircum-
cised Greeks into the inner court, appropriated
to the people of Israel, which no foreigner might
enter, as was notified by the Greek and Latin inscrip-
tions on several of the pillars which stood in the
wall that separated it: *μη δει αλλοφυλον παρειναι, No*

the city, [¶]Trophimus, an Ephesian, ^{A. M. 4064.}
whom they supposed that Paul had ^{A. D. 60.}
brought into the temple.)

30 And [¶]all the city was moved, and the
people ran together: and they took Paul and
drew him out of the temple. And forthwith
the doors were shut.

31 And as they went about to kill him, tid-
ings came unto the chief captain of the band,
that all Jerusalem was in an uproar;

32 [¶]Who immediately took soldiers and cen-
turions, and ran down unto them. And when
they saw the chief captain and the soldiers,
they left beating of Paul.

[¶] Chap. xx. 4.—[¶] Chap. xxvi. 21.—[¶] Chap. xxiii. 27;
xxiv. 7.

foreigner must enter here. It must be observed,
however, that a proselyte who by his circumcision
had declared his submission to, and acceptance of
the whole Jewish religion, was no longer looked on
as a foreigner, but as one naturalized, and so a fel-
low-citizen, to which there seems to be an allusion
Eph. ii. 19.

Verse 30. *And all the city was moved*—Was in
an uproar. Although the people had little holiness
themselves, yet they had a great veneration for the
temple; and when they heard of its being polluted,
they were up in arms presently, being determined
to stand by it with their lives and fortunes. *And the
people ran together*—In a tumultuous manner; and
the concourse was the greater because of the prodigi-
ous number of Jews from foreign countries, who
had come to the feast of pentecost. The Jews, on
this occasion, showed just such zeal for God's tem-
ple as the Ephesians did for that of Diana, when
Paul was represented as an enemy to it. But God
does not reckon himself at all honoured by any zeal
for him which transports people into such irregu-
larities, and causes them, while they pretend to be
concerned for his honour and service, to act in such
an unreasonable, brutish, and barbarous manner. *And
they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple*—
That is, out of the court of Israel, into that of the
Gentiles, as one who had polluted the temple. *And
forthwith the doors were shut*—Both to prevent any
further violation of the temple, and to prevent Paul's
taking sanctuary at the horns of the altar.

Verses 31-36. *And as they went about to kill him*
—It was a rule among the Jews, that any uncircum-
cised person who came within the separating wall,
mentioned above, might be stoned to death without
any further process. And they seemed to think
Paul, who, as they supposed, had brought such in-
thither, deserved no better treatment. *Tidings
came unto the chief captain of the band*—Greek, *τω
χιλιαρχω της σπειρης*, to the tribune of the cohort, call-
ed Lysias. A cohort, or detachment of soldiers, be-
longing to the Roman legion which lodged in the
adjacent castle of Antonia, were stationed on feast-

A. M. 4064. 33 Then the chief captain came
A. D. 60.

near and took him, and ° commanded him to be bound with two chains: and demanded who he was, and what he had done.

34 And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was borne of the soldiers, for the violence of the people.

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, ^d Away with him.

37 ¶ And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I

° Verse 11; Chap. xx. 23.—^d Luke xxiii. 18; John xix. 15; Chap. xxii. 22.

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 then at Jerusalem, and, as such, was the commanding officer of the legion quartered at the castle. *Who immediately took soldiers, &c.*—And ran down unto them, namely, to suppress the riot, knowing how much it was his concern to check such proceedings. *And when they saw the chief captain and soldiers, they left beating of Paul*—Which it appears they had begun to do in such a manner, that, had he not been thus seasonably rescued in this critical moment, his life must soon have fallen a sacrifice to their rage. *Then the chief captain*—Having made his way through the multitude, *came near and took him*—Into his custody. And how many great ends of Providence were answered by this imprisonment! It was not only a means of preserving his life, (after he had suffered severely for worldly prudence,) but it 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. *And demanded*—Of those that seemed most enraged against him; *who he was*—Against whom such a general outcry was raised; *and what he had done*—To deserve it. *And some cried one thing and some another*—So great was the confusion of this riotous assembly, who neither knew one another's mind, nor their own; though every one pretended to give the sense of the whole body. *And when he could not know the certainty for the tumult*—For the noise, clamour, and contradictory speeches that were uttered; *he commanded him to be carried into the castle*—The tower of Antonia, where the Roman soldiers kept garrison. *And when he came upon the stairs*—Leading to the castle. It was situated on a rock, fifty cubits high, at that corner of the outward

speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? A. M. 4064. A. D. 60.

38 ° Art not thou that ¹ Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

39 But Paul said, ^f I am a man *which am* a Jew of Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee suffer me to speak unto the people.

40 And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs, and ^g beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

° Chap. v. 36.—¹ This Egyptian rose A. D. 55.—^f Chap. ix. 11; xxii. 3.—^g Chap. xii. 17.

temple where the western and northern porticoes joined, to each of which there were stairs descending from it. *So it was that he was borne of the soldiers*—Up from the ground; *for the violence of the people*—Who, if they could, would have pulled him limb from limb. And, when they could not reach him with their hands, they pursued him with their clamorous invectives, *crying, Away with him*—Observe, reader, how the most excellent persons and things are often run down by a popular clamour: Christ himself was so treated, while they cried, *Crucify him, crucify him*, though they could not mention any evil he had done.

Verses 37–40. *And as Paul was going to be led into the castle*—To which the soldiers were conducting him; *he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee?*—The wisdom of God teaching him to make use of that very time and place: *Who*—Hearing him speak in the Greek language; *said*—With some surprise; *Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian*—Who came into Judea when Felix had been some years governor there, (see note on Matt. xxiv. 26;) and, calling himself a prophet, 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 were quickly dispersed, many of whom were taken or slain, but he himself made his escape. To the tribune's question, Paul replied that he was a Jew, born in Tarsus, in Cilicia, and begged that he would suffer him to speak to the people. *And when he had given him license*—To say what he pleased; *Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with his hand unto the people*—To show that he was going to speak to them. *And when there was made great silence*—Their curiosity concurring with other motives to make them desire to hear what he could say in his own defence; *he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue*—Or that dialect of it which was then commonly spoken at Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXII.

In this chapter, (1.) By his affectionate address in the Hebrew tongue, Paul procures himself the attention of his audience, 1, 2. (2.) He gives an account of himself, of his Jewish extraction, liberal education, former bigotry, and furious persecution of the Christians, 3-5; of his miraculous conversion to Christ, 6-11; of his being baptized and further instructed by Ananias, 12-16; of his call from heaven to preach among the Gentiles, 17-21. (3.) Enraged at the last circumstance, the Jews fly out into a violent fury against him, 22, 23. (4.) The chief captain again rescues him, and orders him to be bound and examined on his crime by scourging, 24, 25. But, (5.) Paul, claiming the privilege of a Roman, escapes the torture, is freed from his bonds, and brought before the Jewish council, 26-30.

A. M. 4064. **M**EN, ^a brethren, and fathers, hear
A. D. 60. ye my defence *which I make*
now unto you.

2 (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,)

3 ^b I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city ^c at the feet of ^d Gamaliel, and taught ^e according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and ^f was zealous toward God, ^g as ye all are this day.

4 ^h And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also the high-priest doth bear me witness, and ⁱ all the estate of the elders; ^k from

^a Chap. vii. 2.—^b Chap. xxi. 39; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 5.
^c Deut. xxxiii. 3; 2 Kings iv. 38; Luke x. 39.—^d Chap. v. 34.
^e Chap. xxvi. 5.—^f Chap. xxi. 20; Gal. i. 14.—^g Rom. x. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXII.

Verses 1, 2. *Men, brethren, and fathers*—Of whatsoever age, rank, or circumstance of life you are; *hear ye my defence*—Which ye could not hear before for the tumult. *And when they heard that he spake* in their vulgar tongue, then called the Hebrew dialect, *they kept the more silence*—Were the more disposed, numerous as the assembly was, to hearken to him attentively.

Verses 3-5. *I am verily a Jew, &c.*—This defence answers all that is objected, chap. xxi. 28. But he speaks closely and nervously, in a few words, because the time was short; *born in Tarsus, yet brought up in this city*—For my parents were so warmly attached to their religion, and so desirous that I might be well instructed in it, that they sent me to be educated here; *at the feet of Gamaliel*—That celebrated teacher. See note on chap. v. 34. The phrase of being *brought up at his feet*, plainly alludes to the posture in which the scholars were usually placed, sitting on low seats, or upon mats, on the floor, at the feet of their masters, whose seats were raised to a considerable height. *Taught according to the perfect manner of the law*—Or, accurately instructed in the law: which learned education was once, doubtless, the matter of his boasting and confidence; but, not being sanctified, it made his bonds strong, and furnished him with numerous arguments against the gospel. Yet, when the grace

whom also I received letters unto the ^{A. M. 4064.}
brethren, and went to Damascus, to ^{A. D. 60.}
bring them which were ^f there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

6 And ^l it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

9 And ^m they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

^h Chap. viii. 3; xxvi. 9-11; Phil. iii. 6; 1 Tim. i. 13.—ⁱ Luke xxii. 66; Chap. iv. 5.—^k Chap. ix. 2; xxvi. 10, 12.—^l Chap. ix. 3; xxvi. 12, 13.—^m Chap. ix. 7; Dan. x. 7.

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 defence and propagation of Christianity. *And I persecuted this way*—With the same zeal that ye do now; *binding both men and women*—Who professed and practised it, without any regard to sex, age, or quality. How much better was his condition now he was bound himself! *The high-priest doth bear me witness*—Is able to testify; *and all the estate of the elders*—All the other members of the sanhedrim; *from whom also I received letters unto the brethren*—The Jews (for this title was not peculiar to the Christians) empowering me to act against those for whom I have now so great a regard. *And went to Damascus, &c.*—See note on chap. ix. 1, 2.

Verses 6-16. *And as I made my journey, &c., about noon*—For all was done in the face of the sun; *suddenly there shone a great light*—By whatever method God reveals himself to us, we shall have everlasting cause to remember it; 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 circumstance, and be ready, on every proper occasion, to recount these wonders of power and love for the encouragement and instruction of others. See notes on chap. ix. 3-18, where the substance of this paragraph oc-

A. M. 4064. 10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And ^aone Ananias, a devout man according to the law, ^bhaving a good report of all the ^cJews which dwelt *there*,

13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

14 And he said, ^dThe God of our fathers ^ehath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and ^fsee ^gthat Just One, and ^hshould'est hear the voice of his mouth.

15 ⁱFor thou shalt be his witness unto all men of ^jwhat thou hast seen and heard.

^a Chap. ix. 17.—^b Chap. x. 22.—^c 1 Tim. iii. 7.—^d Chap. iii. 13; v. 30.—^e Chap. ix. 15; xxvi. 16.—^f 1 Corinthians ix. 1; xv. 18.—^g Chap. iii. 14; vii. 52.—^h 1 Cor. xi. 23; Gal. i. 12.—ⁱ Chapter xxiii. 11.—^j Chapter iv. 20; xxvi. 16.
^{*} Chap. ii. 38; Heb. x. 22.—^{*} Chap. ix. 14; Rom. x. 13.

curs, and is explained. *They that were with me heard not the voice*—Distinctly, but only a confused noise. *And one Ananias, 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. *The God of our fathers hath chosen thee*—Ananias's giving God this appellation, *the God of our fathers*, shows that he was himself a Jew by birth, who observed the law of the fathers, and relied on the promises made to them: *that thou shouldest know his will*—By immediate revelation from himself, Gal. i. 12. *And see that Just One*—The Lord Jesus, called *the Just*, or *Righteous One*, with a reference to the conduct of the Jews, who crucified him under a pretence of his being a malefactor. This is an additional proof to what we read, chap. ix. 5, (where see the note,) that Saul did really see Christ, appearing even in a human form; *and hear the voice of his mouth*—And that in such a manner, as to be taught his will immediately from himself. This was a peculiar privilege to which Paul was chosen, namely, to see Christ here on earth, even after his ascension into heaven! Stephen, indeed, saw him at the right hand of God, but Paul saw him standing, as it were, at his right hand. This honour none had but Paul. *Be baptized, and wash away thy sins*—Baptism, administered to real penitents, was intended to be both a means and a seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily, in the primitive church, bestow this on any person till he submitted to baptism; and this may explain, in some measure, in what sense baptism may be said to wash away sins, and elsewhere to save. See chap. ii. 28; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

16 And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, ^aand wash away thy sins, ^bcalling on the name of the Lord.

17 And ^bit came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;

18 And ^csaw him saying unto me, ^dMake haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, ^ethey know that I imprisoned and ^fbeat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

20 ^aAnd when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and ^bconsenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart: ⁱfor I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

^b Chap. ix. 26; 2 Cor. xii. 2.—^c Verse 14.—^d Matt. x. 14.
^e Verse 4; Chap. viii. 3.—^f Matt. x. 17.—^g Chap. vii. 58.
^h Luke xi. 48; Chap. viii. 1; Rom. i. 32.—ⁱ Chap. ix. 15; xiii. 2, 46, 47; xviii. 6; xxvi. 17; Rom. i. 5; xi. 13; xv. 16; Gal. i. 15, 16; ii. 7, 8; Eph. iii. 7, 8; 1 Tim. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11.

Verses 17–21. *When I was come again to Jerusalem*—From Damascus; and *prayed in the temple*—By this he shows that he still paid the temple its due honour, as the house of prayer; *I was in a trance*—Or ecstasy. Perhaps he might continue standing all the while, with an intenseness of countenance which, if it were observed by any near him, might be imputed to the fixedness of his mind in his devotions; or, if he fell down, it might be looked upon as an epileptic fit. *And saw him*—Jesus; *saying to me, Get thee quickly out of Jerusalem*—Because of the snares that will be laid for thee, and in order to preach where people will hear: *for they will not*—In Jerusalem; *receive thy testimony*—But, on the contrary, will rather attempt thy destruction. *And*—Presuming to expostulate with Christ himself on this occasion; *I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned, &c.*—They know that I was once of their mind; that I was as bitter an enemy to thy disciples as any of them; that I excited the civil power against them; *and imprisoned them*—And also raised the spiritual power against them; *and beat them in every synagogue*—Particularly in Stephen's case, they know that, when he was stoned, *I was standing by*—Was aiding and abetting; *and consenting to his death and*—In token thereof, *kept the raiment of them that slew him*—That is, Lord, my former zeal against those that believed in thee is so well known to them all, by so many remarkable instances shown among them, that sure they must be convinced it is upon some certain and irresistible grounds of persuasion that I am now become a preacher of that faith I formerly destroyed and persecuted

A. M. 4064. 22 ¶ And they gave him audience
A. D. 60. unto this word, and *then* lifted up their voices, and said, ^k Away with such a *fellow* from the earth: for it is not fit that ^l he should live.

23 And as they cried out, and cast off *their* clothes, and threw dust into the air,

24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

25 ¶ And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, ^m Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

^k Chap. xxi. 36.—^l Chap. xxv. 24.

with so great zeal. *And he said*—Overruling my plea by a renewal of his charge; *Depart*—Reason no further on this subject, but go thy way immediately, according to my direction; *for I will send thee far hence*—Into distant countries; *unto the Gentiles*—And thou shalt preach my gospel, and publish the glad tidings of salvation, with much greater encouragement and success among them. 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 them. 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.

Verse 22. *And they gave him audience*—Heard him with quietness and attention; *unto this word*—Till he began to speak of his mission to the Gentiles, and this in such a manner as implied that the Jews were in danger of being cast off; but no sooner did he mention this, than the multitude, especially such of them as had come from Asia, became instantly perfectly enraged, and cried out with vehemence, *Away with such a fellow from the earth*—Such an impudent blasphemer; *for it is not fit that he should live*—Any longer upon it, since he shows himself to be such a traitor to God, and an enemy to his chosen people, in pretending to have a commission to go and preach to the ignorant and reprobated Gentiles. Thus the men that have been the greatest blessings of their age, have often been represented, not only as the burdens of the earth, but as the pests of their generation. He who was worthy of the greatest honours in life is condemned as not worthy of life itself!

Verses 23, 24. *And as they cried out*—In this furious manner; *and cast*—Or tore; *off their clothes*—In token of indignation and horror at this pretended blasphemy; or, as Dr. Whithy thinks, as in the case of Stephen, that they might be ready to stone him; *and threw dust into the air*—Through vehemence of rage, which they knew not how to give vent to; *the chief captain*—Not knowing the

26 When the centurion heard *that*,
A. M. 4064. he went and told the chief captain,
A. D. 60. saying, Take heed what thou doest; for this man is a Roman.

27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was *free* born.

29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have ^l examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

^m Chap. xvi. 37.—^l Or, *tortured him*.

particulars of what had passed, but perceiving, by the effect, that Paul had rather exasperated than appeased them by the apology which he had been permitted to make, *commanded* that he should be brought into the castle, and—As no witnesses were produced in a regular way to give information against him, he bade that he should be examined by scourging—In order that he might get to know by his own confession, since he could not learn it any other way; *wherefore they cried so against him*—That the Romans used this method of scourging to compel real or supposed criminals to make confession, is proved by Dr. Lardner, and several other learned writers.

Verses 25–29. *And as they*—The soldiers ordered by the tribune; were binding him with thongs—In order to their scourging him; *Paul said unto the centurion that stood by*—To see the tribune's orders executed; *Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?*—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 nor beaten with rods. *The centurion told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest*—Greek, *Ορα τι μελλεις ποιειν, consider what thou art about to do; for this man is a Roman*—Yea, and there was a stronger reason to stop proceedings, and to consider, for this man was a servant of God. *Paul said, I was free born*—Not, as some have supposed, because he was born at Tarsus; for, as Dr. Lardner has unanswerably proved, that was not a Roman colony, or what the Romans called *municipium*, a free town, or a place where all the natives were free of Rome by birth. But, it is probable, 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 obligations, as Christians, to give up our civil privileges (which we ought to receive and prize as the gifts 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 en-

A. M. 4064. 30 ¶ On the morrow, because he would
A. D. 60. have known the certainty wherefore he
was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his

gauge us to strive to transmit them improved to posterity. *Then straightway they*—Who had bound him, and were about to examine him by scourging; *departed from him*—Not daring to proceed; *and the chief captain*—Whom we may justly suppose to have had considerable influence at Rome; *also was afraid, because*—Though he had not scourged him, yet he had bound him—In order to his being scourged; which was a breach of privilege, for which he might have been accused by Paul to his superiors.

Verse 30. *On the morrow*—The chief captain, having become more anxious to know certainly

bands, and commanded the chief A. M. 4064.
priests and all their council to appear, A. D. 60.
and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

what Paul's crime was, since he understood that he was a Roman citizen; *loosed him from his bands*—In which he had laid him a close prisoner; *and commanded the chief priests, and all their council*—All the members of the sanhedrim; *to appear*—Or to come together and hold a court; *and brought Paul down*—From the castle; *and set him before them*—That he might be examined and tried according to the laws and usages of his own country; in order that the most seditious of the Jews might have no reason to complain of the manner in which they were treated.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Paul, being before the council, (1.) Professes his integrity, and foretells the high-priest's ruin, who had commanded him to be unjustly smitten at the bar; but apologizes for his sharp reproof, 1-5. (2.) He prudently extricates himself out of the dangerous situation in which he was placed, by occasioning a dissension in the council, in consequence of which he is carried away by the chief captain, 6-10. (3.) While Christ by a vision encourages him, and warns him of further trouble at Rome, some desperate Jews bind themselves by an oath to assassinate him, 11-15. (4.) A relation of Paul informs him and the chief captain of the plot, 16-22. (5.) The chief captain prevents the execution of it, by sending Paul to Cesarea under a strong guard that same night, 23-35.

