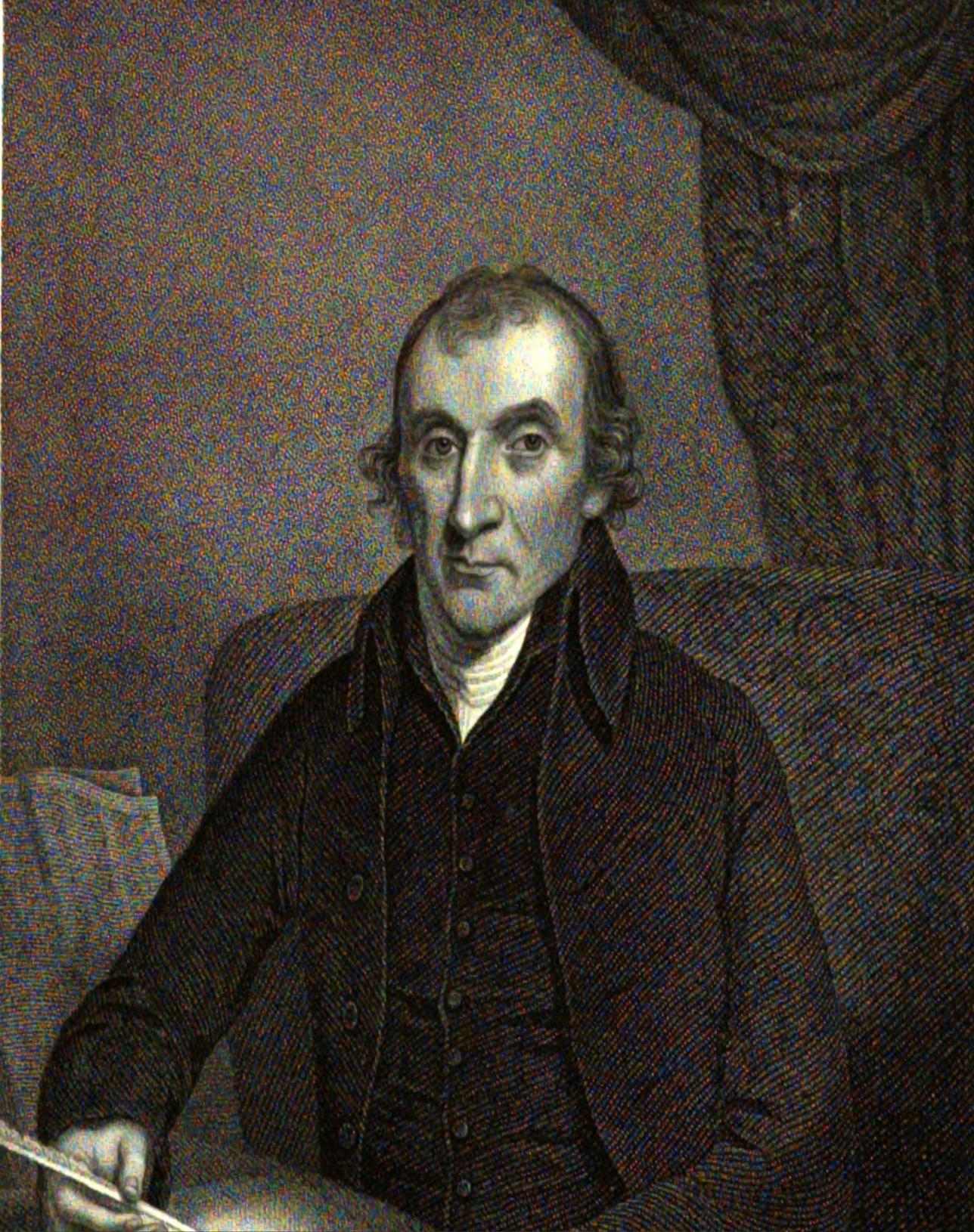

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*The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and
New Testaments (according to the ...*

Joseph Benson

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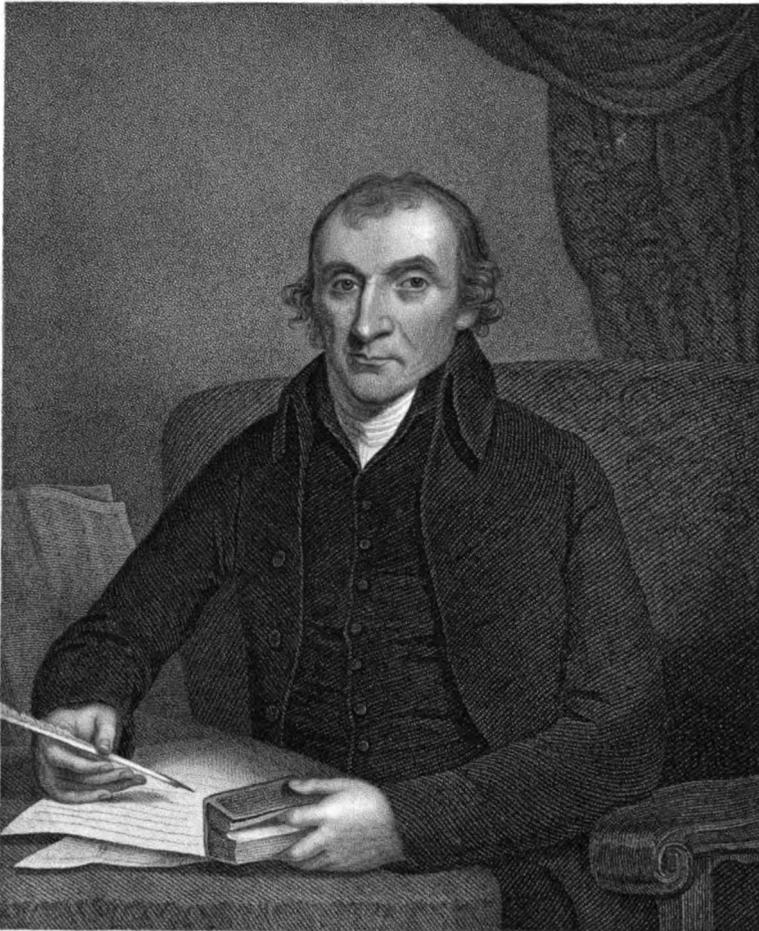


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JOSEPH LONGKING, PRINTER.

1846.

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AT THE

FOR

THE
NEW TESTAMENT

OF OUR
LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

(ACCORDING TO THE PRESENT AUTHORIZED VERSION.)

WITH
CRITICAL, EXPLANATORY, AND PRACTICAL

NOTES:

THE MARGINAL READINGS OF THE MOST APPROVED PRINTED COPIES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WITH SUCH OTHERS AS APPEAR TO BE COUNTENANCED BY THE

ORIGINAL GREEK:

A COPIOUS COLLECTION OF PARALLEL TEXTS;

SUMMARIES OF EACH BOOK AND CHAPTER;

**AND THE DATE OF EVERY TRANSACTION AND EVENT RECORDED IN THIS PART OF THE
SACRED ORACLES, AGREEABLY TO THE CALCULATIONS OF THE
MOST CORRECT CHRONOLOGERS.**

BY REV. JOSEPH BENSON.

VOLUME I.—MATTHEW TO THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

New-York:

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THE
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LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

INTRODUCTION.

AS the whole revelation of the will of God to mankind is usually called the BIBLE, from the Greek *Βιβλος*, *Biblos*, that is, the BOOK, by way of eminence; so this sacred code with us Christians is usually divided into the OLD and NEW TESTAMENT, or rather New Dispensation, Law, or Covenant, as the original expression, *η καινη διαθηκη*, might be more properly translated. The latter word, indeed, rendered "testament," originally and primarily signifies "a disposition" or "appointment of things:" and, because among men things are ordered, disposed, or appointed, by a law, or by contract or covenant, or by will and testament, the word has been often used to signify any of these. But, inasmuch as a testament is of no force until the testator be dead, and Christ did not die, nor indeed come into the world, till after the law and the prophets (that is, the writings containing the law of Moses, and what other holy men, termed prophets, delivered by inspiration from God) were finished, it does not appear to be quite proper to call those ancient records by the name of "testament;" especially considering that one part of them, namely, the ceremonial law, was abolished by the testator's death, and another great part of them fulfilled in his coming and dying. The name of "testament," however, belongs more properly to the books of the evangelists, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, which not only contain the "New Law," (so far as it is new, either in respect of the full and proper interpretation of the moral law, or in regard of the law concerning the worship of God under the gospel, and the government of the church,) but also the new covenant, or "New Dispensation" of the covenant of grace. For, whereas the covenant of grace was first made with, and revealed to Adam, and in and by him to the following patriarchs, and through them to the ages in which they lived; and was declared and set forth a second time, chiefly in types and shadowy representations, to Israel by Moses; it is much more clearly and fully revealed in these books, which contain a third, and more perfect, and indeed the last dispensation of it, and are also the last will and testament of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

It may be observed further here, nearly in the words of Dr. Campbell, that although the expression, *η καινη διαθηκη*, by which the religious institution of Christ is frequently denominated, "is almost always in the writings of the apostles and evangelists rendered by our translators, 'the New Testament;' yet the word *διαθηκη* by itself, except in a very few places, is always there rendered, not testament, but covenant; and is the Greek word whereby the LXX. have uniformly translated the Hebrew, כְּרִית, *berith*, which our translators in the Old Testament have invariably rendered 'covenant.' That the Hebrew term corresponds much better to the English word 'covenant,' though not in every case perfectly equivalent, than to 'testament,' there can be no question; at the same time it must be owned, that the word *διαθηκη*, in classical use, is more frequently rendered 'testament;' the proper Greek word for covenant being *συνθηκη*, which is not found in the New Testament, and occurs only thrice in the Septuagint. But that the Scriptural sense of the Greek word is more fitly expressed by our term 'covenant,' will not be doubted by any body who considers the constant application of the Hebrew word, so rendered in the Old Testament, and of the Greek word, in most places at least, where it is used in the New. What has led translators, ancient and modern, [sometimes.] to render it 'testament,' seems to be, "the manner wherein the author of the epistle to the Hebrews argues,

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chapter ix. 16, 17, in allusion to the classical acceptance of the term. But however much it was necessary to give a different turn to the expression in that passage, in order to make the author's argument as intelligible to the English, as it is in the original to the Greek reader, this [certainly] was not a sufficient reason for giving a version to the word in other places that neither suits the context, nor is conformable to the established use of the term in the sacred writings.