A. M. 4064. AND Paul, earnestly beholding the
A. D. 60. council, said, Men and brethren,
I have lived in all good conscience before God
until this day.

2 And the high-priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him; b to smite him on the mouth.

* Chap. xxiv. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 4; 2 Cor. i. 12; iv. 2; 2 Tim. i. 3; Heb. xiii. 18.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIII.

Verses 1-5. *And Paul, earnestly beholding the council*—At whose bar he was placed; manifesting a clear conscience by his very countenance; and likewise waiting to see whether any of them was minded to ask him any question; *said, Men and brethren*—Though I am brought before you as a malefactor, to be examined and judged by you, I have the comfort of being conscious to myself that *I have lived in all good conscience before God*—The Searcher of hearts; *until this day*—Whatever men may think or say of me. 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 error, yet he had acted from conscience before God. *And the high-priest Ananias*—Conscious of his inveterate enmity to Paul, and of the steps he had openly taken for his destruction, thinking himself insulted by such a solemn declara-

3 Then said Paul unto him, God A. M. 4064.
shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for A. D. 60.
sittest thou to judge me after the law, and c com-
mandest me to be smitten contrary to the
law?

4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou
God's high-priest?

b 1 Kings xxii. 24; Jer. xx. 2; John xviii. 22.—c Lev. xix. 35; Deut. xxv. 1, 2; John vii. 51.

tion of his innocence; *commanded them that stood by him*—At the bar; *to smite him on the mouth*—For what he represented as a most insolent assertion; which was accordingly done. *Then said Paul*—Being carried away by a sudden and prophetic impulse; *God, τυπτειν σε μελλει, 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. *And they that stood by*—Being greatly offended; *said, Revilest*

A. M. 4064. 5 Then said Paul, ^d I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest: for it is written, ^e Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

6 ¶ But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men *and* brethren, 'I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: ^f of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

7 And when he had so said, there arose a

^d Chap. xxiv. 17.—^e Exod. xxii. 28; Eccles. x. 20; 2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 8.—^f Chap. xxvi. 5; Phil. iii. 5.—^g Chap. xxiv. 15, 21; xxvi. 6; xxviii. 20.

thou God's high-priest—Dost thou, who pretendest to so much religion, presume impiously to revile the most sacred person in our nation, and consequently in the whole world? *Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren*—Οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀρχιερεὺς, *I knew not, or, had not known; that he is the high-priest*—That is, (as many understand him,) he did not advert to it, in the prophetic transport of his mind, that Ananias was the high-priest. But he does not say that his not adverting to it proceeded from the power of the Spirit coming upon him, as knowing that they were not able to bear it. But is it not more probable that his positive assertion here was the exact truth; and that, in fact, he did not know Ananias to be the high-priest? For, as Dr. Macknight justly observes, "Both the Roman governors and the Jewish princes had, for some time past, been in use to sell the high-priesthood to the best bidder; and sometimes to depose the person in office, that they might have it to sell anew. Wherefore, as Paul was but lately come from Greece, after five years' absence, he may very well be supposed to have been ignorant of Ananias's dignity, notwithstanding he might know him personally. It is alleged, indeed, that by his dress and seat in the council, Paul might have known Ananias to be the high-priest. But that does not seem probable; because, having looked steadfastly on the council at his first coming in, he would, by such an excuse, have exposed, himself to ridicule, if Ananias could have been known to be the high-priest, either by his dress, or by his seat in the council."

Verses 6-8. *But when Paul perceived*—Ἦντες δὲ ὁ Παῦλος, *Paul knowing*, in consequence of his being personally acquainted with many whom he saw sitting round; *that one part of the council were Pharisees, and the other Sadducees, cried out, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee*—I am such both by birth and education, as also by my own free choice, having voluntarily attached myself to that sect: *of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question*—Meaning, that he was brought before them as a criminal for preaching the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, as a proof of the resurrection of all the dead at the last day. Certainly this was a principal part (though not the whole) of the truth, since the chief thing which enraged

dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.

8 ^h For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes *that were* of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, ⁱ saying, ^j We find no evil in this man: but ^k if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, ^l let us not fight against God.

^h Matthew xxii. 23; Mark xii. 18; Luke xx. 27.—ⁱ Chapter xxv. 25; xxvi. 31.—^k Chapter xxvii. 7, 17, 18.—^l Chapter v. 39.

the Sadducees against Christianity, was the demonstration it gave to the doctrine of a resurrection, which they so eagerly opposed. *When he had so said, there arose a dissension*—A disagreement and contention producing a separation between the Pharisees and Sadducees, several persons of each sect becoming warm in the debate. *For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection*—Of the dead. See on Matt. xxii. 23. *Neither angel nor separate spirit*—It seems strange that the Sadducees should deny that there were angels, considering that they acknowledged the authority of the five books of Moses, in which mention is frequently made of angels; but it seems they either understood the passages that speak of angels, in those books, allegorically, or, as Dr. Whitby observes, supposed that when they are said to appear, they were framed at that particular time for that purpose, and afterward ceased to have any being: so that, after the giving of the law, at least, no angel existed. And with regard to their denying the existence of spirits, the meaning probably is, not that they denied God to be a spirit, or that there was any spirit in man, but, as Josephus testifies, they denied, τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν διαμονὴν, *the permanency of the soul after death*, or, that any spirits existed in a state of separation from men's bodies. *But the Pharisees confess both*—Both the resurrection and the existence of angels and separate spirits.

Verse 9. *And there arose a great cry*—A great clamour and quarrel, so that the edge of their zeal began to turn from Paul against one another. Nor could they go on to act against him, when they could not agree among themselves, or prosecute him for breaking the unity of the church, when there was among them so little of the unity of the Spirit. All the cry had been against Paul: but now there arose a great cry against one another; and so much did a fierce, furious spirit prevail among all orders of the Jews at this time, that every thing was done, even respecting religion, with clamour, tumult, and noise. *And the scribes of the Pharisees' part arose and strove*—In the prisoner's defence. Every sect contains both learned and unlearned: the former of which are usually the mouth of the party; *saying, We find no evil in this man*

A. M. 4064. 10 ¶ And when there arose a great
A. D. 60. dissension, the chief captain, fearing
lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of
them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and
to take him by force from among them, and to
bring him into the castle.

11 And ^a the night following the Lord stood
by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul:
for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusa-

^a Chap. xviii. 9; xxvii. 23, 24.—^a Verses 21, 30; Chap. xxv. 3.

—And can see no reason for his being condemned
or detained; *but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken
unto him*—In the manner he represents, *let us ac-
quiesce*, and wait the event, and *not fight against
God*—Which must end in our ruin. They allude to
what Paul had affirmed in his speech from the
stairs, that Jesus, whom they knew to have been
dead, was alive, and had appeared and spoken unto
him in his way to Damascus, and again in a vision.
This they interpret of an angel or spirit appearing
to him; not allowing that the person whom they
had crucified was really risen from the dead.

Verses 10, 11. *And when there arose a great dis-
sension*—Some of them urging that he ought to be
set at liberty, while others eagerly insisted on his
condemnation; *the chief captain, fearing*—On be-
ing informed of their disorderly proceedings; *lest
he should be pulled in pieces of them*—Amidst the
tumult; *commanded a party of soldiers to go down*—
From the garrison; *to take him by force from among
them*—Out of that apartment in the temple where
he had ordered them to meet; *and to bring him
into the castle Antonia*—“What must this heathen
have thought of the worshippers of JEHOVAH, when
he saw this assembly of chief priests, learned scribes,
and rulers of Israel, forgetful of what became their
rank, profession, and sacred character; and carried
away by such unbridled rage, in their religious con-
tests, as the Roman senators and magistrates, or
principal persons, would have been ashamed of, even
in their eager competition for authority and pre-
eminence?”—Scott. *And the night following the
Lord stood by him*—Appeared to him in a vision;
And said, Be of good cheer, Paul—As he laboured
under singular distresses and persecutions, so he
was favoured with extraordinary assurances of the
divine assistance. *For as thou hast testified of me
in Jerusalem*—And all the malice of the Jews has
not prevented thee from faithfully discharging thy
commission; *so must thou bear witness also at
Rome*—Thus God now, in due time, confirms what
Paul had before purposed in spirit, chap. xix. 21.
Another declaration to the same effect is made by
an angel of God, chap. xxvii. 23; particular pro-
mises being usually given when all things appear
dark and desperate. For difficulties and dangers
are nothing in the eyes of God; all hindrances only
further his work; and a promise of what is afar off,
implies all that necessarily lies between. Paul shall
testify at Rome; therefore he shall come to Rome;

lem, so must thou bear witness also A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60.
at Rome.

12 ¶ And when it was day, ^a certain of the
Jews banded together, and bound them-
selves ¹ under a curse, saying that they would
neither eat nor drink till they had killed
Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which had
made this conspiracy.

¹ Or, with an oath of execration.

therefore he shall escape the Jews, the sea, and the
viper. He shall be brought safe through all inter-
vening obstacles, dangers, and distresses, that he
may bear testimony to the Romans. How would the
defenders of Peter's supremacy triumph, could they
find but half as much ascribed to him!

Verses 12, 13. *And when it was day, certain of
the Jews*—Being exceedingly provoked that Paul
had been thus rescued from the council; *bound
themselves under a curse*—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, as Dr. Lightfoot has
shown from the Talmud, to obtain absolution from
their rabbis; *saying*—Vowing; *That they would
neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul*—Im-
precating the heaviest curses upon themselves, their
souls, bodies, and families, if they did not kill him,
and so speedily, that they would not eat or drink
till they had done it. What a complication of wick-
edness is here! To design to kill an innocent man,
a good and useful man, a man that had done them
no harm, but was willing and desirous to do them
all the good he could, was going in the way of Cain
most manifestly, and showed them to be of their
father the devil, who was a murderer from the be-
ginning. Yet, as if this had been a small matter, 1st,
They bound themselves to it in a most awful man-
ner. To incline to do evil is bad, and to intend and
purpose to do it is worse; but to engage to do it, es-
pecially in such a manner as these Jews here did, is
worst of all. It is entering into covenant with the
devil; it is swearing allegiance to the prince of
darkness; it is bidding defiance to a holy and just
God. 2d, They bound one another to it, even more
than forty of them, and thus did all they could, not
only to secure the damnation of their own souls, but
of the souls of all them whom they drew into the
association. 3d, They showed a great contempt of
the providence of God, and a presumption upon it,
in that they bound themselves to do a thing, and
that so dreadfully wicked, within so short a space of
time as they could continue fasting; without any
proviso or reserve for the disposal of an overruling
providence; without saying, or thinking, “If the
Lord will.” But, indeed, with what face could they
insert a proviso for the permission of God's provi-
dence, when they knew what they were about to do
was directly contrary to the prohibitions of his word?
4th, They showed a great contempt of their own

A. M. 4064. 14 And they came to the chief
A. D. 60. priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain, that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he ^a went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain; for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and

^a 2 Sam. xvii. 17.

souls and bodies; of their souls, in imprecating a curse upon them if they did not proceed in this desperate enterprise; thus throwing themselves upon a most woful dilemma! for God certainly meets them with his curse if they proceed in their design, and they desire he would if they do not! and of their own bodies too, (for wilful sinners are the destroyers of both,) in tying themselves up from the necessary supports of life till they had accomplished a thing, which they could never lawfully, and perhaps not possibly, accomplish.

Verses 14, 15. *And they came to the chief priests and elders*—Who were of the sect of the Sadducees, and Paul's greatest enemies, telling them what they had done; and desiring them to ask *the chief captain* to bring Paul down to the council on the morrow, as if they wished to inquire something more perfectly concerning him, and we, (said they,) or ever he come near, are ready to kill him—And we will manage the attack in such a manner, that you shall not appear at all concerned in it; nor have any alarm about the matter, till you hear that he is actually dead. Josephus mentions a case not much unlike this, of some that bound themselves with an oath to kill Herod; in which they gloried as a laudable intention, because he had violated the ancient customs of their nation. It is no wonder, therefore, that these Jews should make no scruple of acquainting the chief priests and elders with their conspiracy against the life of Paul; who, indeed, were so far from blaming them for it, that not long after they

83)

asked *him*, What is that thou hast to **A. M. 4064.**
A. D. 60. tell me?

20 And he said, ° The Jews have agreed to desire thee, that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat *nor drink* till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain *then* let the young man depart, and charged *him*, See thou tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me.

23 ¶ And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night;

24 And provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the governor.

° Verse 12.

renewed the same design themselves. See chap. xxv. 2, 3.

Verses 16–22. *When Paul's sister's son heard, &c.*—How privately soever this business was contrived, the providence of God so ordered it, that, for the deliverance of his faithful servant from this inhuman and bloody conspiracy, it came to the ears of Paul's nephew; who *went and entered into the castle*—Where, as has been before observed, Paul now lay confined; and *told him* the whole matter. *Then Paul called one of the centurions*—Who commanded part of the cohort under the tribune; and *said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain*—Thus we see that Paul, though he had an express promise of it from Christ, did not neglect any proper means of safety. *The chief captain took him by the hand*—In a mild, condescending way; and *went aside privately*—Where none could overhear them speaking; and *asked what he had to tell him*—Lysias seems to have conducted this whole affair with great integrity, humanity, and prudence. So *the chief captain*—Having received the information which the young man had to give; *let him depart*, charging *him* to tell no man what things they were that he had communicated.

Verses 23–30. *And he called two centurions*—In whom he could particularly confide; *saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers*—Thus the chief captain prudently sends Paul away to Cesarea by night, under a strong guard, to the governor Felix. *Provide them beasts*—If a change should be necessary; to

a

A. M. 4064. 25 And he wrote a letter after this
A. D. 60. manner :

26 Claudius Lysias, unto the most excellent governor Felix, *sendeth* greeting.

27 ^p This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them : then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman.

28 ^a And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council ;

29 Whom I perceived to be accused ^r of questions of their law, ^s but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death, or of bonds.

30 And ^t when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and ^u gave commandment to his accu-

^p Chap. xxi. 33 ; xxiv. 7.—^q Chap. xxiii. 30.—^r Chap. xviii. 15 ; xxv. 19.—^s Chap. xxvi. 31.—^t Verse 20.

set Paul on—So we read of his riding once, but not by choice. *And he wrote a letter, &c.*—To Felix on the occasion ; which may be considered as a specimen of the Roman method of writing letters, and is certainly a model of brevity, simplicity, and perspicuity. *This man was taken of the Jews*—Was seized by a multitude of them, who made a sudden insurrection on his account. *Then came I with an army*—With a party of soldiers, and rescued him from their furious assault ; *having understood that he was a Roman*—True ; but not before he rescued him. He here uses art.

sers also, to say before thee what *they* A. M. 4064
had against him. Farewell. A. D. 60.

31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought *him* by night to Antipatris.

32 On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle :

33 Who, when they came to Cesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.

34 And when the governor had read *the letter*, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that *he was* of ^x Cilicia ;

35 ^y I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in ^z Herod's judgment-hall.

^a Chap. xxi. 8 ; xxv. 6.—^x Chap. xxi. 39.—^y Chap. xxiv. 1, 10 ; xxv. 16.—^z Matt. xxvii. 27.

Verses 31–35. *Then 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 north-west 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, about thirty from Antipatris. *He commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall—Or pretorium.* This was a palace and a court, built by Herod the Great, when he rebuilt and beautified Cesarea. Probably some tower belonging to it might be used as a kind of state prison.

CHAPTER XXIV.

(1.) *The high-priest and elders, with Tertullus their orator, come to Cesarea, and accuse Paul before Felix of sedition, heresy, and profanation of the temple, 1–9. (2.) Paul clears himself of their charges, and defends his behaviour and doctrine, 10–21. (3.) Felix defers the decision, and gives Paul more liberty than before, 22, 23 ; trembles at his discourse concerning Christ, righteousness, temperance, and the future judgment, 24, 25 ; but, receiving no bribe for his freedom, leaves him a prisoner to please the Jews, 26, 27.*

A. M. 4064. AND after ^a five days, ^b Ananias the
A. D. 60. high-priest descended with the elders, and *with* a certain orator *named* Tertullus,

^a Chap. xxi. 27.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIV.

Verse 1. *After five days, Ananias*—Who would spare no trouble on the occasion ; *descended*—To Cesarea, seventy miles from Jerusalem ; *with several of the elders*—Members of the sanhedrim. It seems the commander of the horsemen, who brought Paul to Cesarea, was ordered, on his return, to inform the high-priest and elders at Jerusalem of the day which the governor should fix for hearing their accusation, and for trying the prisoner. *With a certain orator*

who informed the governor against A. M. 4064.
Paul. A. D. 60.

2 And when he was called forth, Tertullus

^b Chap. xxiii. 2, 30, 35 ; xxv. 2.

named Tertullus—Whose business it was to open the cause, and to harangue the governor in the most agreeable manner that he could ; *who*—That is, all who, as the word *oriver* implies, not referring to Tertullus only, but to the high-priest and elders also ; *informed the governor against Paul*—Advanced a general accusation against him, on which they desired to be more particularly heard.

Verses 2, 3. *And when he*—Paul ; *was called forth*—To hear the charge preferred against him, and

A. M. 4064. began to accuse *him*, saying, Seeing
A. D. 60. that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence,

3 We accept *it* always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words.

5 ° For we have found this man *a pestilent fellow*, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes :

• Luke xxiii. 2; Chap. vi. 13; xvi. 20; xvii. 6; xxi. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 12, 15.

make his defence; *Tertullus began to accuse him*—In an oration, almost every word of which was false; the accusation of Paul; the encomium on the government of Felix; and the declaration of a lawful intention in what they had done and attempted. *Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness*—Thus this orator, to induce the governor to give countenance to their cause, and to punish Paul as the disturber of the public peace, compliments him on the wisdom and vigour of his administration; but in so doing he is guilty of using the most barefaced flattery; for although Felix had repressed the Sicarii, and other robbers, he was himself a great oppressor of the nation, by the cruelty and injustice of his administration, all historians agreeing, that he was a man of so bad a character, that his government was a plague to all the provinces over which he presided. And as for Judea, its state under him was so far from being what Tertullus here represents, that Josephus (besides what he says of the barbarous and cowardly assassination of Jonathan the high-priest by his means) declares, that the Jews accused him before Nero of insufferable oppressions, and had certainly ruined him if his brother Pallas had not interposed in his favour. (*Antiq.*, xx. 8.) *And that very worthy deeds*—Greek, *κατορθωμάτων γνωμύων*, *illustrious deeds*; *are done unto this nation*—The whole Jewish nation; *by thy providence*—The continual care and vigilance of thy prudent administration. See here, reader; 1st, The unhappiness of great men who have their services magnified beyond measure, and are seldom or never faithfully told of their faults; in consequence of which they are encouraged and hardened in evil. 2d, The policy of bad men; who flatter princes in what they do amiss, to draw them in to act still worse. The bishops of Rome obtained their exorbitant power, and have been assisted in persecuting the servants of Christ, by flattering and caressing usurpers and tyrants, and making them such tools of their malice, as the high-priest, by his compliments, designed to make Felix here! *We accept it always, and in all places*—Everywhere and at all times we embrace it; *most noble Felix, with all thankfulness*—If it had been true,

6 ° Who also hath gone about to A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60. profane the temple: whom we took, and would ° have judged according to our law :

7 ° But the chief captain Lysias came *upon us*, and with great violence took *him* away out of our hands,

8 ° Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom, thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things *whereof we* accuse him.

9 And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.

• Chapter xxi. 28.—° John xviii. 31.—† Chapter xxi. 33.
• Chap. xxiii. 30.

that Felix was such a governor, it would have been just that they should have thus accepted his good offices, with all thankfulness. The benefits which we enjoy by government, especially when administered by wise and good governors, is what we ought to be thankful for both to God and man; this is part of the honour due to magistrates, to acknowledge the quietness we enjoy under their protection, and the worthy deeds done by their prudence.

Verses 4–9. *Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious*—*ἵνα δε μη ἐπι πλεῖον σε ἐγκοπτῶ*, that I may not trouble thee any further, 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? *I pray that thou wouldest hear*—What we have to offer; *of thy clemency*—With thy usual candour and well-known goodness. *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow*—Or rather, *a pestilence, or plague*, as *ζοιμός* signifies; a man infecting others with pernicious principles, and spreading mischief wherever he comes; *and a mover of sedition among all the Jews*—Rendering them disaffected to the government, and exciting them to rise in rebellion against it; *and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes*—A term of reproach, which, it seems, was given to the disciples of Christ even at that early period. *Who also hath gone about to profane the temple*—By bringing heathen into it. “Tertullus artfully mentions this, as the most express fact he had to charge upon him, as he knew that the Romans allowed the Jews a power of executing, even without forms of law, any person who should be found in such an act of profanation; and he seems to have intended to make a merit of their moderation, that they intended, nevertheless, fairly to have tried him, and not to have destroyed him on the spot, as Lysias had justly charged them with attempting to do. And it is observable, that Tertullus nowhere expressly avows so much as a design to have put Paul to death, though it was undoubtedly intended.”—Doddridge. Thus, after a fawning preface, Tertullus prefers charges against Paul, for which there was not the shadow of

A. M. 4064. 10 ¶ Then Paul, after that the A. D. 60. *governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

11 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem ^h for to worship.

12 ⁱ And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

* A. D. 53, Felix made procurator over Judea.—^h Verse 17; Chap. xxi. 26.—ⁱ Chap. xxv. 8; xxviii. 17.—^k Amos viii. 14; Chap. ix. 2.

a foundation, except that he was a leading person among the Nazarenes, or Christians. For that he had moved the Jews to sedition against the government, or that he went about to profane the temple, was utterly false; (see chap. xxi. 28;) and so it was also, that they took him to judge him according to their law; for they took him by violence, and drew him out of the temple, and went about to kill him without any judicial process. In short, the whole accusation, together with the circumstances by which the orator aggravated it, were all mere fictions, of which he offered no proof whatever, only that (verse 9) the Jews—Namely, the high-priest and the elders; assented, saying that these things were so.

Verses 10–13. Then Paul—Having heard with patient silence all the false charges preferred against him, after the governor had given him a sign to speak, answered in a speech widely different from that of Tertullus, true, modest, solid, and unaffected; forasmuch as I know, &c.—Paul would not introduce his speech by flattering Felix with notorious untruths, as the Jewish orator had done, or by paying him any fulsome compliment; yet he addresses him very respectfully, and with such a degree of ease and freedom as manifested his confidence that the governor would do him justice; that thou hast been of many (of several) years a judge of this nation—And so not unacquainted with our religious rites and customs, or with the affairs of the Christians, and temper of the Jews, my accusers, 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 had governed Judea six or seven years; I do the more cheerfully answer for myself—And 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 but twelve days since he went up thither, five of which he had been at Cesarea, one or two were spent in his journey thither, and most of the rest he had been confined at Jerusalem;) and he challenges them to produce, in fact, any evi-

13 Neither can they prove the things A. M. 4064. whereof they now accuse me. A. D. 60.

14 But this I confess unto thee, that after ^k the way which they call heresy, so worship I the ^l God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in ^m the law and in the prophets:

15 And ⁿ have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, ^o that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And ^p herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of ^q offence toward God, and toward men.

^l 2 Tim. i. 3.—^m Chap. xxvi. 22; xxviii. 23.—ⁿ Chap. xxiii. 6; xxvi. 6, 7; xxviii. 20.—^o Daniel xii. 2; John v. 28, 29. ^p Chap. xxiii. 1.

dence of such practices, verses 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, verses 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.

Verses 14–16. But—As to what they have alleged against me with regard to the Nazarenes; this I confess unto thee—And am not ashamed publicly to avow it in the presence of the greatest personages upon earth; that after the way which they call aiseow, a sect; (so the same word is properly rendered, verse 5;) so worship I the God of my fathers—And am authorized by our sacred writings so to do; believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets—On which every part of the religion which I profess is founded, and which I should not either understand or believe if I worshipped or served the God of my fathers any other way, or did not believe in and receive Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, to whom both the law and the prophets bear witness. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow—All the Pharisees allowed it; that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust—In a public court, this was peculiarly proper to be observed. The pious Jews expected a resurrection, as Paul did, on the foundation of the promises of God, delivered by Moses and the prophets. This was a very proper defence before a Roman magistrate, who, by the laws of the empire, was bound to allow every man to worship God according to the religion of his country. And herein—Ev *terro*, on this account, because I believe all things written in the law and the prophets, and expect a future resurrection and an eternal state; I exercise myself—And make it the continual care and study of my life; to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man—That so, whatever accusations are brought against me, my own heart may not condemn me.

A. M. 4064. 17 Now, after many years, ⁹ I came
A. D. 60. to bring alms to my nation, and offer-
ings.

18 [†] Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found
me purified in the temple, neither with multi-
tude, nor with tumult :

19 [°] Who ought to have been here before thee,
and object, if they had aught against me.

20 Or else let these same *here* say, if they
have found any evil-doing in me, while I stood
before the council,

21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried,

⁹ Ch. xi. 29, 30 ; xx. 16 ; Rom. xv. 25 ; 2 Cor. viii. 4 ; Gal.
ii. 10. — [†] Chap. xxi. 26, 27 ; xxvi. 21.

but I may always find internal support amidst all
the external injuries I may receive from mankind.

Verses 17-21. *Now after many years, &c.*—They have represented me as a profane and lawless person, as if I had thrown contempt upon religion, and done them a great deal of wrong ; but so far have I been from doing any thing to injure the Jews, to whom by birth I belong, or from attempting to profane the temple, as these my enemies falsely pretend, that I have given many public and important proofs of my particular regard for the good of my country, and of the veneration that I have for all that is sacred. Accordingly, *after several years*—Which I had spent in other parts ; *I came to bring alms* to the poor of *my nation*—Which I had been collecting for them in the Gentile provinces where I had any interest ; *and offerings*—To God, which I proposed to make by assisting some Nazarites to discharge their vow, according to the law ; *whereupon*—At the very time when I was thus employed ; *certain Jews from Asia*—Who raised the first outcry against me ; *found me purified in the temple*—That is, performing such things as the law required, and in which the legal purification of Nazarites consisted ; *neither with multitude*—Attending me ; *nor with tumult*—Made by me ; the multitude being of their own gathering together, and the tumult, if any, being made by themselves. So that there was no colour for the charge brought against him, but evidence sufficient against it. And it was very unreasonable and hard, 1st, To accuse him as an enemy to their nation, when, after long absence from Jerusalem, he came to bring alms to it, money which he had collected among his friends for the relief of the poor at Jerusalem ; and, 2d, To accuse him of having profaned the temple, when he brought offerings to the temple, and was found purifying himself therein, according to the law, and that in a very quiet and orderly manner. And as to what was, perhaps, suggested to Felix, that he had brought Greeks into the temple contrary to their law, he challenges them to prove it. Those Jews of Asia, says he, who were the causes of all the tumult, confusion, and violent proceedings, *ought to have been here before thee*—As being the only proper witnesses of the facts, if

standing among them, [†] Touching the ^{A. M. 4064.}
resurrection of the dead I am called in ^{A. D. 60.}
question by you this day.

22 [¶] And when Felix heard these things,
having more perfect knowledge of *that way*, he
deferred them, and said, When [°] Lysias the
chief captain shall come down, I will know the
utmost of your matter.

23 And he commanded a centurion to keep
Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and [‡] *that*
he should forbid none of his acquaintance to
minister, or come unto him.

[¶] Chap. xxiii. 30 ; xxv. 16. — [†] Chap. xviii. 6 ; xxviii. 20.
[°] Verse 7. — [‡] Chap. xxvii. 3 ; xxviii. 16.

there were any which could justify their laying violent hands upon me. These, however, were now absent, probably because they knew they could not make good their charge against him, and were conscious of having injured him by their accusation ; and doubtless Felix so understood it. As for the other Jews, they could only testify on the report of others, or give hear-say evidence, which could not be sufficient in any cause or court. *Or else let these same here say*—Paul is willing to allow the validity of the testimony of the Jews present, about such things as they themselves had been eye or ear witnesses of, namely, of what had passed in the council when Paul was brought before it ; *if they have found any evil-doing in me*—Any crime committed by me, or any thing done or said, for which I merit punishment. *Except it be for this one voice*—As if he had said, Let them object, if they can, any other fault ; *that I cried, standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question*—Which, nevertheless, was the real truth. And, if my affirming it be a fault for which I must suffer, I acknowledge it, and there needs no other proof. But as that was one of the great articles of the national faith, he could not be blamed, either for maintaining it, or for asserting that God had given a proof of it, in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Verses 22, 23. *When Felix heard these things*—Namely, the orator's accusation and the prisoner's defence ; *having more perfect knowledge of that way*—*ἄκριβεστερον εἶδως τὰ περὶ τῆς οἴου*, *having known more perfectly the things concerning the way*, namely, the way of worship, mentioned by Paul, (verse 14,) or a more perfect knowledge of Jesus and his disciples than had been given him by the high-priest, the elders, and their orator ; and knowing it not to be so mischievous a thing as these accusers suggested ; *he deferred them*—This seems to be that interpretation of the clause which best accords with the original. Beza, Grotius, and many others, however, take the meaning of the clause to be, that Felix “ would take an opportunity of being more particularly informed of this sect, and of its aspect on the public tranquillity ; and that when Lysias should come down and give him an account of what he had observed con-

A. M. 4064. 24 ¶ And after certain days, when
A. D. 60. Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

cerning it, as well as of the circumstances attending Paul's apprehension, &c., he would determine the affair." "But it seems to me evident," says Dr. Whitby, "that the original words cannot admit of this explication, namely, that Felix deferred them that he might have a more exact knowledge of Christianity; but that, having his residence at Cesarea, where Cornelius the centurion and his friends were converted, where Philip the evangelist dwelt, and where there were many disciples, (chap. xxi. 8, 16,) he had thus become acquainted with the way of Christianity." But though Felix did not find any crime proved against Paul, yet he did not acquit him, because he was afraid of displeasing the Jews. Being, however, fully convinced (as it is evident he was) of his innocence, he ordered that he should not be confined too closely; but that his acquaintance should be allowed to visit him, or minister unto him; a liberty which we may be sure the brethren of Cesarea made good use of during his long imprisonment in that city.

Verses 24, 25. *After certain days*—After Paul had been kept a few days in this gentle confinement at Cesarea, Felix, who had been absent a short time, came thither again; *with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess*—We learn from Josephus, that she was the daughter of Herod Agrippa, and the sister of that Agrippa who is mentioned chap. xxv. 13. She had been married to Azizus, king of Emessa; but Felix, struck with her great beauty, by means of a wicked Jew, named Simon, who professed himself a magician, persuaded her to abandon her husband and marry him; which she did, though Azizus had but a little before submitted to circumcision, and so embraced Judaism, as the condition required in order to his marrying her. It appears from Josephus, (*Antiq.*, lib. xx. cap. 7,) that she was afterward, with a son she had by Felix, consumed in a terrible eruption of mount Vesuvius. *He sent for Paul, &c.*—Doubtless, Paul's trial had occasioned much discourse in Cesarea, and this, it seems, had excited a desire in Drusilla to see and hear that extraordinary man; and, to gratify her curiosity as well as his own, and to learn from Paul's own mouth what were the principles of his religion, Felix sent for him; *and heard him concerning the faith in Christ*—That is, heard him declare what the Christians believed concerning Jesus; namely, that he was the Christ, or Messiah, long expected by the Jews; and that he was proved to be the Christ, by God's raising him from the dead. Moreover, being well acquainted with the character and actions of his illustrious hearers, the apostle introduced other articles of the Christian religion, well suited to their particular case; *he reasoned of righteousness*—That is, chiefly of justice and mercy toward men; virtues peculiarly necessary in a ruler; *of temperance*—Of sobriety, continence, chastity, against which Felix

25 And as he reasoned of righteous- A. M. 4064.
ness, temperance, and judgment to A. D. 60.
come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

and his lady had greatly trespassed in their marriage; *and of a judgment to come*—At which the highest personages should appear, and stand upon equal terms with others, before that righteous tribunal; and at which the great and small should answer to God for their actions; the only effectual way this of preaching Christ to an unjust and lewd judge, such as Felix was. For of him the Roman historian, Tacitus, relates, "Per omnem severitatem et libidinem jus regium servili ingenio exercuit," *he practised all cruelty and lust in his government*; and from what is said above, it appears that Drusilla, though a Jewess, was not less wicked, transgressing, as Josephus observes, *τα πατρια νομιμα, the laws of her country*, namely, in marrying a heathen; and the laws of God, in forsaking her own husband and living in adultery with Felix. To persons so unjust, lewd, and otherwise wicked, Paul very properly discoursed on the virtues here mentioned, against which they had both so highly offended; for he knew that it would be to little purpose to address them on other subjects of Christianity, such as those of redemption and salvation through Christ, till they forsook these sins. And it was with equal propriety that he discoursed of a *judgment to come*, where Felix could not hope to escape unpunished, as here he did. And it is no wonder that *Felix trembled*, or *was terrified*, as *εμφοδος γενομενος* signifies. How happy would it have been for him had he yielded to the convictions now produced in his conscience, and been careful to pursue the views 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 trembled and was terrified no more. Nor did he forsake his bad practices, but continued in them as long as his government lasted. In the mean time, we do not find that Drusilla, though a Jewess, was thus alarmed. She had been used to hear of a future judgment; perhaps, too, she trusted to being a daughter of Abraham, or to the expiations 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 dependances 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! *When I have a convenient season*—Or, *I will take some future opportunity*, as Dr. Doddridge renders *καιρον μεταλαβων*; *to call for thee*. "He thought it did not become the dignity of a judge on the bench to receive even such oblique

A. M. 4064. 26 ¶ He hoped also that money
A. D. 60. should have been given him of Paul,
that he might loose him : wherefore he sent for
him the oftener, and communed with him.

† Exod. xxiii. 8.

admonitions and reproofs from a prisoner, and therefore might really intend to give him a fuller audience in private. Paul must, no doubt, discern those marks of confusion that would be so apparent in his countenance, which would give him some hopes of succeeding in this important attempt for such a conversion, and, consequently, would give him spirit when he resumed the discourse. This must naturally increase in Felix a conviction of his innocence, and esteem for his virtues; yet, in spite of all, he was so far from reforming his life in general, that he would not do justice to Paul; however, the conviction might perhaps prevail so far, as to engage him to persist in his resolution of not delivering him to the Jews. How affecting an instance and illustration of the treachery of the human heart!"

Verses 26, 27. *He hoped also*—A vain and evil hope! So, when he heard, his eye was not single; no marvel then that he profited nothing by all Paul's discourses; *that money would be given him by Paul*—Or 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. *But after two years*—After Paul had been two years a prisoner at Cesarea; *Porcius Festus came into Felix's room*—Succeeded him in the government of that province; *and Felix*—Knowing that he had, by his op-

27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix's room : and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

* Exod. xxiii. 2; Chap. xii. 3; xxv. 9, 14.

pressive administration, furnished the Jews with abundant matter of accusation against him; *to show them a pleasure*—That is, to ingratiate himself with them, and prevent them from pursuing him with their complaints; *left Paul bound*—Though he was, in his own conscience, not only persuaded of his innocence, but of the worth of his character. Thus the 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 would have utterly ruined him, had not the interest of his brother Pallas prevailed to have obtained his pardon from Nero. "How much more effectually would he have consulted the peace of his own mind, and, on the whole, his temporal interest, and cultivated those serious impressions which were once so strongly made upon his conscience. It was during the two years of Paul's imprisonment here, that those contentions arose between the Jews and Gentiles, as to their respective rites in Cesarea, which, after many tumults and slaughters of the Jews, were inflamed rather than appeased by the hearing at Rome, and did a great deal toward exasperating the Jewish nation to that war which ended in its utter ruin."—Doddridge.

CHAPTER XXV.

(1.) Paul is again accused by the Jews, before Festus the new governor, 1-7. (2.) He vindicates himself; and, to prevent the removing the cause to Jerusalem, appeals to Nero, the Roman emperor, 8-12. (3.) Festus relates the case to King Agrippa, who desires to hear Paul's own account of it, 13-23. (4.) Festus presents Paul before Agrippa, Bernice, &c., and represents him as one who had done nothing worthy of death or bonds, and leaves him to answer for himself, 23-27.

A. M. 4066. NOW when Festus was come into
A. D. 62. the province, after three days he
ascended from Cesarea to Jerusalem.

2 * Then the high-priest and the chief of the

* Chap. xxiv. 1; Verse 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXV.

Verses 1-3. *When Festus was come into the province*—And had taken possession of the government; *after three days he ascended from Cesarea*—The usual residence of the Roman governors; *to Jerusalem*—The capital city; probably, both that he might gratify his curiosity in the sight of so celebrated a place, and also that he might there, as at the fountain-head, inform himself of the present state of their public affairs. *Then the high-priest,*

Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,

3 And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, b lay-

b Chap. xxiii. 12, 15.

&c., informed him against Paul—In so long a time their rage was nothing cooled: so much louder a call had Paul to the Gentiles. *And besought him*—That he would not (as, it is probable, they pretended Lysias and Felix had done) obstruct the course of public justice against one whom they knew to be so notorious an offender; *and desired favour against him*—Requested of him, as a peculiar favour; *that he would send for him to Jerusalem*—To be judged there; *laying wait, &c.*—Secretly purposing to lay

A. M. 4066. ing wait in the way to kill him.
A. D. 62.

4 But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*.

5 Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, ° if there be any wickedness in him.

6 And when he had tarried among them 1 more than ten days, he went down unto Cesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment-seat, commanded Paul to be brought.