"The term, 'new,' is added to distinguish it from the 'old covenant,' that is, the dispensation of Moses." It may be observed here, by the way, "that often the language of theological systems, so far from assisting us to understand the language of holy writ, tends rather to mislead us. The two covenants are always in Scripture the two dispensations, or religious institutions; that under Moses is the 'old,' that under the Messiah is the 'new.' It is not denied that, in the latitude wherein the term is used in holy writ, the command under the sanction of death, which God gave to Adam in paradise, may, like the ordinance of circumcision, with sufficient propriety be termed a 'covenant;' but it is pertinent to observe that it is never so denominated in Scripture; and that when mention is made in the epistles of the two covenants, the 'old' and the 'new,' or the first and the second, (for there are two so called by way of eminence,) there appears no reference to any thing that related to Adam. In all such places, Moses and Jesus are contrasted, the Jewish economy and the Christian, mount Sinai, in Arabia, whence the law was promulgated, and mount Sion in Jerusalem, where the gospel was first published. It is proper to observe further, that, from signifying the two religious dispensations, they came soon to denote the books wherein what related to these dispensations was contained; the sacred writings of the Jews being called *η παλαια διαθηκη*, and the writings superadded by the apostles and evangelists, *η καινη διαθηκη*. We have one example in Scripture of this use of the former appellation. The apostle says, speaking of his countrymen, 'Until this day remaineth the veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament,' 2 Cor. iii. 14, *επι τη αναγνωσει της παλαιας διαθηκης*. The word, in this application, is always rendered in our language, 'testament.' We have in this followed the Vulgate, as most modern translators also have done. In the Geneva French, the word is rendered both ways in the title, that the one may serve for explaining the other, in which they have copied Beza, who says, *Testamentum novum, sive Fœdus novum*, 'the New Testament,' or 'the New Covenant.' That the second rendering of the word is the better version, is unquestionable; but the title appropriated by custom to a particular book is on the same footing with a proper name, which is hardly considered a subject of criticism. Thus we call Cesar's Diary, 'Cesar's Commentaries,' from their Latin name, though very different in meaning from the English word."

The title of this part of the Scriptures, in some of the original or Greek copies is, *της καινης διαθηκης απαντα*, *all the books*, or rather, *all the things of the New Covenant*: a title which, according to Dr. Hammond, refers to "the consent of the catholic church of God, and the tradition which bears testimony to these books as those, and those only, which complete the canon of the New Testament;" or all the books which have been handed down to the church so as to be received into the number of writings confessedly edited by the apostles and disciples of Christ. "I cannot indeed find," says Dr. Whitby, "that this title is of any considerable antiquity, but the more ancient title of *η καινη διαθηκη*, *the New Covenant*, prefixed to these books, doth plainly intimate the full and general persuasion of the ancient church, that in these books was comprised the whole new covenant, of which the blessed Jesus was the Mediator, and the apostles were the ministers and dispensers; and therefore they must surely contain all that is requisite for Christians to believe and do in order to salvation." It may be proper to observe here, that in this latter dispensation, the divine authority of the former is presupposed and built upon; and "the knowledge of what is contained in that introductory revelation is always presumed in the readers of the New Testament, which claims to be the consummation of an economy of God for the salvation of man; of which economy the Old Testament acquaints us with the occasion, origin, and early progress. Both are, therefore, intimately connected. Accordingly, though the two Testaments are written in different languages, the same idiom prevails in both; and in the historical parts at least, nearly the same character of style." The books of the New Testament obviously divide themselves into the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of the Apostles, and the Apocalypse or Revelation of St. John. The evangelists, through whom we have the gospels, are four, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. Their histories are termed *εωαγγελια*, *gospels*, or *good tidings*, as the word signifies, because they contain tidings of the appearance of the Messiah, and a circumstantial account of his birth, life, doctrine, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and

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exaltation to God's right hand, as the Redeemer and Saviour, the Mediator, Advocate, and Forerunner of his people. These sacred writers are therefore not called evangelists in the sense in which the same expression is used Eph. iv. 11, where it signifies a certain class of extraordinary officers in the Christian Church, such as Philip, Acts viii. 5-29; and xxi. 8; Timothy, 2 Tim. iv. 5; and many others: but as they were evangelical historians. Of those, however, Matthew and John were apostles, and preachers of the gospel, the other two were only disciples of the apostles; but, nevertheless, they doubtless occasionally laboured "in the word and doctrine."

That these four persons were the inspired authors of the four narratives which bear their names, we have, as Dr. Whitby shows at large, the clear and decisive testimony of the ancient fathers of the Christian Church. 1. A passage from Polycarp, (who, as Irenæus informs us, was made bishop of Smyrna by the apostles, and conversed with many who had seen the Lord,) is cited by Victor Capuanus, in which we have the names of these four gospels, as we at present have them, and the beginning of their several histories. 2. Justin Martyr, who, according to Eusebius, lived, *μετ' ἢ πολλῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων*, *not long after the apostles*, shows that these books were then well known by the name of "gospels," and were read by Christians in their assemblies every Lord's day. Yea, we learn from him that they were read by Jews, and might be read by heathens; and that we may not doubt that, by the "Memoirs of the Apostles, which," says he, "we call Gospels," he meant these four, received then in the church, he cites passages out of every one of them, declaring that they contained the words of Christ. 3. Irenæus, in the same century, not only cites them all by name, but declares that there were neither more nor fewer received by the church, and that they were of such authority that though the heretics of his time complained of their obscurity, depraved them, and endeavoured to lessen their authority, yet they durst not wholly disown them, or deny them to be the writings of those apostles whose names they bore. Moreover, he cites passages from every chapter of St. Matthew and St. Luke, from fourteen chapters of St. Mark, and from twenty chapters of St. John. 4. Clemens of Alexandria, having cited a passage from "the Gospel according to the Egyptians," informs his readers, "that it was not to be found in the four gospels delivered by the church." 5. Tatianus, who flourished in the same century, and before Irenæus, wrote *συναφειαν τινα και συναγωγην τῶν εὐαγγελίων*, *a chain or harmony of the gospels*, which he named, *το δια τεσσαρων*, *the gospel gathered out of the four gospels*. And the "apostolical constitutions" name them all, and command "that they be read in the church, the people standing up at the reading of them. 6. Inasmuch as these gospels were "written," says Irenæus, "by the will of God, to be the pillars and foundation of the Christian faith," the immediate successors of the apostles, who, says Eusebius, did great miracles by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and performed the work of evangelists in preaching Christ to those who had not yet heard the word, made it their business, when they had laid the foundation of that faith among them, *την των θειων εὐαγγελιων παραδιδουαι γραφην*, *to deliver to them the writing of the holy gospels*.