7 And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, 4 and laid many and grievous complaints

° Chap. xviii. 14; Verse 18.—1 Or, as some copies read, no more than eight or ten days.—4 Mark xv. 3; Luke xxiii. 2, 10;

an ambush of desperate wretches for him, who they knew would readily undertake to intercept and *kill him by the way*. "The high-priests, about this time, were, according to the account Josephus gives of them, such monsters of rapine, tyranny, and cruelty, that it is not to be wondered such a design should have been favoured by him who now bore the office. Josephus also mentions a great number of assassins at this time, called *sicarii*, or *poniarders*, from the weapons they carried, by whom many innocent persons were murdered."

Verses 4, 5. *But Festus*—Knowing their design; answered, that Paul should be kept at Cesarea—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! Nevertheless, Festus was willing to do them the justice of hearing what they had to say against Paul, if they would go down with him to Cesarea, and appear against him there. *Let them, said he, which among you are able*—Who are best able to undertake the journey, and to manage the cause; *go down with me, and accuse this man*—In my hearing: or, let those go and give in their evidence that are competent witnesses, and are able to prove any thing criminal upon him; *if there be any wickedness in him*—For which he ought to be punished according to the Roman laws. So he does not pass sentence before he hears the cause, nor take it for granted that there was wickedness in him till it should be proved upon him, and he had been heard in his own defence.

Verses 6-8. *And when he had tarried there more than ten days*—A short time for a new governor to stay at such a city as Jerusalem; *he went down to Cesarea*—As he had said, several of the Jews attending him, as being determined to lose no time, but to prosecute the affair in the most strenuous manner they possibly could; *and the next day sitting in the judgment-seat*—As the governor used to do, when any cause of consequence was brought before him; *commanded Paul to be brought*—And

against Paul, which they could not A. M. 4066.
prove; A. D. 62.

8 ¶ While he answered for himself, ° Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cesar, have I offended any thing at all.

9 But Festus, 1 willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, 2 Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

10 Then said Paul, I stand at Cesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

Chapter xxiv. 5, 13.—° Chapter vi. 13; xxiv. 12; xxviii. 17.
1 Chap. xxiv. 27.—2 Verse 20.

make his appearance. *And the Jews, standing round about*—An expression which intimates that there were many of them; *laid many and grievous complaints against Paul*—Doubtless like those which Tertullus had formerly advanced before Felix; *which they could not prove*—By proper witnesses. When many accusations against any one are heaped, frequently not one of them is true; *While he answered, Neither against the law of the Jews, &c.*—I openly deny their charge in every branch of it, and challenge them to make it out by proper evidence in any instance, or in any degree. To a general charge a general answer was sufficient.

Verses 9-12. *But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure*—To ingratiate himself with them by a popular action, at the beginning of his government; to gratify the prosecutors rather than the prisoner, as far as he could go with safety against one that was a citizen of Rome; *answered Paul, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem and there be judged?*—Festus could have ordered this without asking Paul. But God secretly overruled the whole, that he might have an occasion of appealing to Rome. In suffering times the prudence of the Lord's people is tried as well as their patience. Being sent forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, they have need to be wise as serpents. *Then said Paul*—Apprehensive of the attempt which might be made upon his life in his journey, or in the city itself; *I stand 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; *where*—As a Roman citizen; *I ought to be judged*—And I insist upon my privilege of having my cause decided there; *to the Jews have I done no wrong*—In any respect whatever; *as thou very well knowest*—As thou must have perceived clearly by what has this day been examined before thee. Or, Festus might know that Paul had done the Jews no wrong, from the relation Felix had made unto him, as also from such as were present with Felix when Paul's cause was heard. Thus it very well becomes those that are innocent to plead their innocence, and to insist upon it; it is

A. M. 4066. 11 ^b For if I be an offender, or have
A. D. 62. committed any thing worthy of death,
I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these
things wherof these accuse me, no man may
deliver me unto them. ⁱ I appeal unto Cesar.

12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with
the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto
Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou go.

13 ¶ And after certain days, King Agrippa and
Bernice came unto Cesarea, to salute Festus.

14 And when they had been there many
days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the
king, saying, ^k There is a certain man left in
bonds by Felix:

^a Verse 25; Chap. xviii. 14; xxiii. 29; xxvi. 31.—ⁱ Chap. xxvi.
32; xxviii. 19.

a debt we owe to our own good name, not only not
to bear false witness against ourselves, but to main-
tain our own integrity against those who bear false
witness against us. *For if I be an offender, &c.*—
If I have injured the Jews, and my fault be such as
by law deserves death, I ask no favour; *I refuse
not to die*—But will willingly accept the punishment
of mine iniquity. *But if*—As I know in my own
conscience, and as thou, from the course of this trial,
hast the greatest reason to believe; *there be none of
these things*—That is, that these things, *wherof
they accuse me*—Have had no existence, and that
their accusations proceed from malice, and are
founded on falsehood; *no man may deliver me unto
them*—Nor can, without palpable injustice. He ex-
presses himself modestly, but his meaning is, Thou
canst not deliver me to them; it being a governor's
business, as much to protect the innocent, as to pun-
ish the guilty. *I appeal unto Cesar*—Which any
Roman citizen might do before sentence was passed.
*Then Festus, when he had conferred with the
council*—It was customary for a considerable num-
ber of persons of distinction to attend the Roman
governors into the provinces. These constituted a
kind of council, with whom they frequently advis-
ed; *answered*—Having called in the prisoner; *Hast
thou appealed unto Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou
go*—For how desirous soever I am to oblige the
people of my province, I will never allow myself,
upon any occasion, to violate the privileges of a Ro-
man citizen. Festus, therefore, gave proper orders
for conveying him to Rome as soon as possible, that
he might be there presented before the emperor
himself; and, in the mean time, Paul was remanded
to his confinement, and his accusers returned to
Jerusalem a second time, with the mortification of
not having been able to accomplish their purpose
against him.

Verse 13. *And after certain days, &c.*—We have
here the preparation that was made for another
hearing of Paul before King Agrippa, not in order
to his giving judgment upon him, but in order to his
giving advice concerning him, or rather, only to

15 ^l About whom, when I was at A. M. 4066.
Jerusalem, the chief priests and the ^{A. D. 62.}
elders of the Jews informed *me*, desiring to have
judgment against him.

16 ^m To whom I answered, It is not the man-
ner of the Romans to deliver any man to die,
before that he which is accused have the accu-
sers face to face, and have license to answer
for himself concerning the crime laid against
him.

17 Therefore, when they were come hither,
ⁿ without any delay on the morrow I sat on
the judgment-seat, and commanded the man
to be brought forth;

^k Chapter xxiv. 27.—^l Verses 2, 3.—^m Verses 4, 5.
ⁿ Verse 6.

gratify his curiosity. Christ had said concerning
his disciples, and particularly concerning his apos-
tles, that they should be brought before governors
and kings, and here we find his prediction accom-
plished. The preceding verses inform us of Paul's
being brought before Festus the governor, and the
following of his being brought before Agrippa the
king, for a testimony to both. *King Agrippa and Ber-
nice*—His sister, with whom he lived in a scandalous
familiarity; *came to Cesarea to salute Festus*—To
congratulate him on his arrival in the province.
The prince, here mentioned, was the son of Herod
Agrippa, mentioned chap. xii. 1, (where see the
note,) and grandson of Aristobulus, the son of Herod
the Great. As he was but seventeen years of age
when his father died, the Emperor Claudius did not
think proper to appoint him king of Judea in the
room of his father, but made it a Roman province;
however, on the death of his uncle, Herod Antipas,
(of whom see note on Matt. xiv. 1,) he made him
king of Chalcis, which, after he had governed it four
years, he exchanged for a greater kingdom, and
gave him the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, to
which Nero afterward added part of Galilee, with
several towns in Peræa. Of Bernice's incestuous
commerce with this Agrippa, Juvenal speaks, *Sat.*
vi. verse 155, as well as Josephus, *Antiq.*, lib. xx.
cap. 7. It is certain this lady had first been married
to her own uncle, Herod, king of Chalcis; after
whose death, on the report of her scandalous famili-
arity with her brother Agrippa, she married Pole-
mon, king of Cilicia, whom she soon forsook, though
he had submitted to circumcision to obtain the alli-
ance. This was also the person whom Titus Vespasian
so passionately loved, and whom he would have
made empress, had not the clamours of the Roman
people prevented it.

Verses 14-16. *When they had been there many
days*—Among other subjects of discourse which oc-
curred, *Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king*
—For, as the crime of which he was accused related
wholly to the Jewish religion, in which the king was
very knowing, Festus wished to have his opinion

A. M. 4066. 18 Against whom, when the ac-
A. D. 62. cusers stood up, they brought none
accusation of such things as I supposed :

19 ° But had certain questions against him
of their own superstition, and of one Jesus,
which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be
alive.

20 And because ² I doubted of such manner
of questions, I asked *him* whether he would

° Chap. xviii. 15; xxiii. 29.—² Or, *I was doubtful how*

upon it; and for that purpose began telling him that Felix had left Paul in bonds, and that the chief priests and elders at Jerusalem had applied to him, desiring judgment against him—As upon a previous conviction falsely pretended. *To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans—When a crime is charged upon a person; to deliver any man to be put to death before he who is accused have the accusers—*Openly produced to give their evidence against him; *face to face, and he have also license to answer for himself—*To make his defence; concerning the crime laid against him—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.

Verses 18, 19. *Against whom, when the accusers stood up—*And offered what they had to say; *they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed—*From the general clamour they had made against him, as a seditious and dangerous person, they would have done. He had inferred, from the eagerness of their prosecution, and their urging the matter thus upon the Roman governors, one after another, 1st, That they had something to accuse him of, which was dangerous either to private property or to the public peace. Such were the outcries against the primitive Christians: so loud, so fierce, that the standers by, who judged of them by those outcries, could not but conclude that they were the worst of men; and, indeed, to represent them as such was the design of that clamour, as it was of that against our Saviour. 2d, That they had something to accuse him of that was cognizable in the Roman courts, and of which the governor was properly the judge; as Gallio expected, chap. xviii. 14. Otherwise it was absurd and ridiculous to trouble him with it. *But had certain questions—*Disputable matters; *against him of their own superstition—*Or religion rather; for, as Agrippa was a Jew, and now came to pay a visit of respect to Festus on his arrival at his province, it is improbable that he would use so rude a word as one that properly signified superstition: so that this text affords a further argument that the word *δεισιδαιμονία* will admit a milder interpretation, as has been observed on chap. xvii. 22; *and of one Jesus—*Thus does Festus speak of him to whom every knee shall bow; *which was dead—*Or had been dead; *whom Paul—*Unaccountably; *affirmed to be alive—*Though, at the same

go to Jerusalem, and there be judged A. M. 4066.
of these matters. A. D. 62.

21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the ³ hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cesar.

22 Then ⁴ Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

to inquire hereof.—³ Or, judgment.—⁴ Chap. ix. 15.

time, he acknowledged that he had been crucified at Jerusalem, and expired on the cross. 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 had led thee into the glorious liberty of the children of God!

Verses 20, 21. *And because I doubted of such manner of questions—*Whether they were dangerous to the state and punishable, and whether I was a competent judge of them; *I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem—*I proposed that the cause should be adjourned to the Jewish courts, as best able to take cognizance of an affair of this nature. *But when Paul appealed to Augustus—*Being apprehensive, as I plainly perceived, of some clandestine attempt upon his life; *I commanded him to be kept—*Under confinement as before; *till I might send him to Cesar—*By some convenient opportunity.

Verse 22. *Then Agrippa said, I would also hear the man myself—*That I may learn from his own mouth what it is that he maintains, and on what principles he proceeds. This demand the king made because he was well acquainted with the religious tenets, disputes, and expectations of the Jews, and because many wonderful things had been reported to him concerning Jesus and his disciples, and he had heard of Paul, and knew of what vast concern this question was which Festus made so light of; namely, whether Jesus was alive or not. Many great men think it below them to take cognizance of the matters of religion, except they can hear of them while they sit in judgment with authority, and act in character, like themselves. Agrippa would not, on any account, have gone to a synagogue, or religious meeting, to hear Paul preach, no more than Herod to hear Jesus; and yet they were both glad to have these persons brought before them, but only to satisfy their curiosity. *To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him—*There was a gracious providence in this for the encouragement of Paul, who seemed buried alive in his imprisonment, and deprived of almost all opportunities of doing good. We know not that any of his epistles were written during his confinement at Cesarea. What opportunity he had of doing good to his friends that visited him, or perhaps to a little congregation of them, that might

A. M. 4066. 23 ¶ And on the morrow, when
A. D. 62. Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains and principal men of the city, at Festus's commandment Paul was brought forth.

24 And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man about whom ⁹ all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought ^r not to live any longer.

⁹ Verses 2, 3, 7.—^r Chap. xxii. 23.

assemble to hear him every Lord's day, was but a low and narrow sphere of usefulness: so that he seemed to be thrown by as a broken vessel, in which there was no pleasure; but he has now an opportunity of preaching Christ to a great congregation, and that of great ones. Felix heard him in private concerning the faith in Christ; but Agrippa and Festus agree that he shall be heard in public. And we have reason to think that his sermon, contained in the next chapter, though it might not be so instrumental as some other of his sermons for the conversion of individual persons, yet redounded as much to the honour of Christ and Christianity as any sermon he ever preached.

Verses 23-27. *On the morrow, &c.*—Festus, accordingly, performed his promise to the king; and when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp—Of apparel, attendants, guards, &c.; Greek, *μετα πολλης φαντασιας*, with great show, or splendour. But all this pomp and show was far outshone by the real glory of the poor prisoner at the bar. What was the honour of their fine clothes, compared with his wisdom, grace, and holiness; his courage and constancy in suffering for Christ? His bonds in so

25 But when I found that ^a he had
A. M. 4066. committed nothing worthy of death,
A. D. 62. ^a and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him.

26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and especially before thee, O King Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write.

27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

^a Chap. xxiii. 9, 29; xxvi. 31.—^t Verses 11, 12.

good a cause were more glorious than their chains of gold, and his guards than their equipage. Who would be fond of worldly pomp, that here sees so bad a woman loaded with it, and so good a man loaded with the reverse of it? *And was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, χιλιαρχους, the tribunes, and principal men of the city*—Men of the greatest note and eminence, that is, the chief officers, both military and civil; *at Festus's commandment Paul was brought forth*—Before this splendid audience. *Then Festus said*—Festus, rising up, made an elegant speech to the assembly, in which he declared that at the former trial no crime had been proved against the prisoner; but that as he had appealed to Cesar, he had brought him forth, that, after a second examination, he might have something more certain to write to the emperor concerning the crimes laid to the prisoner's charge. *For, says he, it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner*—Especially so far as Rome; *and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him*—That the matter may be prepared as much as possible, and put in readiness, for the emperor's determination.

CHAPTER XXVI.

In this chapter, after a polite address to King Agrippa, 1-3, (1.) Paul gives an account of his Hebrew extraction, Pharisaical profession, belief of the resurrection of the dead, and his inveterate rage against Christ and his followers, 4-11. (2.) He relates the manner of his conversion, and call to the apostleship among the Gentiles for their salvation, and his preaching Christ afterward, in agreement with the Old Testament predictions, 12-23. (3.) Upon hearing this account, Festus pronounces him mad; but Paul maintains, in a modest appeal to Agrippa, that he speaks the words of truth and soberness, 24-26. (4.) Agrippa is almost persuaded to be a Christian, and, together with Festus, declares Paul innocent, 27-32.

A. M. 4066. THEN Agrippa said unto Paul,
A. D. 62. Thou art permitted to speak for

thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the
A. M. 4066. hand, and answered for himself.
A. D. 62.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVI.

Verses 1-3. *Then Agrippa said unto Paul*—Agrippa was the most honourable person in the assembly, having the title of king bestowed upon him, though otherwise not superior to Festus, as only

having the power of other governors under the emperor. But as Festus had opened the cause, and Agrippa, though not here superior, yet, was senior to Festus, therefore, as the mouth of the court, he intimates to Paul that liberty was given him to

A. M. 4066. 2 I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews :

3 Especially, because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews : wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews,

5 Which knew me from the beginning, (if

^a Chap. xxii. 3 ; xxiii. 6 ; xxiv. 15, 22 ; Phil. iii. 5.—^b Chap. xxiii. 6.—^c Gen. iii. 15 ; xxii. 18 ; xxvi. 4 ; xlix. 10 ; Deut. xviii. 15 ; 2 Sam. vii. 12 ; Psa. cxxxiii. 11 ; Isa. iv. 2 ; vii. 14 ; ix. 6 ; xl. 10 ; Jer. xxiii. 5 ; xxxiii. 14-16 ; Ezra xxxiv. 23 ;

speaking for himself. Then Paul stretched forth the 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 accusation of the Jews, but enlarging upon the faith of the gospel. I think myself happy—I consider it as no small advantage to me and my cause; King Agrippa—There is a peculiar force in thus addressing a person by name: Agrippa felt this; because I shall answer for myself before thee—Though Agrippa was not sitting as judge in this place, yet his opinion and judgment could not but have much influence with Festus. Especially because I know thee to be expert, &c.—Γνωσθη οντα σε, to be knowing, or skilled, which Festus was not; in all 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, here repeats and explains it. Agrippa 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.

Verses 4-7. My manner of life from my youth, which was at first—Την απ' αρχης, which from the beginning, that is, from the beginning of my youth; was among mine own nation at Jerusalem—He was not born among the Jews at Jerusalem, but he was bred among them. And though he had of late years been conversant with the Gentiles, which had given great offence to the Jews, yet, at his setting out in the world, he was intimately acquainted with the Jewish nation, and entirely in their interests. His education was neither foreign nor obscure; it was among his own people at Jerusalem, where religion and learning flourished; as was well known to all the Jews there, for he had made himself remarkable betimes. Who knew me from the begin-

they would testify,) that after ^athe A. M. 4066. most straitest sect of our religion, I ^{A. D. 62.} lived a Pharisee.

6 ^bAnd now I stand and am judged for the hope of ^cthe promise made of God unto our fathers :

7 Unto which *promise* ^dour twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* ^eday ^fand night, ^ghope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead ?

xxxvii. 24 ; Dan. ix. 24 ; Mic. vii. 20 ; Chap. xiii. 32 ; Rom. xv. 8 ; Titus ii. 13.—^d James i. 1.—^e Greek, night and day. ^f Luke ii. 37 ; 1 Tim. v. 5 ; 1 Thessalonians iii. 10.—^g Phil. iii. 11.

ning—Of my education, under that celebrated master, Gamaliel; if they would testify—But they would not, for they well knew what weight his former life must add to his present testimony; that after the most straitest—That is, the strictest, sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee—Observing all the rules enjoined among them, respecting every thing that relates not only to the written law of God, but likewise the traditions of the fathers. And now I stand and am judged—Not for any crime that I have committed; but for the hope of the promise made unto our fathers—The promise of a resurrection to eternal life and happiness, by means of the Messiah, that is, of the resurrection of Christ; and of all the dead, in consequence of his resurrection. So the case was in reality; for unless Christ had risen, there could have been no resurrection of the dead. And it was chiefly for bearing witness to the resurrection of Christ, that the Jews still persecuted him. Unto which promise our twelve tribes—So he speaks: for a great part of the ten tribes, which had been carried captive into Assyria by Shalmaneser, (see 2 Kings xvii.) had, at various times, returned from the East (as well as the remains of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, from Babylon) to their own country; James i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1. Instantly serving—Or worshipping God, day and night—That is, continually, or in the stated and constant performance of their morning and evening devotions, whether in the temple or in other places, in which they present their prayers; hope to come—To attain that resurrection and eternal life; that is, this is what they aim at in all their public and private worship: and by the expectation they have of it, they are animated in all their labours and sufferings for religion. For which hope's sake—Reasonable and glorious as it is; I am accused of the Jews—The doctrine which I preach containing the fullest assurance and demonstration of a resurrection that ever was given to the world. And it is this that provokes those of mine enemies, who disbelieve it, to prosecute me with so much malice.