If it be objected here, that other gospels, bearing the names of other apostles, or gospels used by other nations, are mentioned as having existed in the early ages of Christianity, it may be answered, that this is so far from being derogatory from, or tending to diminish, the tradition of the church concerning these four gospels, that it tends highly to establish and confirm it, as will be evident from these considerations: 1. That we find no mention of any of these gospels until the close of the second century, and of few of them till the third or the fourth century; that is, not until long after the general reception of these four gospels by the whole church of Christ. For Justin Martyr and Irenæus, who cite large passages from these four gospels, take not the least notice of any other gospels, mentioned either by the heretics or by the orthodox. 2. They who speak of them in the close of the second, or in the following centuries, do it still with this remark, that "the gospels received by the tradition of the church were only four," and that the others belonged not to them, nor to the evangelical canon. For authorities the reader must be referred to Dr. Whitby, from whom the two last paragraphs are taken. He sums up the argument as follows: "Seeing, then, 1. That these four gospels were received without any doubt or contradiction by all Christians from the beginning, as the writings of those apostles and evangelists whose names they bear; and that these first Christians both acknowledged and testified that these writings were delivered to them by the apostles as the pillars or fundamental articles of their faith: seeing, 2. That these same gospels were delivered by the immediate successors of the apostles to all the churches which they converted or established, as the rule of their faith: seeing, 3. They were read from the beginning, as Justin Martyr testifies, in all

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assemblies of Christians, on the Lord's day, and so must have been early translated into those languages, in which alone they could be understood by some churches; namely, the Syriac and Latin: seeing, 4. They were generally cited in the second century for the confirmation of this faith, and the conviction of heretics, and the presidents of the assemblies exhorted those who heard them to practise and imitate what they heard: seeing, 5. We never hear of any other gospels till the close of the second century, and then hear only of them with a mark of reprobation, or a declaration that they were *ψευδεπιγραφα*, falsely imposed upon the apostles, that they belonged not to the evangelical canon, or to the gospels delivered to the churches by a succession of ecclesiastical persons, or to those gospels which they approved, or by which they confirmed their doctrines, but were to be rejected as the inventions of manifest heretics:—All these considerations must afford us a sufficient demonstration that all Christians then had unquestionable evidence that these four gospels were the genuine works of those apostles and evangelists whose names they bear, and so were worthy to be received as the records of their faith. What reason, then, can any persons of succeeding ages have to question what was so universally acknowledged by those who lived so near to that very age in which these gospels were edited, and who received them under the character of the holy and divine Scriptures?"

To this general and uncontrolled tradition respecting the authenticity of the gospels, we may add further strength from the following considerations: 1. That since our Jesus was a Prophet or Teacher sent from God, he must have left to his church some records of his doctrines and his Father's will; since he was a King, and was to reign for ever, he must have left some laws by which his subjects were to be for ever governed; as the Saviour of the world, he must have delivered to the world an account of the terms on which they might obtain the great salvation purchased by him; otherwise, he must have been a Prophet, Priest, and King in vain. Hence we infer that some certain records of those doctrines, laws, and conditions of salvation, must be extant. Now, unless these gospels and other scriptures of the New Testament contain those records, they must be wholly lost, and we must all be left under a manifest impossibility of knowing, and, therefore, of doing the will of God. For to say tradition might supply the want of writing is to contradict experience; since the traditions of the Jews made void that word of God they had received in writing; and how much more would they have done it had no such writing been delivered! Moreover, our blessed Lord spake many things which were not committed to writing. He taught the multitude "by the sea;" Mark ii. 13; "beyond Jordan;" Mark x. 1; "in the synagogues of Galilee;" Luke iv. 15; "at Nazareth;" Luke iv. 22; "Capernaum;" Luke iv. 31; "out of Simon's ship;" Luke v. 3; and very often "in the temple;" John vii. 14; viii. 2. He interpreted to the two disciples going to "Emmaus, throughout all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself;" Luke xxiv. 27. He discoursed to his disciples, after his resurrection, "touching the things of the kingdom of God;" Acts i. 3; and St. John assures us there were exceeding many miracles which Jesus did that were not written; John xx. 30. Now, whereas accounts of all those miracles and sermons which were written are entirely preserved, and firmly believed, tradition hath not preserved an account of one miracle or sermon which was not written; and, therefore, tradition can be no sure record or means of making known the doctrine or the laws of Christ. In a word, it is evident that even the church catholic hath lost a tradition delivered to her by St. Paul; for he says, "I told you these things," (namely, concerning antichrist,) "when I was with you; and now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time;" 2 Thess. ii. 5, 6. He also intimates, in the same chapter, at verse 15, where he exhorts them to hold fast these traditions, that they were of great moment to be known and retained; and yet these traditions have neither been retained by the Roman, nor by the catholic church, and it is confessed by Anselm and Esthius on the place, that, "though the Thessalonians knew, yet that we know not what they were;" so that the tradition which the church received touching this matter is wholly lost. How then can the church be relied on as a sure preserver and true teacher of unwritten tradition, since she has confessedly lost one of great moment deposited with the Thessalonians, and the primitive church.

2. That it was necessary that the Christian doctrine or revelation should be preserved in some writing, may be fairly concluded from the Holy Scriptures themselves. For, if St. Paul thought it necessary to write to the church at Rome, "to put them in remembrance of the grace of God given to them," Rom. xv. 15, as also to send to his Corinthians in writings "the things they had heard and

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did acknowledge," 2 Cor. i. 13, and to write "the same things" which he had taught to his Philipians; Phil. iii. 1;—if St. Peter thought it needful to write to the Jewish converts, "to stir up their sincere minds by way of remembrance, that they might be mindful of the commands of the apostles," 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2, though they at present knew them, and were "established in the truth;" 2 Pet. i. 12, 13; and St. Jude to write to the same persons, to remind them "of the common salvation;" verse 3;—if the beloved evangelist closes his gospel with these words, "These things were written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and believing ye might have life through his name;"—surely these persons could not but think it necessary that the essential doctrines of Christianity should be recorded in writing; and yet we are sure they have only been so recorded in those gospels and other writings contained in the canon of the New Testament; and, therefore, we cannot reasonably doubt of the authority of these gospels and other writings. Add to this, the apostles, and the Holy Spirit, who influenced them in the inditing of these gospels for the church's use, would certainly not be wanting in causing them to be transmitted to those Christians for whose use they were intended, because they would not be wanting to pursue the end for which these gospels were written; and they were therefore written, that the disciples "might know the certainty of those things in which they had been instructed," Luke i. 4, and might be engaged more firmly to believe that Jesus was the Christ.

3. It is evident that the age immediately succeeding could not be ignorant of what was thus delivered to them by the church from the apostles, as the pillar and ground of their faith; nor is it easy to conceive, that either they would have thus received these gospels, had not the apostles given them sufficient authority and indication of their duty so to do; or that these writings would have been esteemed so readily as the charters of the Christian faith, had not the apostles delivered them unto the churches under that character.

And lastly. We have good reason to suppose that the providence of God, which was so highly interested in the propagation of the Christian faith, and making it known to the world, would not permit false records of that faith to be so early and so generally imposed upon the Christian world.

From the same consent and suffrage of the primitive church, we may conclude, with the strongest evidence of reason, that these four gospels, and the other Scriptures, received then without doubt or contradiction by the church, were handed down to them uncorrupted in the substantial articles respecting faith and practice. For, 1. These records were generally dispersed through all the Christian churches, though at a great distance from each other, from the beginning of the second century. 2. They were universally acknowledged and consented to by men of great parts and learning, and of different persuasions. 3. They were preserved in the originals in the apostolical churches, among whom, says Tertullian, *authentice eorum literæ recitantur*, "their original letters are recited;" it being not to be doubted that they who received the originals from the apostles, and who had authentic copies of them given to them by their immediate successors, would carefully preserve them to posterity. 4. They were multiplied into divers versions, almost from the beginning, as we may rationally conclude, because the Church of Rome, and other churches which understood not the original Greek, having been founded in the apostles' days, cannot be reasonably supposed to have been long without a version of those Scriptures which were to be read by them in public and private. 5. They were esteemed by them as *digesta nostra*, "our law books," says Tertullian; *libri dei fieri dei fieri Scripture*, "divine books of God's inditing," or, "books which instruct men to lead a divine life," say the martyrs; and believed by all Christians to be *θειαι γραφαι*, "divine Scriptures," says Origen, and, therefore, as the records of their hopes and fears. 6. They were so constantly rehearsed in their assemblies by men whose office it was to read, explain, and enforce them, and exhort to the performance of the duties they enjoined, and so diligently read by the Christians, that they were riveted in the memories of many, and, according to Eusebius, some had them all by heart. 7. They were so frequently referred to in their writings, and passages of them so often cited by Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, and Origen, exactly as we now have them;—that it must be certain, from all these considerations, they were handed down to succeeding generations pure and uncorrupt.

And, indeed, from these considerations, we may with greater certainty infer, that the Scriptures were preserved entire from any designed corruption, than any person can, that the statutes of the land, or any other writings, histories, or records whatsoever, have been so preserved; because the evidence thereof depends upon more persons, and those more holy, and of consequence more averse