Verses 8-11. Why should it be thought a thing incredible—(It was thought so by Festus, chap. xxv.

A. M. 4066. 9 ^{A. D. 62.} I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 ^b Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority ⁱ from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*.

11 ^k And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities.

12 ^l Whereupon, as I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests,

[†] John xvi. 2; 1 Tim. i. 13.—^b Chap. viii. 3; Gal. i. 13.
ⁱ Chap. ix. 14, 21; xxii. 5.

19, to whom Paul answers as if he had heard him discourse;) *that God*—A Being of infinite perfections, and the original author of the human frame; *should raise the dead*—And continue their existence in a future state? Will not his Almighty power enable him to do it? and will not the honour of his moral attributes be hereby illustrated and vindicated? And if it be credible, is it not important enough to deserve the most attentive regard? *I verily thought, &c.*—That is, when I was a Pharisee; *that I ought to do many things* (which he now enumerates) *contrary to the name*—Destructive of the cause and religion; *of Jesus of Nazareth*—Or, *Jesus the Nazarene*, whom under that title I once impiously derided, esteeming all his pretences to be the Messiah at once false and contemptible. He now proceeds to give an account of the extraordinary scenes through which he had passed, and which had occasioned a change in his views and conduct. *Which thing I also did in Jerusalem*—Where many, now living, were witnesses of my rage against the Christians; *and many of the saints*—Persons not only innocent, but just, good, and holy; *I shut up in prison*—*φυλακαις, in prisons; having received authority from the chief priests* to do it; *and when they were put to death*—Were condemned to die; *I gave my vote against them*—I joined with those who condemned them. It does not appear that Paul had any vote in the sanhedrim: and we do not certainly know that, before Paul's conversion, any more than Stephen were put to death for Christianity, in whose condemnation there was no voting at all. But the meaning plainly is, that he instigated the people against them as much as he could, in that instance, and in others which possibly might occur, whether at Jerusalem or elsewhere, though not recorded in the New Testament. Accordingly the Syriac renders it, *I joined with those that condemned them*; and Grotius observes, that the original phrase, *κατηγεγα ψηφον*, has evidently sometimes this general signification. *And I punished them oft in every synagogue*—Wherever I met with

13 At mid-day, O king, I saw in the ^{A. M. 4066.} way a light from heaven, above the ^{A. D. 62.} brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them which journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, ^m to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those

^k Chap. xxii. 19.—^l Chapter ix. 3; xxii. 6.—^m Chapter xxii. 15.

them; *and*—When I could possibly effect it, I *compelled them to blaspheme*—The name of the Lord Jesus, and openly to renounce all faith in him, and subjection to him. This was the most dreadful of all the sinful acts which he committed; and, it seems, grieved him most: and no guilt can lie heavier upon persecutors, than that of forcing *men's* consciences, and triumphing over them, by putting them to the torture, and thereby compelling them to abjure their religion. How light soever they may make of such guilt, and even rejoice in the proslutes they gain by their acts of violence and cruelty, awful, sooner or later, will be the condition of all such! For if Spira, who was compelled, suffered so terribly, what will become of those who compel like Saul, but do not repent like him? *And being exceedingly mad against them*—*Περὶσσως ἐμμανομενος, beyond measure furious; I persecuted them even unto strange cities*—To which some of them had fled, to avoid or escape my outrageous cruelty, pursuing and hunting out the poor refugees, and endeavouring to drive them, not only out of their country, but out of the world.

Verses 12-15. *Whereupon, as I went to Damascus, &c.*—See notes on chap. ix. 3-9, and xxii. 5-11; where the substance of this paragraph occurs, and is explained. *At mid-day, O king*—Most seasonably, in the height of the narration, does he thus fix the king's attention; *I saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun*—And no marvel, for what is the brightness of the created sun to the *Son of righteousness, the brightness of the Father's glory? I heard a voice speaking in the Hebrew tongue*—Paul observes this, because he was not now speaking in Hebrew: when he was, (chap. xxii. 7,) he did not add, *in the Hebrew tongue*. Christ used this tongue, both on earth and from heaven.

Verses 16-18. *But rise and stand upon thy feet*—Though thou hast persecuted me and my followers in this outrageous manner, and hast been engaged in a desperate attempt to destroy them from the face of the earth, and, by so doing, hast forfeited thy life

A. M. 4066. things in the which I will appear unto
A. D. 62. thee;

17 Delivering thee from the people, and from
the Gentiles, ^a unto whom now I send thee,

18 ^o To open their eyes, and ^p to turn them

^a Chap. xxii. 21.—^o Isa. xxxv. 5; xlii. 7; Luke i. 79; John viii. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. i. 18; 1 Thess. v. 5.—^p 2 Cor. vi.

I am determined graciously to spare it, and to use thee hereafter as the instrument of my grace. *For I have appeared unto thee*—In this extraordinary manner; for this purpose, to make thee a minister—Of my gospel; and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen—Now, at this time; and of those in which I will appear unto thee—Namely, hereafter; *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 enjoyed, 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. *To open their eyes*—The eyes of them who are now in a miserable state of blindness, whether Jews or Gentiles. He opens them who sends Paul, and he does it by Paul who is sent. *And to turn them from darkness*—From that state of ignorance and folly in which they are involved; that is, with respect to the Gentiles, to turn them from following false and blind guides, their oracles, divinations, and superstitious usages, received by tradition from their fathers, and the corrupt notions they had of their gods. And with respect to the Jews, to rescue them from their ignorance of the spirituality, extent, and obligation of the moral law, and of the shadowy, typical, and temporary nature of the Mosaic institution in general, as also from their ignorance of the spiritual and heavenly nature of the Messiah's kingdom, and the qualifications necessary for becoming subjects of it, and of the true sense of the prophetic writings with relation to these things; *to light*—The light of divine knowledge and wisdom; and *from the power of Satan*—Who now holds them in a state of sin and guilt, weakness and wretchedness; *unto God*—To his love and service: for it was not sufficient for them to have their eyes opened, it was also necessary to have their hearts renewed; not enough to be turned from darkness to light, but they must be turned from sin to holiness; which, indeed, follows of course; for Satan rules by the power of darkness, and God by the convincing evidence of light. Idolaters were and are, in a special manner, under the power of Satan, paying their homage to creatures of their own fancy; to images, or imaginary beings; or to God's creatures, not formed and given to man for any such purpose; that is, in effect, doing service to devils: but all sinners, also, are under the power of Satan, influenced by his temptations, yielding themselves captives to his will and pleasure. But converting grace rescues them from his tyranny, and brings them into sub-

jection to God; translates them out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Observe, reader, when gracious dispositions are as strong in the soul as corrupt and sinful dispositions had been, it is then turned *from the power of Satan unto God*. *That they may receive forgiveness of sins*—That they may be pardoned, and restored to God's favour, which by sin they had forfeited. They are delivered from the dominion of sin, that they may be delivered from that death which is the wages of sin; not that they may merit that forgiveness, as a debt or reward, but that they may receive it as a free gift, together with the comfort arising from it; they are persuaded to lay down their arms, and return to their allegiance, that they may have the benefit of the act of indemnity passed by God in behalf of those who do so. *An inheritance, or lot, among them which are sanctified*—That is, 1st, That they may be sanctified as well as justified; may be redeemed from all iniquity, Tit. ii. 14; cleansed from all unrighteousness, 1 John i. 9; from all unholy tempers, words, and works, purified from all pollution of the flesh and of the spirit, 2 Cor. vii. 1; and made glorious souls, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but constituted holy and without blemish, Eph. v. 26, 27; in other words, so renewed by the power of the Holy Ghost as to bear the image of the heavenly, as they had borne that of the earthly, and be made partakers of the divine nature, Tit. iii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 4. 2d, That they may receive an inheritance among such as are thus sanctified, even the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. For this inheritance, the forgiveness of our sins and the sanctification of our nature prepare us; removing that guilt and depravity which were the chief hinderances in the way of our receiving it. As all those that shall be saved hereafter must be sanctified as well as justified here, all that receive the heavenly inheritance must be thus entitled to it and made meet for it: and none can be saints in heaven that are not first saints on earth; so we need no more to ensure our happiness in a future world, than to possess these blessings in this world. And, as is here stated, these, together with the heavenly inheritance, for which they prepare us, are received by faith in Jesus: for faith in him, and in the promises of God, made to the penitent and believing through him; the faith whereby we not only receive divine revelation in general, but the record which God hath given of his Son in particular; by which we apply to, and rely on, Christ as the Lord our righteousness and sanctification, and resign ourselves to him as the Lord our proprietor and ruler; this is that faith whereby we receive forgiveness, holiness, and

14; Eph. iv. 18; v. 8; Col. i. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 9, 25.—^a Luke i. 77.—^o Eph. i. 11; Col. i. 12.—^p Chap. xx. 32.

A. M. 4066. 19 Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I
A. D. 62. was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

20 But ¹ showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do ² works meet for repentance.

21 For these causes ³ the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill *me*.

22 Having therefore obtained help of God,

¹ Chap. ix. 20, 22, 29; xi. 26; xiii.; xiv.; xvi.; xvii.; xviii.; xix.; xx.; ² Matthew iii. 8.—³ Chapter xxi. 30, 31; Luke xxiv. 27, 44; Chap. xxiv. 14; xxviii. 23; Rom. iii. 21.

eternal life, the salvation of grace here, and the salvation of glory hereafter.

Verses 19, 20. *Whereupon*—Or, *from that time*, as *οθεν* may be rendered, that ever-memorable time, through the grace of God, giving me inclination and power to obey; *I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision*—With which he was pleased thus miraculously to favour me. *But showed first unto them of Damascus*—Preached first to the Jews there, to which place I was going when the vision was granted me; and afterward to those at Jerusalem, and throughout all Judea—In the country towns and villages thereof, as Christ had done; and then to the Gentiles—Wherever I came, in my various and widely-extended travels from one country to another; that they should repent—Of all their sins, internal and external; and turn to God—In heart and life; and do works meet for repentance—The repentance which they profess, and the sincerity of which can only be thus evidenced.

Verses 21–23. *For these causes*—And for no other; *the Jews*—Who have the same inveteracy against the gospel of Jesus that I once had; *caught (seized) me in the temple, and went about (attempted) to kill me*—*Διαχειρισαοθαι, to kill me with their own hands*. So the word properly signifies; but, *having obtained help of God*—By the protection and care of his watchful providence; *I continue unto this day*—Am still preserved and upheld, and employ my spared life to the purposes for which it is prolonged; *witnessing both to small and great*—What is really a matter of infinite concern, both to the meanest and most exalted of mankind, the gospel of Christ, and the way of salvation for lost sinners through him; *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say*—Advancing no new doctrine whatever; that Christ should suffer—Not only be a man, and therefore should be capable of suffering, but that, as Messiah, he should be appointed to suffer; and that his sufferings and ignominious death should not only be consistent with, but pursuant of, his undertaking. The cross of Christ was a stumbling-block to the Jews, and Paul's preaching it was one great thing that exasperated them; but Paul adheres to that doctrine, and insists that, in preaching it, he preached the fulfilling of the Old Testament

A. M. 4066. I continue unto this day, witnessing
A. D. 62. both to small and great, saying none other things than those ¹ which the prophets and ² Moses did say should come:

23 ³ That Christ should suffer, and ⁴ that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and ⁵ should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

24 ¶ And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, ⁶ thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

¹ John v. 46.—² Luke xxiv. 26, 46.—³ 1 Cor. xv. 20; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5.—⁴ Luke ii. 32.—⁵ 2 Kings ix. 11; John x. 20; 1 Cor. i. 23; ii. 13, 14; iv. 10.

predictions: and that therefore they ought not only not to be offended at what he preached, but to believe, and embrace it with all their hearts. *And that he should be the first that should rise from the dead*—Namely, to an immortal life; the first that should rise to die no more, opening, as it were, the womb of the grave to all the pious dead who should rise after him, and none of whom could have risen, if he had not risen first. Accordingly, to show that the resurrection of all believers is in virtue of his resurrection, just when he rose, many dead bodies of the saints arose, and went into the holy city, *Matt. xxvii.*

53. *And should show light unto the people*—The Jews in the first place, for he was to be the glory of his people Israel: to them he showed light by himself, and then to the Gentiles by the ministry of his apostles; for he was to be a light to lighten them who sat in darkness. In this Paul refers to his commission, verse 18. He rose from the dead on purpose that he might show light to Jews and Gentiles; that he might give a convincing proof of the truth of his doctrine, and might send it with so much the greater power among both descriptions of persons. All this was foretold by the Old Testament prophets; and what was there in it that the Jews could justly be displeased at?

Verse 24. *And as he thus spake for himself*—And was making his defence; *Festus*—Astonished, it seems, to hear him represent this despised gospel of Jesus of Nazareth as a matter of such high and universal concern, and designed to be the means of illuminating both Jews and Gentiles, and thinking the vision he had related, as introductory to that assertion, quite an incredible story; *said, with a loud voice*—Which reached the whole auditory; *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 the 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. *Much learning doth make thee mad*—*Πολλα σε γραμματα εις μανιαν περιτρειπει, much study drives thee to madness*. Perhaps

A. M. 4066. 25 But he said, I am not mad, most
A. D. 62. noble Festus; but speak forth the
words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king knoweth of these things,
before whom also I speak freely. For I am
persuaded that none of these things are hid-
den from him; for this thing was not done in
a corner.

^d James i. 23, 24.

he might know that Paul, in his present confine-
ment, spent a great deal of time in reading; and this
was the most decent turn that could be given to such
a mad charge. Doubtless, Paul had a great deal
more to say in defence of the gospel which he
preached, and for the honour of it, and to recom-
mend it to the good opinion of his noble audience.
He had just fallen upon a subject that was the life of
the cause in which he was engaged, the death and
resurrection of Jesus: and here he was in his ele-
ment, his soul was animated, his mouth was opened
toward them, and his heart enlarged: and it is a
thousand pities that he should have been interrupt-
ed, as he now was, and not permitted to say all he
designed.

Verses 25-29. *But he said*—Calmly, and with a
perfect command of himself, not in the least provok-
ed by such an invidious imputation; *I am not mad,*
most noble Festus—A title properly belonging to a
Roman propretor. How inexpressibly beautiful is
this reply! How strong! yet, how decent and res-
pectful! Madmen seldom call men by their names
and titles of honour. Thus, also, Paul refutes the
charge. *But utter the words of truth*—Confirmed in
the next verse; *and soberness*—The very reverse of
madness. And both these remain, even when the
men of God act with the utmost vehemence. *For
the king knoweth of these things*—Is not an entire
stranger to them. Paul, having refuted Festus, pur-
sues his purpose, returning naturally, and as it were
step by step, from him to Agrippa. *Before whom
also I speak freely*—Imboldened by his permission,
and assured of his candour. *For I am persuaded
that none of these things*—Of which I have been
speaking; *are entirely hidden from him*—No, not
what I have related concerning my conversion to
Christianity. Agrippa could not but have heard of
it, having been so long conversant among the Jews.
For this thing was not done in a corner—He seems
to refer not merely to one particular fact, such as
his conversion and commission to preach the gospel,
but to include the other great facts of Christianity;
and particularly the death and resurrection of Christ,
and the miraculous powers conferred on his disci-
ples, which were all matters open and notorious, of
the truth of which thousands had opportunity of be-
ing certainly and thoroughly informed. *King Agrip-
pa, 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*

27 King Agrippa, believest thou the A. M. 4066.
prophets? I know that thou believest. A. D. 62.

28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost
thou ^d persuadest me to be a Christian.

29 And Paul said, * I would to God, that not
only thou, but also all that hear me this day,
were both almost, and altogether such as I
am, except these bonds.

* 1 Cor. vii. 7.

—Them to be written by divine inspiration, and art
aware of the weight of those arguments which are
derived from the authority of their testimony. Paul,
it seems, knew Agrippa to be of the sect of the Pha-
risees: for his father, being a zealous Jew, had edu-
cated him in the Jewish religion, according to the
strictest form. Here Paul lays so fast hold on the
king, that he can scarcely make any resistance.
*Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persua-
dest me to be a Christian*—Paul's doctrine, concern-
ing Jesus of Nazareth, appeared to Agrippa so con-
formable to the things written concerning the Mes-
siah, by Moses and the prophets; and his testimony
concerning the appearing of Jesus to him by the
way, was rendered so probable by the total altera-
tion of his sentiments and conduct, that Agrippa
declared he was almost persuaded of the truth of
the things which Paul affirmed concerning Jesus,
and therefore to become a Christian. The meaning
of his words is not, Thou persuadest me to be almost
a Christian, or, to become an almost Christian;
but, as it is here expressed, *Thou almost per-
suadest me to be a Christian*, a true Christian,
that is, really to embrace the religion of Christ.
See here, Festus, altogether a heathen; Paul, alto-
gether a Christian; Agrippa, halting between both.
Poor Agrippa! But almost persuaded! So near the
mark, and yet to fall short! Another step, and thou
art within the veil. Reader, stop not with Agrippa;
but go on with Paul. *And Paul*—Powerfully struck
with so remarkable an acknowledgment, *said*—With
great fervency of spirit, and yet with perfect decen-
cy; *I would to God that not only thou, &c.*—Agrippa
had spoken of being a Christian, as a thing wholly
in his power. Paul gently corrects his mistake; in-
timating that to be a Christian is the gift and the
work of God; *but also all that hear me this day*—
It was modesty in Paul not to apply directly to them
all; yet he looks upon them and observes them;
were both almost and altogether 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.
Except these bonds—For my afflictions I am willing
to bear myself, till Providence shall release me from
them, without desiring that any others should share
with me in them. He wishes that they might all be
happy Christians as he was, but not persecuted
Christians; that they might taste as much as he did
of the blessings that attended Christianity, but not so
much of its crosses; that they might be in bonds to

A. M. 4066. 30 ¶ And when he had thus spoken,
A. D. 62. the king rose up, and the governor,
and Bernice, and they that sat with them :

31 And when they were gone aside, they
talked between themselves, saying, ' This man

† Chap. xxiii. 9, 29 ; xxv. 25.

Christ, but not in bonds for Christ. Nothing surely
could be said more tenderly, nor with better decorum.