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to deceive, and more concerned that their writings should not be corrupted, than any men are, or have reason to be, respecting other writings. So that we must renounce all certainty of the authenticity of any record, or grant that it is certain these are the genuine records of the Christian faith. Again : The corruption of the word of God, or the substitution of any other doctrine in the place of that which had been delivered by the apostles, could not have been effected by any part or sect of Christians, without its being soon discovered by those who had embraced the Christian faith, and used the true copies of the word of God, in other churches of the Christian world. And, therefore, this supposed corruption, if it could at all have taken place, must have been the work of the whole body of Christians. But surely it cannot be reasonably supposed that the ages immediately succeeding the apostles should universally conspire to substitute their own inventions in the place of the word of God, and yet continue steadfast in, and suffer so much for, that faith which denounced the severest judgments against them who should corrupt his word ; or that so many men should, with the hazard of their lives and fortunes, avouch the gospel to be the truth of God, and yet make such a change even in the frame and constitution of its doctrine, as rendered it ineffectual, both to their own salvation and that of their posterity. Lastly, that these sacred records of the word of God have not been so corrupted as to cease to be an authentic and sufficient rule of faith and practice, may be argued from the providence of God. For nothing seems more inconsistent with his wisdom and goodness, as the Governor of the world and of his church, than to influence his servants to write the Scriptures, to be a rule of faith and manners for all future ages, and to require the belief of the doctrines, and the practice of the duties contained therein, and yet to suffer this divinely-inspired rule to be corrupted in things necessary to faith and practice. Who can imagine that God, who sent his Son into the world to declare this doctrine, and inspired his apostles to indite and preach it, and who by so many miracles confirmed it, should suffer any weak or ill-designing persons to corrupt or alter any of those terms on which the salvation of the world depended ? Surely none can think this rational but such as are of opinion that it is not absurd to say that God repented of his goodness and love to mankind in vouchsafing them the gospel ; or that he was so unkind to future generations, that he suffered wicked men to rob them of all the benefits intended them by this new declaration of his will. For since those very Scriptures, which have been received as the word of God, and used by the church as such, from its first ages, profess to contain the terms of our salvation ; to be Scriptures indited by men commissioned from Christ, and such as avouched themselves "apostles by the will of God, for the delivery of the faith of God's elect, and for the knowledge of the truth, which is after godliness, in hope of eternal life ;" they must either be the word of God in reality, or providence must have permitted such a forgery as renders it impossible for us to perform our duty in order to salvation ; for if the Scriptures of the New Testament should be corrupted in any essential requisite of faith or practice, they must cease to be "able to make us wise unto salvation," and so they must fail of answering the end which God intended they should answer when he indited them.

Now the authenticity of the gospels being thus demonstrated, or that they are the genuine and uncorrupted writings of the persons whose names they bear, their truth and divine inspiration follows of course. For, first, with respect to the evangelists Matthew and John, we may observe with Dr. Macknight, as they were apostles, "they were eye-witnesses of most of the things they have related. They attended our Lord during his ministry ; they heard him preach all his sermons, and saw him perform the greatest part of his miracles ; they were present at his crucifixion ; they conversed with him after his resurrection ; and they beheld his ascension. Besides, as apostles, they possessed the gifts of illumination and utterance. By the former they were absolutely secured from falling into error, in any point of doctrine, or matter of fact, relating to the Christian scheme. By the latter they were enabled to express themselves clearly and pertinently upon every subject of Christianity which they had occasion to treat of, either in their sermons or writings. These gifts our Lord had expressly promised to all his apostles. See John xiv. 25, 26." He also promised that, when they should be brought before governors and kings, it should be given them what they should speak ; that he would give them a mouth and wisdom which their adversaries should not be able to gainsay or resist ; yea, that the Spirit of their Father should speak in them. Matt. x. 18, 20 ; Luke xxi. 15. The whole of these promises were punctually fulfilled. For, about ten days after our Lord's ascension, the disciples received a glorious effusion of the Holy Ghost, while they tarried in Jerusalem, according to their Master's order, in expectation of being "endued with power from on high." See Acts ii. 3.

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“From that moment forth the Spirit gave clear indications of the reality of his presence with them; for he enabled them, all at once, to speak the various languages under heaven as fluently as if they had been their native tongues, and thereby qualified them to preach the gospel in all countries immediately upon their arrival, without the necessity of submitting to the tedious and irksome labour of learning the languages of those countries. Moreover, he gave them the power of working all manner of miracles; nay, he enabled them to impart unto those whom they converted the power of working them, and the faculty of speaking with tongues, and of prophesying or preaching by inspiration. The apostles of the Lord, having such convincing proofs of their inspiration always abiding with them, did not fail on proper occasions to assert it, that mankind might everywhere receive their doctrine and writings with that submission which is due to the dictates of the Spirit of God. Hence we find them calling the gospel which they preached and wrote, “the word of God, the commandment of God, the wisdom of God, the testimony of God;” also, “the word of Christ, the gospel of Christ, the mind of Christ, the mystery of God the Father, and of Christ.” Wherefore, Matthew and John being apostles, and having received the gifts of the Spirit with the rest of their brethren, there can be no doubt of their inspiration. Their gospels were written under the direction of the Holy Ghost, who resided in them; and upon that account they are venerated by all Christians as the word of God, and have deservedly a place allowed them in the sacred canon.

2. “The characters of Mark and Luke come next to be considered. They were not apostles, it is true, yet they were qualified to write such a history of our Lord’s life as merits a place in the canon of Scripture.” For as they were, in all probability, early disciples, it is not unlikely that they were eye-witnesses of most of the things which they have related; and were even in the apostles’ company on the day of pentecost, and then received the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit together with them; consequently they wrote by divine inspiration also. But, if that were not the case, it must be granted that these two evangelists accompanied the apostles in their travels. “The matter is certain with respect to Luke; for, in his history of the Acts, he speaks of himself as Paul’s companion; and, in the preface to his gospel, he expressly mentions the information of the ministers of the word, as distinct from that of the eye-witnesses, to lead us, probably, to think of Paul, with whom he had long travelled, and who had not the knowledge of Christ’s history by personal acquaintance, but by revelation. See Gal. i. 11, 12; 1 Cor. xi. 23. As for Mark, he is generally reported by antiquity, and currently believed, to have been Peter’s assistant. And, in conformity to this opinion, all interpreters, both ancient and modern, suppose that Peter speaks of Mark the evangelist in 1 Peter v. 13: ‘The church that is at Babylon salutes you, and so does Marcus my son.’ This appellation Peter gives to Mark, because of the great intimacy and friendship which subsisted between them, agreeable to the Apostle Paul’s description of Timothy’s affection. See Phil. ii. 22. If Mark was Peter’s companion and fellow-labourer in the gospel, although he was neither an apostle nor an eye-witness, he must have been well acquainted with our Lord’s history, because he could not but learn it from the conversation and sermons of Peter, who was both. Wherefore, to use the words of Luke, since these evangelists took in hand to write the history of our Lord’s life, according to the informations which they had received from the eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, and executed their design while they accompanied the persons from whom they received those informations, we may reasonably suppose they would submit their works to their examination. Accordingly, Clemens Alexandrinus, quoted by Eusebius, vi. 14, tells us that Mark’s gospel was revised by Peter. And Mr. Jones, in support of this opinion, has collected eight particulars from the other gospels, all tending to the honour of Peter, which are entirely omitted by Mark, because Peter’s humility, as he supposes, would not allow him to tell these things to that historian. But if it be true that Mark and Luke wrote according to the information of the apostles, and had their gospels revised by them, it is evidently the same as if their gospels had been dictated by the apostles.

“I cannot but observe, however,” proceeds the doctor, “that though none of all the suppositions just now mentioned should be granted, there is one unquestionable matter of fact, which fully establishes the authority of the two gospels under consideration; namely, that they were written by the persons whose names they bear, and while most of the apostles were alive. For, in that case, they must have been perused by the apostles, and approved; as is certain from their being universally received in the early ages, and handed down to posterity as of undoubted authority. The apostolical approbation was the only thing, without the inspiration of the writers, which could give these books

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the reputation they have obtained. And had it been wanting in any degree, they must have shared the fate of the many accounts which Luke speaks of in his preface; that is, must have been neglected, either as imperfect or spurious, and so have quickly perished. But, if the gospels of Mark and Luke were approved by the apostles immediately upon their publication, and for that reason were received by all Christians, and handed down to posterity as of undoubted authority, it is the same as if they had been dictated by the apostles. Hence they are justly reckoned of equal authority with the other books of Scripture, and admitted into the canon together with them. Such proofs as these, drawn from the sacred writings themselves, are sufficient to make all Christians reverence the gospels as the word of God. And, therefore, they are fitly produced for the confirmation of our faith."

It must be observed further, here, that while we believe the sacred historians have recorded nothing but what is true, we must not suppose they have related all the things which with truth they might have related. "Each of them, indeed, has delivered as much of Christ's doctrine and miracles as is necessary to our salvation. Nevertheless, many important sermons and actions are omitted by each, which, if the rest had not preserved, the world must have sustained an unspeakable loss. We have even reason to believe that it is but a small part of our Lord's history which is preserved among them all;" for John has said expressly, that "there were many other things which Jesus did, which, if they had been written every one," he supposed "that even the world itself could not contain the books that would have been written." The other evangelists affirm, in effect, the same thing, in the summaries which they give of such discourses and miracles as they did not think proper to relate particularly. Thus we read, "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy, and he healed them," Matt. iv. 23, 24. In Luke vii. 21 it is said, "And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and to many that were blind he gave sight." See also Matt. xiv. 35, 36; xv. 30, 31; xix. 1, 2; John ii. 23; and iii. 2; and the passages referred to above in the paragraph respecting the insufficiency of tradition, page 6.

And, "as the evangelists did not intend to relate all the sermons and actions of Christ, so it was not their purpose to mention every circumstance of those which they undertook to relate. Each evangelist, directed by the Spirit, makes his own choice. This circumstance is mentioned by one, and that by another, as they judged most proper." And "we must by no means urge omissions, whether of facts, or circumstances of facts, in such a manner as to fancy that the inspired authors rejected all the things they have omitted, or even that they were ignorant of them. For, from the summaries above mentioned, it is plain they have passed over many particulars with which they were well acquainted."

But it must be observed, though Jesus performed many miracles, which the evangelists have not recorded, and probably many equal in greatness to those which they have recorded; yet, it is likely "that those recorded were more remarkable than the rest, either for the number of the witnesses who were present at them; or for the character and quality of those witnesses; or for the places where they were performed; or for the consequences which they gave rise to; or for the reports which went out concerning them, and fame which accrued to Jesus from them. This observation, which may be applied likewise to our Lord's sermons, deserves the rather to be attended to, because it accounts for what would otherwise be very difficult to be understood, namely, how the evangelists, notwithstanding they had such an infinity of sermons and miracles to make a choice from, came all of them, except John, who designed his gospel as a supplement to the rest, to mention, in most instances, the same sermons and miracles; I say, in most instances, because in a few cases each evangelist has departed from this rule, omitting things, which on account of their importance, their notoriety, their consequences, and other reasons, are recorded by the rest; while he has taken notice of particulars which, to appearance, are not so material. Thus, Mark xiv. 51, the cure which our Lord performed on the high-priest's slave, whose ear Peter cut off, is omitted; while the young man who followed him with a linen cloth cast round his naked body, is mentioned. In these, and such like instances, the evangelists seem not to have considered how their readers would be affected with the transactions recorded by them. If that had been a matter of care with them, they would, in every

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case, have made choice of those particulars only which might have prejudiced their readers in favour of their Master, or led them to form a high idea of him. Wherefore, as they have not done so, they possess evidently the character of writers who have no distrust of their cause, but who tell the truth as it presented itself, without artifice or disguise.