Verses 30-32. *And when he had thus spoken*—That
the impression Paul began to make upon the court
might reach no further; *the king rose up*—Thus
neglecting to yield to conviction, and losing, per-
haps for ever, an unspeakably precious moment.
Whether the good impressions made were ever af-
terward laid to heart and improved, we shall see in
the day of final accounts. *And the governor, and
Bernice, &c.*—On none of whom, it seems, Paul's
discourse had much, if any, effect. They ought, in
justice, to have asked the prisoner whether he had
any more to say for himself; but, it seems, they
thought he had said enough to make his case clear,
and with that they contented themselves. *And when
they were gone aside*—Had withdrawn, to consult
and know one another's minds on the matter, they
spoke one with another, all to the same purpose;
saying, This man—As is evident by his discourse,
which has all imaginable marks of candour and sincer-
ity; *doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds*—They
appear to speak of his whole life, and not of what
happened at Jerusalem only. And could ye learn
nothing more than this from his discourse? A fa-
vourable judgment of such a preacher is not all that
God requires. *Then Agrippa*—Not in the least of-
fended with Paul for having spoken to him so freely;
said to Festus—In the hearing of the whole assem-
bly; *This man might have been set at liberty, if he
had not appealed unto Cesar*—Paul's appeal, how-
ever, was perfectly proper at the time he made it,
seeing Festus had shown an inclination to gratify
the Jews by proposing to judge him in Jerusalem.
And now, although Agrippa, with the consent of
Festus, had declared that Paul might have been set
at liberty if he had not appealed to Cesar, Paul very pru-
dently did not withdraw his appeal, because he fore-

doeth nothing worthy of death, or of A. M. 4066.
bonds. A. D. 62.

32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man
might have been set at liberty, ' if he had not
appealed unto Cesar.

‡ Chap. xxv. 11.

saw that, by the solicitations and threatenings of the
chief priests and elders, Festus might be constrained,
contrary to his inclination, to put him to death, even
as Pilate formerly had been constrained, contrary to
his conscience, to put Jesus to death. He might prob-
ably foresee, too, that his visiting Rome under the
character of a prisoner, would be overruled by Pro-
vidence to answer some important purposes, as is
evident from Phil. i. 12-20, it was. We may add
further here, though this declaration of Agrippa
could not obtain Paul's deliverance, yet it might do
him some service, that a testimony to his innocence
was pronounced by so learned and honourable a
person of the Jewish nation and religion. Festus
would probably entertain a better opinion of him on
this account, and would give directions to the offi-
cer who attended him to treat him with so much the
greater regard. "Thus it appears that, besides the
defence which Paul made from the top of the stairs
to the multitude in Jerusalem, he at four different
times, before the highest courts of judicature in Ju-
dea, defended the gospel, and his own conduct in
preaching it, in the most public manner; namely,
1st, Before the Jewish council, consisting of the
high-priests, the chief priests, the whole estate of the
elders, and the scribes; who all sat as his accusers.
2d, Before Felix the Roman governor, at whose tri-
bunal the high-priest Ananias, and the elders from
Jerusalem, were likewise his accusers, and employ-
ed a Roman orator to plead against him. 3d, Before
Festus, the governor, on which occasion the Jews
from Jerusalem stood forth, a third time, as his ac-
cusers. 4th, Before King Agrippa, Bernice, the tri-
bunes, and the principal persons of Cesarea, with
many others, in whose presence Paul boldly assert-
ed his own innocence, with such strength of evidence
that both Agrippa and Festus declared he might
have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to the
emperor."—Macknight.

CHAPTER XXVII.

This chapter contains an account of Paul's voyage to Rome as a prisoner, accompanied by Luke, with divers other prisoners.
(1.) The beginning of their voyage is calm and prosperous, 1-8. (2.) Paul warns them of a destructive storm, but cannot
prevail with them to winter where they were, 9-11. (3.) They are attacked by the storm predicted by Paul, and reduced
thereby to the greatest extremity, 12-20. (4.) Paul, nevertheless, assures them that God would preserve all their lives,
21-26. (5.) After terrible and long distress, and the loss of their ship, they all, with great difficulty, escape to land on the
isle of Malta, 27-44.

A. M. 4066. A. D. 62. **AND** when ^a it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto *one* named Julius, a centurion of Augustus's band.

2 And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; *one* ^b Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.

3 And the next *day* we touched at Sidon. And Julius ^c courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.

4 And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.

5 And when we had sailed over the sea of

Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to A. M. 4066 Myra, *a city* of Lycia. A. D. 62.

6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.

7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under ¹ Crete, over against Salmone:

8 And hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

9 Now, when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, ^d because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished *them*,

10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with ² hurt and much da

^a Chap. xv. 12, 25.—^b Chap. xix. 29.—^c Chap. xxiv. 23; xxviii. 16.—^d Or, *Candia*.

^d The Fast was on the tenth day of the seventh month, Le. xxiii. 27, 29.—² Or, *injury*.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVII.

Verses 1, 2. *When it was determined that we should sail into Italy*—The apostle having, by appeal, transferred his cause to the emperor, Festus determined to send him to Italy by sea, as being a shorter and less expensive passage to Rome; and for that purpose delivered him, with certain other persons, who were also to be judged at Rome, to one Julius, a centurion of the Italian legion. All these prisoners, with the soldiers who guarded them, went aboard a ship of Adramyttium, a seaport of Mysia, and sailed from Cesarea in the autumn of A. D. 62. From the history here, it appears that the messengers of the churches, who accompanied Paul into Judea with the collections, (Acts xxi. 4,) were not intimidated by the evils which the Jewish rage brought upon him in Jerusalem. For, while he continued there, they remained with him; and when he was sent a prisoner to Cesarea, they followed him thither, and in both places, doubtless, ministered to him, and perhaps attended him on his trials. And when it was determined to send him to Italy, two at least of these affectionate friends went in the same ship with him; namely, Luke, the writer of this book, as appears from his style here, and Aristarchus, a Thessalonian.

Verses 3-8. *And the next day we touched at Sidon*—A celebrated city on the Phœnician coast, not far from Tyre. Here Julius, to whose care the prisoners had been delivered, being a man of singular humanity, allowed Paul to go ashore and refresh himself with the brethren of that city; a favour which must have been peculiarly acceptable to one that had been so long in prison. After that, loosing from Sidon, they sailed under Cyprus—Leaving it on the left hand; to Myra, a city of Lycia; and there finding a ship of Alexandria, bound for Italy, they went aboard. This ship, it is probable, was laden with wheat, for the greatest part of the corn con-

sumed in Rome was brought from Alexandria in Egypt; and the vessels employed in that trade were exceedingly large, as this vessel certainly was; for there were on board of her no fewer than two hundred and seventy-six persons. *And when we had sailed slowly many days*—By Rhodes and several other small islands, which lay near the Carian shore; and scarce were come over against Cnidus—A cape and city of Caria; the wind not suffering us—To make greater despatch, steering to the south; we sailed under Crete—A well-known island in the Mediterranean sea; over against Salmone—A promontory on the eastern coast of that island. *And hardly passing it*—That is, passing the cape with difficulty; we came to a place called The Fair Havens—The most considerable port in that part of Crete, which still retains the same name: but the city Lasea, mentioned next, is now utterly lost, together with many more of the hundred cities for which Crete was once so renowned.

Verses 9-12. *Now when much time was spent*—In making this little way, and the season of the year was so far advanced, that sailing was now dangerous—On account of the tempestuous weather usual at that season: for the fast—Of the seventh month, or anniversary expiation; was now past—And consequently winter was coming on apace. It may be proper to observe, that the fast here spoken of was the day of atonement, which was ordered to be kept on the 10th day of the 7th month, called Tisri by the Jews, and consequently must have been about the 25th of our September. Philo, in several passages quoted by Dr. Whitby in his note here, speaks of this as an ill time for sailing, as Aratus also does; and it would naturally be so, not only on account of winter approaching, but also because of the flows that are still well known in the Mediterranean. *Paul admonished them*—Not to leave Crete. "Even in external things," says Bengelius, "faith exerts

A. M. 4066. mage, not only of the lading and ship,
A. D. 62. but also of our lives.

11 Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

12 ¶ And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is a haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south-west and north-west.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.

14 But not long after there ³arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

³ Or, beat.

itself with the greatest presence of mind, and readiness of advice." And said unto them—Namely, to the centurion and other officers; *I perceive that this voyage*—If it be pursued according to the present scheme you have in view; *will be with hurt and much damage*—Paul seems to have given them this warning, not so much because of the time of the year, and the tempests usually attending it, as by a prophetic spirit. God, intending to preserve and honour Paul in this tedious and difficult voyage, endues him with the gift of prophecy; which, when they saw it verified, could not but beget in them a great respect for him, and was probably the means of salvation to many that were in the ship with him; *not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives*—So it would have been; their lives would have been lost, as well as the ship and goods, had not God given the lives of all in the ship unto Paul, and saved them for his sake. See verse 24. *Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master*—Whom he thought most experienced and best skilled in an affair of that kind. And, indeed, it is a general rule, Believe an artificer in his own art. But Paul had an extraordinary qualification, with which the centurion was not acquainted: he had supernatural light from God. *And because the haven*—Notwithstanding its promising name; *was not commodious*—*Avevθevs, was unfit*, and probably judged unsafe; *to winter in, the more part*—Of the ship's company; *advised to depart*—*Αναχθηναι, to set sail thence*; *if by any means they might obtain to Phenice*—A port in Crete, and not the Phenicia in Syria; *and lieth toward the south-west and north-west*—That is, having a double opening to these two parts.

Verses 13-15. *And when the south wind blew softly*—Ordinarily a wind very mild, and at that time not high; *supposing they had obtained their purpose*—And would soon arrive at the harbour they wished to reach; *loosing, they sailed close by Crete*—That is, sailed along the shore of the island, not being afraid to be driven upon it by that side wind.

15 And when the ship was caught, A. M. 4066.
and could not bear up into the wind, A. D. 62.
we let her drive.

16 And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat:

17 Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

18 And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship;

19 And the third day ^o we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on

^o Jonah i. 5.

But not long after there arose against it—Against the ship; *a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon*—This expression comes from *ευρος* and *κλύδων*, an eastern storm, as the word signifies. A kind of tempest this which is called by those who now frequent those seas, a *Levanter*. It was a kind of hurricane, not carrying them any one way, but tossing them backward and forward: for these furious winds blow in all directions, from the north-east to the south-east. *And when the ship was caught*—*Συναρπασθεντος, was violently hurried away*; *and would not bear up against the wind*—Or *face it*, as the word *αντιορθαλμειν* signifies; *we let her drive*—Gave her up to the wind, to be driven before it.

Verses 16-19. *Running under a certain island called Clauda*—A little to the south of the western coast of Crete. Such was the violence of the storm, that *we had much work*—Great difficulty to become masters of the boat, so as to secure it from being staved; *which when they had taken up, they used helps*—Not only all such instruments as were fit for their purpose, but all hands too; *undergirding the ship*—With cables, to keep it from bulging, and enable it to ride out the storm; *and fearing*—As the wind had varied more to the north, and blew them toward Africa; *lest they should fall into the quicksands*—The greater or the lesser Syrtis, those quicksands on the African shore, so famous for the destruction of mariners and vessels; *they strake sail*—That so their progress might be slower, and some more favourable weather, in the mean time, might come to their relief; *and so were driven*—Before the wind, as before. *And the next day they lightened the ship*—Casting the heavy goods with which she was laden into the sea. *And the third day we cast out the tackling of the ship*—Cutting away even those masts that were not absolutely necessary, and throwing them overboard with their furniture.

Verses 20-22. *And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared*—The direction of which could be the less spared before the compass was found

A. M. 4066. us, all hope that we should be saved
A. D. 62. was then taken away.

21 ¶ But after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship.

23 'For there stood by me this night the an-

^f Chap. xxiii. 11.—^g Dan. vi. 16; Rom. i. 9; 2 Tim. i. 3.

out; and no small tempest lay on us—Still the wind was boisterous, and the sea ran high; all hope that we should be saved—That is, delivered from the danger we were in; was then taken away—The whole ship's company expected nothing but that the ship would certainly be lost, and we should all perish with it. But after long abstinence—For all this time they had had no heart to think of taking any regular refreshment, and probably several of them took little or none; Paul stood forth in the midst of them—Authorized by God to give them encouragement; and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me—Paul having foreseen and foretold what had befallen them, and warned them not to set sail from Crete, they ought to have believed his prediction, and taken his advice, especially as Luke and Aristarchus, if not some others on board the ship, Paul's companions, could have borne, and probably did bear, witness to the spirit of prophecy and the miraculous powers with which he was endowed: and for their not hearkening to him they were now deservedly punished. And to have gained—That is, to have brought upon yourselves and upon us all, as well as upon the owner of the ship, this harm and loss—Which is now before your eyes. The words, *ὄβριον και ζημιαν*, rendered *harm and loss*, are used verse 10, and have here evidently a reference to what the apostle had there predicted. And—Or nevertheless; now I exhort you—Bad as the situation of affairs may appear; to be of good cheer—For though you conclude you must inevitably perish, I assure you there shall be no loss of any man's life—Among you, that is, provided they would do as he directed them, see verse 31. In God's promises there is generally implied a tacit condition, which, from the nature of the thing, is to be understood, as in the promise made to Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 30. Paul here foretels their preservation so particularly, that, when it was effected, more credit might be given to the gospel which he preached, and more glory might redound to the God he worshipped.

Verses 23–26. For, &c.—As if he had said, It is not without good authority that I speak in so express and positive a manner, with regard to an event which seems to you utterly improbable; there stood by me this night the angel of God,

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gel of God, whose I am, and ^g whom I serve, A. M. 4066
A. D. 62.

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cesar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: ^h for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26 Howbeit, ⁱ we must be cast upon a certain island.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria,

^h Luke i. 45; Rom. iv. 20, 21; 2 Tim. i. 12.—ⁱ Chap. xxviii. 1.

whose servant and property I am, and whom I serve—Worship and obey. How short a compendium of religion! Yet how clear and how full! Containing both doctrine and practice, both the foundation and the superstructure: comprehending at once faith, hope, and love, with their proper fruits: in fact, all graces and virtues. Reader, see thou be able to say, *Whose I am!* and then, and not before, thou wilt be able to add, *and whom I serve.* Be his subject, his servant, his child, his heir, and know thyself to be such, know that thou art of God, by the Spirit which he gives thee, and then thou wilt be able to serve him in holiness and righteousness before him, making his will thy rule, and his glory thy end, in all thy actions, and that all the days of thy life. Saying, Fear not, Paul—Such a message God's angels have often brought unto his people. See Dan. x. 12, 19; Luke ii. 10; Matt xxviii. 5. Thou must be brought—Rather, be presented; before Cesar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee—Paul had doubtless prayed for them. And God gave him their lives; and perhaps their souls also. And the centurion, subserving the designs of the Divine Providence, spared, for his sake, the lives of the prisoners, verse 43. Here we have an instance how wonderfully the providence of God reigns in things apparently the most contingent! And, rather shall many bad men be preserved with a few good, (for so it frequently happens,) than one good man shall perish with many bad. So it was in this ship, and so it is in the world. Paul repeats, it seems, the very words of the angel, *Lo, God hath given thee all that sail with thee.* For at such a time of distress as this, there was not the same danger which there might otherwise have been, of Paul's seeming to speak out of vanity what he really spoke out of necessity. Wherefore, be of good cheer—Take courage, and lay aside your fears; for I believe God—I trust in him whose word is faithful, and his power almighty; that the event shall be as has been told me. Howbeit—I know also; we must be cast upon a certain island—And that the vessel will be wrecked upon the coast of it. Nevertheless, if we take care to use the proper means, we shall all escape, and get safe to land.

Verses 27–32. But when the fourteenth night—Since they left Crete; was come, as we were driven

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a

A. M. 466. about midnight the shipmen deemed
A. D. 62. that they drew near to some country ;

28 And sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms : and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms.

29 Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

31 Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

* 1 Kings i. 52 ; Matt. x. 30 ; Luke xii. 7 ; xxi. 18. — 1 Sam.

up and down in Adria—That is, in the Adriatic sea : as the ancients called all that part of the Mediterranean sea which lay south of Italy. *About midnight, the shipmen deemed* (apprehended) *that they drew near to some country—Or shore* ; which confirmed what Paul had told them, that they must be driven upon some island : and, to try whether it was so or not, they *sounded*—In order to ascertain the depth of the water, which would be less as they drew nearer to the shore. And by the first experiment, they *found it twenty fathoms*, and by the next only *fifteen*—Which decrease of their sounding convinced them that their apprehension was just. *Then, fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks*—Of which there were very many in those seas, especially about the islands, where there might not be depth of water sufficient to keep the vessel from striking ; *they cast four anchors out of the stern*—This shows how great the tempest was, in that they needed so many anchors ; *and wished for day*—That they might the better discern their situation. *And, as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship*—Perceiving the danger to be extreme, and endeavouring to provide for their own safety, by making to the shore ; and *when*—To compass their design ; *they let down the boat into the sea*—Supposing it would go more safely over the shallows ; and were just going into it, *under colour as though they would have cast anchors*—From the ship's head, to make the vessel more secure ; thus dissembling the true reason of their going into the boat, which was to make their escape. *Paul*—Who knew it was the will of God that all proper endeavours should be used for their preservation, in a dependance on the promise he had given them, perceiving the design they had in view ; *said to the centurion and to the soldiers*—Who had power to hinder their accomplishing their design ; *Except these mariners abide in the ship*—Without whom ye know not how to manage it ; *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 prison-

32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes ^{A. M. 466.}
of the boat, and let her fall off. ^{A. D. 62.}

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried, and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

34 Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat ; for this is for your health : for ² there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you.

35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and ¹ gave thanks to God in presence of them all ; and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat.

36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat.

ix. 13 ; Matt. xv. 36 ; Mark viii. 6 ; John vi. 11 ; 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4.

ers : 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 pretence of relying upon it be not profane hypocrisy. *Then the soldiers*—Who had learned from their commander to pay a deference to what Paul said, that the success of this intended fraud might be effectually prevented ; *cut off the ropes of the boat*—By which it was fastened to the side of the ship ; *and let it fall off into the sea*—Before any of the mariners got into it.

Verses 33-38. *While the day was coming on*—Before they had light sufficient to discern what they should do ; *Paul besought them all to take meat*—To take some refreshment ; *saying, This is the fourteenth day that ye continue fasting*—Not as if they had absolutely eaten nothing all that while ; for it is generally allowed that none can fast half so long without danger of death ; *having taken nothing*—No regular meal ; through a deep sense of your extreme danger : the necessary consequence of which is, that you must be very faint and weak, and unfit for those exertions and fatigues which may farther lie before you ; for it will be a narrow escape that we are to expect, and we may find great difficulties in getting on shore. If a sense of the great danger they were in took away all their desire for food, let us not wonder if men who have a deep sense of the danger they are in of everlasting death should, for a time, forget either to take food, or to attend to their worldly affairs. Much less let us censure that as madness which may be the beginning of true wisdom. *Wherefore*—Since till the morning rises we can attempt nothing by way of approach

A. M. 4066. 37 And we were in all in the ship
A. D. 62.

two hundred threescore and sixteen

souls.

38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder-bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

Ch. ii. 41; vii. 14; Rom. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. iii. 20.—^a Or, cut the

to land; *I pray*—Παρακαλω, *I exhort*; you to take nourishment, for this is—Προς της υμετερας σωτηριας, for your preservation, that ye may be the better able to swim to shore; for there shall not a hair, &c.—A proverbial expression, assuring them of entire safety. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread and gave thanks—For that provision which God now gave them in their necessities, and for the assurance of life with which he had favoured them by so particular a revelation; and when he had broken it, he began to eat—Thus setting them an example. Then were they all of good cheer—Encouraged by his example as well as words; and they also took some meat—As he had done. And when they had eaten enough—As much as was sufficient for their present refreshment and support; they lightened the ship—Still more than they had done; and cast out the wheat—The very stores they had on board; into the sea—So firmly did they now depend on what Paul had said.

Verses 39–41. And when it was day—And they had the shore before them; they knew not the land—And therefore were still at a loss what course to take; but they discovered a certain creek—A bay or bosom of the sea, having land on each side, where they judged it most likely for them to get on shore; using, however, still all proper means for their safety. And when they had taken up—Or, as it is now termed, weighed; the anchors, they committed themselves—Or, rather, the ship; unto the sea—And tried to stand in for the creek. But the original expressions here, τας ακυρας περιελοντες, ειων εις την θαλασσαν, may be rendered, having cut the anchors, they left them in the sea. And loosed the rudder-bands—Their ships had frequently two rudders, one on each side. These were fastened while they let the ship drive; but were now loosened, when they had need of them to steer her into the creek. And hoisted up the mainsail to the wind—Which seemed to set right for their purpose. Although our translators here render the word, αρτεμονα, mainsail, Grotius (who supposes that

41 And falling into a place where A. M. 4066.
two seas met, ^a they ran the ship A. D. 62.
aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that they which could swim, should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:

44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, ^o that they escaped all safe to land.

anchors, they left them in the sea.—^a 2 Cor. xi. 25.—^o Verse 22.

σκευος, rendered sail, verse 17, signifies the mainmast, and consequently, that the mainsail was now gone, verse 19) supposes it was a sail near the fore part of the ship, answering to what we call the foremast, or the bowsprit. And falling into a place where two seas met—Probably by reason of a sand-bank running parallel with the shore, such was the violence of the current, that they ran the ship aground, so that the fore part stuck fast upon the sand, but the hinder part was broken to pieces by the violence of the waves—So that they suffered shipwreck with the shore in view, and almost in the harbour, teaching us never to be secure.

Verses 42–44. And—In this critical juncture, as there were several prisoners on board, who were to be conveyed in custody to Rome; the soldiers' counsel was to kill them—A counsel most unjust, ungrateful, and cruel; lest any of them should swim out and escape—Out of their hands; of which they were unwilling to run the hazard, as they knew how severe the Roman law was in such cases, where there was any room to suspect the guards of connivance or negligence. But the centurion, willing—Or rather, desirous; to save Paul—For though he had despised his advice, (verse 11,) yet he afterward saw much cause to respect him, and therefore prevented the soldiers from executing their purpose. Thus God, for Paul's sake, not only saved all the rest of the ship's company from being lost in the sea, but preserved the prisoners from being murdered, according to the unjust and barbarous proposal of the soldiers, who could have thought of no worse a scheme, had they all been condemned malefactors, and had these guards, instead of conveying them to their trial, been carrying them to the place of execution. Commanded that they who could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land—That they might be helpful to others in getting on shore; and the rest, some on boards, &c.—Still using means, though it was of God only that they had those means, and that the means were made effectual for their preservation. And it came

to pass—Through the singular care of Divine Providence, and according to the prediction of Paul; that they escaped all safe to land—And there was not one single life lost; 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 earth could afford.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

(1.) Paul and his companions are hospitably entertained by the inhabitants of Malta, 1, 2. (2.) He is there miraculously preserved from the venom of a viper, which fastened on his hand, 3-6; and heals Publius's father of a fever and flux, and other persons of different diseases, 7-10. (3.) After three months' abode at Malta, they sail by Syracuse, Rhegium, and Puteoli; from which last place Paul travels on foot to Rome, 11-16. (4.) Committed to the care of a private soldier in a private house, he sends for some principal Jews, and shows them that there was no cause for his imprisonment, 17-20. (5.) He afterward, at an appointed meeting, preaches the gospel to a great body of them; some of whom believe, and others reject it, as Isaiah had foretold, 21-29. (6.) As a prisoner in his own hired house, he preaches unmolested to all that come to hear him, 30, 31.

A. M. 4066.
A. D. 62. **AND** when they were escaped, then they knew that ^a the island was called Melita.

2 And the ^b barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

^a Chap. xxvii. 26.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVIII.

Verse 1. *When they were escaped, they knew*—From some of the inhabitants who came to them; that the island—On which they were cast; was called Melita—Or, Malta. This island, which took its name from the abundance of honey found therein, (*meli*, in Greek, signifying honey,) lies between Africa and Sicily, about sixty miles distant from the latter country, and is about twelve miles broad, and twenty long. It consists of a chalky rock, having not more than between one and three feet depth of earth, and yet is very fertile, producing much cotton and excellent fruits. The Melitese were originally a colony of the Carthaginians, as appears from several old inscriptions in Punic characters, and from the language of the present inhabitants, the number of whom is stated to be above ninety thousand. The place on the island where Paul and his company were driven on shore is, at this day, shown to travellers, and goes by the name of *St. Paul's shore*, or *haven*. His shipwreck here procured a kind of religious veneration to the island among Christian nations; in consequence of which, it was given, in the year of our Lord 1525, by Charles V., emperor of Germany, to the knights of Rhodes, expelled from that island by the Turks, and generally called the knights of St. John of Jerusalem. They are one thousand in number, of whom five hundred always reside on the island. In the year 1798, the French, under Bonaparte, took the island; and, in 1800, being reduced by famine, after a blockade of

3 ¶ And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. A. M. 4066
A. D. 62.

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer,

^b Rom. i. 14; 1 Cor. xiv. 11; Col. iii. 11.

two years, it surrendered to the English, under whose dominion it still continues.

Verse 2. *And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness*—In our distressed circumstances; for they kindled a fire, &c., because of the present rain—Which had followed the storm; and because of the cold—With which, in our wet clothes, we were ready to perish. It must be observed, that the Romans and Greeks termed all people barbarians that differed from them in their language or customs. All mankind are therefore comprehended by the apostle under the distinction of *Greeks and Barbarians*, Rom. i. 14. The Greeks and Romans, however, were in many respects more barbarous themselves (according to the common meaning of that term) than these islanders, who, as we learn from Diodorus Siculus, (lib. v. page 204,) were noted for their civility to strangers, and who certainly, on this occasion, gave a striking proof of that civility. They were not, indeed, as here appears, much cultivated, but the generosity which they showed to these shipwrecked strangers was far more valuable in the sight of God, and all good men, than any varnish which the poliest education could give, where it did not teach humanity and compassion.

Verses 3, 4. *And when Paul*—Who had learned to make himself servant of all, and would stoop to any thing by which he might be serviceable, was laying on the fire a bundle of sticks—Which he had gathered; there came a viper—Which had been concealed among the wood; out of the heat, and

A. M. 4066. whom, though he hath escaped the
A. D. 62. sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to
live.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire,
and ° felt no harm.

6 Howbeit, they looked when he should have
swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but
after they had looked a great while, and saw
no harm come to him, they changed their minds,
and ^d said that he was a god.

7 ¶ In the same quarters were possessions of

° Mark xvi. 18; Luke x. 19.—^d Chap. xiv. 11.—^e James
v. 14, 15.

fastened on his hand—Round which it probably
twisted itself, and bit it. *And when the barbarians
saw the venomous beast*—Or the fierce animal, as
θηριον should rather be translated; the word *beast*
being a very improper term for it; *they said*—Seeing
also his chains; *No doubt this man is a murder-
er*—“They concluded he was a murderer, (says
Elsner,) rather than a person guilty of any other
crime, because they saw the viper hanging on his
hand, which therefore they judged to have been the
offending member, according to the rule which pre-
vailed among the ancients, that persons were often
remarkably punished in that part of the body which
had been the immediate instrument of their sin;”
whom, though he hath escaped the sea—Hath not
been destroyed by the tempest and shipwreck; *yet
vengeance suffereth not* (Greek, *εκτασεν, hath not
suffered*) *to live*—They looked upon him as, in
effect, a dead man already, after having been bit by
that venomous creature. The poison of a viper so
inflames the blood, that a person infected with it is
usually tormented as with fire, and quickly dies.
For this reason, the ancient Scythians, in war, used
to dip their arrows in the blood and gaul of vipers,
that their enemies wounded by them might die a
painful and sudden death. And, in some remote
times, some condemned criminals were put to death
by vipers set to their breasts: by this means Cleo-
patra despatched herself. Though *δικη, (justice, or
judgment,)* here rendered *vengeance*, may be under-
stood of the divine vengeance in general; yet, as
these were the words of heathen idolaters, possibly
they might refer to a deity worshipped among them
under that name; as we know the Greeks and Ro-
mans had a goddess whom they termed *Νεμεσις, Ne-
mesis*, the daughter of Justice, who, they supposed,
punished the wicked. It must give us pleasure to
trace among these barbarians the force of con-
science, 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 inter-
preted as judgments. Let us guard against this
error, lest, like them, we condemn, not only the in-
nocent, but the excellent of the earth.

Verses 5, 6. *And he shook off, &c.*—Greek, *απορι-
νασας το θηριον, having shaken off the venomous*

the chief man of the island, whose A. M. 4066.
name was Publius; who received us, A. D. 62.
and lodged us three days courteously.

8 And it came to pass, that the father of Pub-
lius lay sick of a fever, and of a bloody flux:
to whom Paul entered in, and ° prayed, and
† laid his hands on him, and healed him.

9 So when this was done, others also which
had diseases in the island, came, and were
healed:

10 Who also honoured us with many † ho-

° Mark vi. 5; vii. 32; xvi. 18; Luke iv. 40; Chap. xix. 11,
12; 1 Corinthians xii. 9, 28.—† Matthew xv. 6; 1 Tim. v. 17.

animal into the fire, (the power of Christ interposing
to preserve him,) he *felt no harm*—Received no in-
jury, and took no further notice of what had hap-
pened. *Howbeit, they looked when he should have
swollen*—The islanders, knowing that the bite of a
viper was wont to occasion a sudden and painful
death, expected the venom left in Paul's flesh would
have caused a burning and swelling, and that he
would instantly have fallen down dead. But Christ
now fulfilled in Paul the promise made to his disci-
ples, *they shall take up serpents, and if they drink
any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. But after
they had looked a great while*—Expecting every
moment the pernicious effects of the venom to ap-
pear, to their astonishment they *saw no harm come
to him*—God hereby intended to make him remark-
able among this barbarous people, and so to prepare
the way for their receiving the doctrine of salvation
from his lips: *they changed their minds, and said
that he was a god*—Some deity, descended in a hu-
man form; supposing that no less power than that
of a god could ward off so extreme a danger. Such
is the stability of human reason! A little before he
was a murderer; and presently he is a god! Just
like the people of Lystra; one hour sacrificing to
this same apostle, and the next stoning him. 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. Grotius, Whitby, and some
others, think that these Melitese took Paul for Her-
cules, *Αλεξιακος, (the driver away of evil,)* who was
worshipped in this island, and was, according to
Ptolemy, one of the gods of the Phenicians.

Verses 7-10. *In the same quarters*—In the neigh-
bourhood of the place where the ship was stranded,
and the shipwrecked company had met with such
kind treatment; *were possessions of the chief man
of the island*—The chief in wealth, if not in power
also; *who received and lodged us three days*—The
first three days of their stay in the island, till they
could all be disposed of properly through the island.
For such goodness Paul was soon able to make some
return. *For the father of Publius lay sick of a fever*
—The providence of God so ordering it, that he
should be ill just at this time, that the cure of him
might be a present recompense to Publius for his

A. M. 4066. nours; and when we departed, they
A. D. 62. laded us with such things as were
necessary.

11 ¶ And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux.

generosity, and the cure of him by a miracle, a recompense particularly for his kindness to Paul. *To whom Paul entered in and prayed*—Thus showing that he could do nothing of himself, but looked to, and depended on, the living and true God alone for the recovery of the sick person; *and laid his hands on him*—Thus, not acting as a physician, to restore him by medicines, but as an apostle, to cure him by miracle; *and healed him*—Made him perfectly well in an instant. Thus, by an extraordinary fact, God recommended the gospel and the ministry of Paul to Publius and his family, and indeed to the whole island. For the news of this miracle was soon spread abroad in all parts of it, so that *others also, who had diseases*—Of any kind, as many as were able to travel, or could any way be brought; *came and were healed*—In the same manner, by prayer and the imposition of Paul's hands. *Who also honoured us, &c.*—The sick people, who were thus miraculously cured, together with their relations and friends, being grateful to Paul, rewarded him and his company very liberally, performing to them, during their abode in the island, every office of kindness in their power; and, at their departure, lading them *with such things as were necessary*—For their voyage.

Verse 11. *And after three months*—The three winter months, which time Paul doubtless improved, as a true labourer in the Lord's vineyard. *We departed in a ship of Alexandria, whose sign was Castor and Pollux*—Two fabulous semi-deities of the Greeks and Romans, who were said to be the sons of Jupiter and Leda, and, being translated to the heavens, formed the constellation called *Gemini, or the Twins*, a constellation which, when it appeared, was deemed propitious to mariners. And, as it was the custom of the ancients to have images of their gods, both on the head and stern of their ships, this Alexandrian ship had these, either on her prow or stern. And yet, in a ship having such an idolatrous image, Paul did not refuse to sail, considering it as being only the name of the ship.

Verse 12. *And*—Soon after, leaving Malta, they made the island of Sicily; and *landing at Syracuse, tarried there three days*—The ship, probably, having some goods to put ashore, or some to take in there; for the ship seems to have been making a trading voyage. This city was the metropolis of Sicily, situated on the east side of the island, and had a beautiful prospect for every entrance, both by sea and land. The port, which had the sea on both sides of it, was almost wholly surrounded with elegant buildings; all the suburbs on both sides being banked up, and supported with walls of marble. While in its splendour, this city was considered as

12 And landing at Syracuse, we tarried there three days. A. M. 4067. A. D. 63.

13 And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli:

the largest and richest belonging to the Greeks; being twenty-two miles in circuit, and equalling Carthage in its wealth. It was called *Quadruplex*, because it was divided into four parts; the first of which contained the famous temple of Jupiter; the second, the temple of Fortune; the third, a large amphitheatre, and a surprising statue of Apollo; and the fourth, which was the island of Ortygia, the two temples of Diana and Minerva, and the celebrated fountain of *Arethusa*. About two hundred and ten years before the birth of Christ, this city was taken by Marcellus, the Roman general, and, in storming the place, the famous Archimedes was slain by a common soldier, while he was intent upon his geometrical studies. He was calmly drawing his lines, and proceeding in the demonstration of a problem, when a soldier entered the room and clapped a sword to his throat. "Hold," said Archimedes, "one moment, and my demonstration will be finished." But the soldier, equally regardless of his prayer and demonstration, killed him instantly; Marcellus extremely regretting his death, and afterward showing singular favour to his relations for his sake. The reader that will be at the pains of consulting the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, on the word *SYRACUSE*, will find a particular account of the manner in which this illustrious geometrician, Archimedes, defended the city for a long time, by his powerful engines, against all the valour and power of the Romans, beating their galleys to pieces by huge stones projected from his machines, and by his levers, chains, and hooks from the walls, weighing the ships out of the water, tossing them to and fro, whirling them round, and dashing them in pieces against each other, or against the points of rocks which projected under the walls, or sinking them to the bottom, destroying several also by burning-glasses. In short, the account of the power of his engines is, perhaps, the most extraordinary that occurs in history; and if it were not well authenticated, would exceed all belief. How these stupendous effects were produced, few, if any, have been able to comprehend. Syracuse was afterward rebuilt by Augustus, and had, at the time Paul visited it, recovered itself so as to answer its former splendour. It had at length three castles, three walls, and a marble gate, and was able to send out twelve thousand heroes, and four hundred ships; but it received such a blow from the Saracens, A. D. 884, when they razed it, that it has not been able to recover itself since. See *Calmet* and the *Universal History*, vol. vii. p. 516; vol. xvii. p. 29.

Verses 13-15. *From thence we fetched a compass*—Coasted round the eastern shore of Sicily; and *came to Rhegium*—A town on the Italian shore,

A. M. 4067. 14 Where we found brethren, and
A. D. 63. were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and the Three Taverns; whom

^h Chap. xxiv.

opposite to Messina in Sicily; and after one day—Having a favourable gale, we pursued our voyage; and came to Puteoli—A great seaport town of Campania, not far from Naples. Here finding Christian brethren—To whom Paul was known, at least by his fame; we were desired to stay with them seven days—That they might have an opportunity of hearing Paul and conversing with him. And Julius was so good as to grant their request. After which he set out with the prisoners and soldiers for Rome, by land. And now the brethren in that city, to whom Paul was well known by his letter lately written to the Romans, hearing that he was on the road, came out to meet him—Not being ashamed of his bonds; and some of them came as far as the town of Appii Forum—Which was fifty-one miles from the city; and others to the Three Taverns, a town at the distance of thirty miles. This unlooked-for testimony of respect from the brethren at Rome, making a strong impression upon the apostle's mind, he thanked God for it, and took courage—Finding Christ was at Rome also, and being greatly refreshed by the company and conversation of such affectionate friends. After which they all went forward to the city, where, it is supposed, they arrived in the February of A. D. 63. 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, (Acts ii. 10,) and being then converted themselves, carried the gospel thither at their return.

Verse 16. And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard—Or prefect of the pretorian band, according to his commission. It was customary for prisoners who were brought to Rome, to be delivered to this officer, who had the charge of the state prisoners. The person who now held this office was the noted Afranius Burrhus. But Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him—Dr. Lardner proves, from Ulpian, that the proconsul was to judge whether a person, under accusation, was to be thrown into prison, or delivered to a soldier to be guarded, or committed to sureties, or trusted on his parole of honour. The humanity with which Julius all along treated the apostle merits particular attention. At Sidon he allowed him to go ashore to visit his Christian friends. And, when they were shipwrecked on the island of Melita, he kept the soldiers from killing the prisoners that he might save Paul. And because some brethren at Puteoli wished Paul to remain with them a week, he was so

a

when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. A. M. 4067. A. D. 63.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but ^h Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him.

25; xxvii. 3.

good as to grant their desire. And, as this worthy person is said by Luke to have courteously entreated Paul through the whole of the voyage, he may have bestowed on him favours which are not particularly mentioned. Those, however, which are mentioned deserve notice, as proofs of esteem and love from a heathen very honourable to the apostle. Julius's regard for Paul was founded, at first, on the favourable opinion which Festus, Agrippa, and the tribunes, had formed of his cause, and which, no doubt, they made known to Julius before he left Cesarea. But his esteem of the apostle must have increased by what he himself observed in the course of their acquaintance. For, in his conversation, Paul expressed such just views of God and religion, and of the duties of morality; and, in his actions, showed such benevolence to mankind, and such a concern for their real interest, as could not fail to endear him to so great a friend to virtue, as this centurion seems to have been. Besides, if Paul was represented to Julius as one who could work miracles, that circumstance alone would induce him to treat him with great respect. And more especially, when he became himself a witness to the accomplishment of Paul's prediction concerning their shipwreck, and to the miraculous cures which he performed on the sick, in the island of Melita. Julius, therefore, having so great a friendship for Paul, and, it may be, a favourable opinion of the Christian doctrine, we may suppose that when he delivered the prisoners to Afranius Burrhus, who was then pretorian prefect, he did justice to Paul by representing him, not only as entirely innocent of any real crime, but as a man of singular probity, who was highly favoured of God, and endowed with extraordinary powers. To this representation, as well as to Festus's letter, the apostle was probably indebted for the indulgence which was shown him immediately on his arrival at Rome. For he was not shut up in a common jail, with the other prisoners, but from the very first was allowed to dwell in his own hired house, with a soldier, who kept him by means of a chain fastened to his right wrist, and to the soldier's left arm. This is the chain of which Paul so often speaks in his epistles, calling it his bonds; and which he showed to the Jews, when they came to him on the third day after his arrival. Who, that had met Paul in these bonds, would have guessed at his real character, and have imagined him to have been one of the most upright, benevolent, and generous of mankind? Yet such the apostle undoubtedly was. See Macknight and Doddridge.

855

A. M. 4067. 17 ¶ And it came to pass, that after
A. D. 63. three days, Paul called the chief of the
Jews together. And when they were come to-
gether, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren,
though I have committed nothing against the
people, or customs of our fathers, yet ^k was I de-
livered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands
of the Romans :

18 Who ^l when they had examined me,
would have let *me* go, because there was no
cause of death in me.

19 But when the Jews spake against *it*, ^m I
was constrained to appeal unto Cesar ; not

^l Chap. xxiv. 12, 13 ; xxv. 8.—^k Chap. xxi. 33.—^j Chap.
xxii. 24 ; xxiv. 10 ; xxv. 8 ; xxvi. 31.—^m Chapter xxv. 11.
ⁿ Chap. xxvi. 6, 7.

Verses 17-20. *And after three days*—Given to rest
and prayer ; *Paul called the chief of the Jews to-
gether*—His great love to the Jews induced him,
wherever he came and found any, to labour in the
first place to promote their salvation ; and as he was
now bound, and could not conveniently go round
to them, he sent for the chief of them to come to
him, his confinement not being so strict but he had
liberty to receive the visits of his friends. He had
reason to suppose that they might be offended, and
imbibe prejudices against him, when they heard he
had appealed from the courts in Judea to Cesar,
and he judged it would be very proper for him to
make an apology to them for so doing ; and, in order
to prepare their minds for receiving the gospel, to
suffer nothing to be wanting on his part, to make
them sensible of the affectionate regard that he had
for them, notwithstanding the injurious treatment
he had met with from their countrymen at Jerusa-
lem. For these purposes he wished to have this
interview with them. *And when*—According to his
desire ; *they were cometogether*—In the private house
where he dwelt ; *he said, Men and brethren*—Ad-
dressing them in respectful language ; and thereby
intimating, that he expected to be treated by them
both as a man and a brother ; *though I have com-
mitted nothing against the people, &c.*—Seeing him
chained, they might have suspected he had com-
mitted something against them. Therefore he first
obviates this suspicion. *Yet was I delivered pri-
soner to the Romans*—Their accusing him as a crimi-
nal before Felix the governor, and demanding judg-
ment against him, was, in effect, delivering him
prisoner into the hands of the Romans ; and that at
a time when he desired no more but a fair and im-
partial trial by their own law. But if he had de-
clared the whole truth in this matter, the Jews
would have appeared in a worse light than that in
which he now represented them ; for he might with
truth have asserted that they would have murdered
him without any colour of law or justice, if the Ro-
mans had not protected him. *Who, when they had
examined me*—And had heard all that my adversa-

ries could offer against me ; *would have let me go*—
That is, would have set me at liberty ; *because there
was no cause of death in me*—No crime, or offence,
which they could judge to be a sufficient reason for
putting me to death, or for keeping me under longer
confinement. *But when the Jews spake against it*
—He speaks tenderly of them, not mentioning their
repeated attempts upon his life. *I was constrained
to appeal unto Cesar*—To remove my cause to
Rome, finding that the governors of Judea, one after
another, stood so much in awe of the Jews, that they
would not discharge me for fear of making them
their enemies. *Not that I had ought to accuse my
nation of*—Not that I had any design to accuse
others ; for, whatever injury I have received from
any particular persons, I heartily forgive them, and
wish the whole Jewish people, without exception,
even my most inveterate enemies among them, all
possible prosperity and happiness ; but I was forced,
contrary to my inclination, to make this appeal,
purely in my own defence, and to prevent that
assassination which I knew some persons were con-
triving against me. *For this cause, therefore, have
I called for you*—As soon as I came hither ; *to see
and speak with you*—With a view, if possible, to
prevent any prejudice which might be entertained
by any of you to my disadvantage ; *because that
for the hope of Israel*—What Israel hopes for,
namely, the Messiah and the resurrection ; *I am
bound with this chain*—And exposed to all these
sufferings ; and therefore, rather merit your com-
passion and friendship, than your resentment.

20 For this cause therefore have I called for
you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you* : be-
cause that ⁿ for the hope of Israel I am bound
with ^o this chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither re-
ceived letters out of Judea concerning thee,
neither any of the brethren that came showed
or spake any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee, what thou
thinkest : for as concerning this sect, we know
that every where ^p it is spoken against.

^o Chap. xxvi. 29 ; Eph. iii. 1 ; iv. 1 ; vi. 20 ; 2 Tim. i. 16 ;
ii. 9 ; Philem. 10, 13.—^p Luke ii. 34 ; Chap. xxiv. 5, 14 ; 1 Pet.
ii. 12 ; iv. 14.

Verses 21, 22. *And they said, We have neither re-
ceived letters, &c.*—There must have been a par-
ticular providence in this ; *neither any of the bre-
thren, (the Jews,) that came from Judea, showed or
spake any harm of thee*—This was very strange if
true : that the restless and inveterate rage of the
Jews, which had followed Paul whithersoever he
went, should not follow him to Rome also, to get
him condemned there, was remarkable. But, per-
haps his accusers had not yet arrived ; or the Jews
did not dare to pursue him with their accusations

A. M. 4067. 23 ¶ And when they had appointed
A. D. 63. him a day, there came many to him
into his lodging: ^a to whom he expounded and
testified the kingdom of God, persuading them
concerning Jesus, ^r both out of the law of Mo-
ses, and out of the prophets, from morning till
evening.

24 And ^s some believed the things which were
spoken, and some believed not.

25 And when they agreed not among them-
selves, they departed, after that Paul had
spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost

^a Luke xxiv. 27; Chap. xvii. 3; xix. 8.—^r Chap. xxvi. 6, 22.
^s Chap. xiv. 4; xvii. 4; xix. 9.—^t Isa. vi. 9; Jer. v. 21; Ezek.

into the court, to which, by appealing to Cesar, he had now removed his cause. *But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest*—What thy opinions or sentiments are, and what thou hast to say in defence of thy doctrine, as a disciple and missionary of Jesus of Nazareth; *for as concerning this sect*—Which professes so high regard to him; *we know*—In the general; *that it is everywhere spoken against*—And held in great contempt. This was not, nor is it ever a proof of a bad cause; but a very probable mark of a good one. Some think this refers to a fact mentioned by Justin Martyr, (*Dialog. cum Tryph.*, pp. 171, and 368,) and afterward by Origen, (*contra Cels.*, lib. vi.,) and Eusebius, (*Ecc. Hist.*, lib. iv. cap. 18,) that the Jews at Jerusalem sent chosen men, of the most distinguished character, all over the world, representing the Christians as an atheistical sect, and charging them with the grossest calumnies, which the ignorant heathen advanced against them. The fact itself is very credible, but as the exact date of it cannot be ascertained, it possibly might take place after this period, and so not be the cause of the reproach now everywhere cast on the Christians. The carnal mind, which is enmity against God and his holy religion, will always dispose those who are only *born after the flesh*, to hate, despise, and persecute those *that are born after the Spirit*, and this circumstance sufficiently accounts for all the obloquy and ill treatment which the disciples of Jesus met with.

Verse 23. *And when they had appointed him a day*—Which might best suit the convenience of most of them that were present; *they came to him at his lodging*—For though they were much prejudiced against the Christian religion, as being everywhere maligned, yet they were willing to be accurately informed concerning it, which the Jews at Jerusalem were not. And though Paul appeared among them, with every disadvantage, having been sent to Rome a prisoner, and being at this very time bound with a chain; yet they were willing to give him a patient hearing, judging it unjust to condemn a man, a party, or cause, unheard. So far, it seems, had they imbibed the fair and equitable principles of the imperial city wherein they resided. *To whom*

by Esaias the prophet unto our fa- A. M. 4067.
thers, A. D. 63.

26 Saying, 'Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive.

27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their eyes*, and hear with *their ears*, and understand with *their heart*, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

xii. 2; Matt. xiii. 14, 15; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 40; Rom. xi. 8.

he expounded—Various passages of their own Scriptures, as well as the chief principles of the Christian faith; *and testified the kingdom of God*—That is, bore testimony to the erection and establishment of God's kingdom, under the Messiah; or set forth the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, showing that it was a spiritual, not a temporal kingdom; *persuading them concerning Jesus*—Namely, that Jesus of Nazareth, in whose name he preached, was the very person foretold as the Lord of that kingdom; *both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets*—That is, he showed that the birth, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, had all happened exactly according to the predictions concerning the Messiah contained in the law and the prophets, and from that agreement he argued and proved that Jesus was their long-expected Messiah. On this head, he had as much need to *persuade* as to convince, their *will* making as strong a resistance as their understanding. And in such an important light did he view this subject, and so much was his heart set upon it, that he continued his discourse *from morning till evening*—Probably eight or ten hours, urging it upon his hearers with all his might; for he knew not when he should have such another opportunity, and therefore was willing to make the most of this.

Verses 24–26. *And some believed the things which were spoken*—Were happily persuaded of the truth of Paul's doctrine, and were induced to embrace Christianity; *and some*—On the other hand, were so much under the influence of strong prejudice and hardened, that they *believed not*—But rejected the gospel, amidst all the evidence which Paul advanced to support it. *And when they agreed not among themselves*—But were of opposite opinions; *they departed*—The assembly broke up; *after that Paul had spoken one word*—In the close of all, on account of that obstinacy which he observed to prevail in most of them; *Well spake the Holy Ghost unto our fathers*—What is equally applicable to you; *saying, Go unto this people*—Perverse and obstinate as they are; *and say, Hearing ye shall hear, &c.*—That is, ye shall most surely hear; *and shall*—Or rather,

A. M. 4067. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, A. M. 4067.
A. D. 63. that the salvation of God is sent
unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear
it.

29 And when he had said these words, the
Jews departed, and had great reasoning among
themselves.

* Matt. xxi. 41, 43; Chap. xiii. 46, 47; xviii. 6; xxii. 21;

will; not understand—The words seem to denote a judicial blindness, consequent upon a wilful and obstinate resistance of the truth. See notes on Isa. vi. 9, 10; Matt. xiii. 14; John xii. 40. We may observe here, that this passage of Isaiah is quoted oftener in the New Testament than any other taken from the Old; namely, no fewer than six times: (see the margin:) and yet in such a variety of expressions, as plainly proves that the apostles did not confine themselves exactly, either to the words of the original Hebrew or of the Greek version.

Verses 28, 29. *Be it known, therefore, &c.*—Having reproved the unbelieving and disobedient among his hearers, he assured them that the salvation of God, which they despised and seemed to fortify themselves against, was sent unto the Gentiles—Namely, more especially from that time; and that they would hear and embrace it, and so inherit the blessings which these Jews rejected. His words imply, that he would, from that day forward, turn to the Gentiles; and would seek, in their faith and obedience, his consolation under that grief which the infidelity of his brethren gave him. Before this, it must be observed, no apostle had been at Rome. St. Paul was the first. *And when he had said these words*—The last, it seems, that he now uttered among them; *the Jews departed*—Out of the place, not being prevailed upon to receive Jesus as the Messiah; and had great reasoning—Greek, *συζητων, disputations; among themselves*—Some thinking there was considerable weight in what Paul had urged to defend the gospel, while others, still retaining their sinful and inveterate prejudices against it, were enraged, and spake of him and his arguments with great contempt and indignation.

Verses 30, 31. *And Paul dwelt two whole years at Rome, in his own hired house*—Before he was heard by Cesar, or his deputy, upon his appeal; and received all that came to him—Whether Jews or Gentiles. *Preaching the kingdom of God*—As established in the person of his beloved Son; and teaching those things which concerned the Lord Jesus—And the religion he had instituted in the world; with all confidence—All freedom of speech; no man forbidding him—Neither emperor, nor senate, nor magistrate, nor soldier, nor priest, nor people, though in a heathen city, devoted to idolatry, in the least hindering or forbidding him. It appears, from this passage, that the persecution against the Christians at Rome was not then begun: the Romans had not yet made any laws against the disciples of Jesus; for what is here related happened

30 ¶ And Paul dwelt two whole A. M. 4067.
years in his own hired house, and A. D. 63.
received all that came in unto him,

31 * Preaching the kingdom of God, and
teaching those things which concern the Lord
Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man for-
bidding him.

xxvi. 17, 18; Rom. xi. 11.—* Chap. iv. 31; Eph. vi. 19.

within the first ten years of the reign of Nero, before his cruelty against Christians broke out. Observe, reader, that Rome heathen of old was far less cruel, and much more courteous to the preachers of the gospel, than Rome antichristian has since been. Then an apostle might preach two years together, without molestation, in his own hired house, to all comers: but now a minister of God must there have no public or private place of meeting to worship God according to his word and will, without danger of an inquisition! As the apostle's house was open to every comer, it is not to be doubted that many resorted to him daily; some out of curiosity to hear and see the chief of a sect which was now become so numerous, and was said to be endued with extraordinary powers, and others from an honest inclination seriously to inquire into the strange things which he spake concerning Jesus of Nazareth, and to examine the evidence which he offered in support of them. Now to all these the apostle willingly preached, bearing witness to Christ at Rome, even as formerly in Jerusalem. And though Luke has not mentioned it, Paul himself hath told us, that his testimony concerning Jesus was well received, and that he made many converts in Rome, among whom were some even of the emperor's domestics, whose salutation he sent to the Philippians, chap. iv. 22. Further, he says, that the brethren in Rome, encouraged by his example, perhaps also strengthened by the gift of the Spirit, which he imparted to them, according to his promise, (Rom. i. 11,) preached the gospel more openly and boldly than they would otherwise have done, Phil. i. 14, 15. Such was the victory of the word of God, and such progress had the gospel made by the end of these two years, in the parts of the world which lay west of Jerusalem, by the ministry of Paul among the Gentiles. How far eastward the other apostles had carried it, in the same time, history does not inform us. As Luke concludes his history with Paul's abode at Rome before his journey into Spain, we may infer that he wrote both his gospel and the Acts while the apostle was still living, of whose actions he was himself an eyewitness, and by whom, it is very probable, this book was revised, as the ancients also say his gospel was. During this, his first confinement at Rome, the apostle wrote four epistles, which still remain; namely, one to the Ephesians, another to the Philippians, a third to the Colossians, and a fourth to Philemon: and after his release, he wrote his epistle to the Hebrews. In the epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, Timothy joined Paul. But he is not

mentioned in the inscription of the epistle to the Ephesians, though it was written about the same time with the others, and sent along with the epistle to the Colossians. From this circumstance we may infer, that the letters to the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon, were written a little before the letter to the Ephesians, and while Timothy was at Rome; but that after they were finished, and before the letter to the Ephesians was begun, he left the city to go to Philippi, agreeably to the apostle's promise to the Philippians to send Timothy to them soon, (chap. ii. 19,) and to what he tells the Hebrews, that Timothy was actually sent away, chap. xiii. 23. The letter to the Ephesians, being written soon after that to the Colossians, and while the matter, and form, and very expressions of that letter were fresh in the apostle's mind, the two resemble each other so much, that they have been termed *twin epistles*, and throw light on each other. For which reason the apostle very properly ordered the Colossians to cause their epistle to be read in the church of the Laodiceans, to which it is supposed the Ephesians, agreeably to the directions given them by Tychicus, sent a copy of their epistle. If this conjecture be right, the epistle to the Ephesians is the letter from Laodicea, which the Colossians were ordered to read in their church, Col. iv. 16.

It must now be observed, that Paul, during his two years' confinement at Rome, having preached the gospel with great success, and edified the churches of Greece and Asia by the divinely-inspired letters which he wrote during that period, was at length released, probably in the spring of A. D. 65, answering to the ninth year of Nero. Luke, indeed, has not directly mentioned Paul's release; but by limiting his confinement to two years, he has intimated that he was then set at liberty. His confinement at Rome issued thus favourably through the goodness of his cause, and through the intercession of some powerful friends in Cesar's family, who had embraced the Christian faith, and who were greatly interested in the fortune of one who was so strong a pillar of the new religion which they had espoused.

Some have questioned whether he ever returned into the east again, which yet, from Philem., verse 22, and Heb. xiii. 23, he seems to have expected. Clemens Romanus (*ad Cor.* epist. i. cap. 5) expressly tells us, that he preached in the west, and that to its utmost bounds, which must at least include Spain, whither he intended to go, Rom. xv. 24, 25. Theodoret adds, that he went to the islands of the sea, and

numbers Gaul (that is, France) and Britain among the *disciples of the tent-maker*. But in what order he took these places, or how long he remained in any of them, cannot be determined. We are told, however, that about A. D. 65, or 67, (for chronologers differ,) he returned to Rome, where, some say he met with Peter, who was thrown into a prison, with other Christians, on pretence of being concerned in the burning of the city. Chrysostom tells us, that he here converted one of Nero's concubines, which so incensed that cruel prince, that he put him to death; probably after an imprisonment, in which the second epistle to Timothy was written. How long Paul continued in prison, at this time, we know not; but from his being twice brought before the emperor, or his prefect, it may be presumed that he was imprisoned a year or more before he was condemned.

The danger to which Paul was exposed, by this second imprisonment, appeared so great to his assistants, that most of them fled from the city. Luke alone remained with him: and even he was so intimidated, that he durst not stand by him when he made his first answer, 2 Tim. iv. 11, 16. From this epistle we learn, also, that although the apostle's assistants, terrified with the danger that threatened him, forsook him and fled, he was not altogether without consolation. For the brethren of Rome came to him privately, and ministered to him, as we learn from his salutation to Timothy, 2 Tim. iv. 21.

It is universally agreed, among all ancient writers, who mention his death, that he was beheaded at Aquæ Salvæ, three miles from Rome; for, being free of that city, he could not be crucified, as Peter was, according to the tradition of the Latin Church, on the very same day. It is said, and there is great reason to believe it, that this glorious confessor gave his head to the fatal stroke with the greatest cheerfulness, and also that he was buried in the Via Ostensis, two miles from Rome, where Constantine the Great erected a church to his memory, A. D. 318, which was successively repaired and beautified by Theodosius the Great, and the Empress Placidia. But his most glorious monument remains in his immortal writings, which come next under our consideration: and the author of this work will esteem it one of the greatest honours which can be conferred upon him, and the most important service his pen can perform for the church of Christ, to be, in any measure, instrumental in illustrating them, and rendering them more edifying than they had been before to the reader.

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