“According to this view of the matter, it appears that the evangelists, in their histories, have given only a faint sketch, as it were, of our Lord's life, and not a full delineation. However, though the miracles and sermons which they have recorded be few in respect of the whole, it is certain that the miracles mentioned do put Christ's mission beyond all reasonable possibility of doubt; and the sermons related give a just idea of his doctrine. Nay, such is the importance of the things related, that each evangelist must be acknowledged singly to have comprehended in his gospel as much of the knowledge of Christ as is sufficient to the salvation of the world. At the same time, by confining themselves to the principal miracles which our Lord performed, and to some select sermons which he preached in the course of his ministry, they made their histories such small books, that every Christian had it in his power to purchase some one of them. And although at first sight this may seem but a matter of little moment, it was, in reality, a singular benefit to mankind, especially in those ancient ages, before printing was invented, when a book of any considerable bulk amounted to a large sum. Brandt, in his *History of the Reformation in the Low Countries*, (vol. i., p. 23,) tells us, that for one copy of the Bible, tolerably written on vellum, it was usual to pay four or five hundred crowns; and, even after the invention of printing, sixty for a printed copy, till the art grew more common. We may therefore presume, that it was not without the particular direction of the Spirit, that the evangelists, in writing their histories, thus consulted the benefit of the poor; who, if they got any one of the gospels into their own possession, could be at no loss for the knowledge of Christ necessary to eternal life.

“Concerning the words and phrases which the inspired writers have made use of,” it may not be improper to subjoin the following observations from the same judicious author. “If two or more evangelists, on any occasion, ascribe to our Lord the same words, we may safely believe they have preserved the words which he uttered on that occasion. However, when they introduce him speaking, they do not always mean to repeat the precise words, but to give the sense of what he said; nothing more being intended oftentimes by those who undertake to relate what was spoken by another. This, I think, is plain, from Acts x. 4, compared with verse 31. In the former of these passages, the angel says to Cornelius, ‘Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God;’ in the latter, Cornelius, rehearsing the angel's words to Peter, delivers them thus: ‘Thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.’ Wherefore, both Cornelius and the historian thought the angel's words were repeated, when the sense of them was delivered. This observation reconciles all those passages in the gospels, wherein our Lord is introduced expressing his sentiments in different words on the same occasion. Nevertheless, where different expressions are found, it is possible that all of them may have been uttered by him, especially if they convey different thoughts, and, when joined together, make a connected discourse. In most cases, however, the former is the more natural solution; because, if the evangelists have given the true meaning of what our Lord said on every occasion, they have certainly delivered what may be called the words of Christ, though the expressions in each gospel should be different, or even to appearance contradictory. A remarkable example of this we have Matt. x. 9, where Jesus is introduced speaking to his apostles thus: ‘Provide—neither shoes nor yet a staff;’ but, in the parallel passage, Mark vi. 8, which exhibits the repetition of those instructions, he commanded them, that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; words in sound contradictory to the former, though in sense perfectly the same. Such of the apostles as had staves in their hands might take them, but those who were walking without them were not to provide them; for, as the providence of God was to supply them with all necessaries, to have made the least preparation for their journey would have implied a disbelief of their Master's promise. In like manner, the words of the voice at Christ's baptism, Matt. iii. 17, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,’ though different as to sound from the words Mark i. 11, ‘Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;’ yet being the same in sense, they are truly repeated. So likewise are the words of institution in the history of the sacrament, and the words of the title that was affixed to our Lord's cross.

“By the way, these principles afford an easy solution of the difficulties which arise upon comparing

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the citations in the New Testament with the passages of the Old, from whence they are taken ; for, if the meaning of the passage is truly given, we must allow that the quotation is justly made. Hence, though the words, ' He shall be called a Nazarene,' Matt. ii. 23, are not to be found in the writings of the prophets, yet, as the thing meant by these words frequently occurs in them, the application is made by the evangelist with sufficient propriety.

" But further, it ought to be considered, that our Lord's discourses were all delivered, and his conferences managed, in a language different from that wherein they are handed down to posterity, namely, the Syro-Chaldaic, called ' the Hebrew tongue,' Acts xxi. 40, because it was a dialect thereof. For which cause, though all the evangelists had remembered the precise words of every person introduced in their histories, when they related them in a different language, they could hardly avoid making use of different expressions, even on supposition that they wrote by inspiration, unless that inspiration absolutely deprived them of the use of their own faculties ; or unless the Holy Spirit, who inspired them, could not suggest different words to each, equally proper for conveying the sentiment he designed to express.

" According to this view of the matter, the four evangelists differ from one another no otherwise than any of them might have differed from himself, had he related the same passage of the history twice. Both narrations would have been the same as to the sense, though different words might have been made use of in each. Wherefore, it can be no good argument against the inspiration of the evangelists, that their accounts are different. Let the reader compare the two histories of our Lord's ascension, given by Luke, the one in the end of his gospel, the other in the beginning of the Acts ; also the three accounts which the same historian gives of Paul's conversion, the first in the ninth, the second in the twenty-second, the third in the twenty-sixth chapter of the last-mentioned book ; and he will acknowledge the truth of what I have been saying."

In the mean time, let him observe that, while these apparent inconsistencies, thus rightly understood, are easily reconciled, they prove undeniably that the evangelists were in no combination to make up their histories and deceive the world : so far from it, that these inconsistencies are of such a kind, as would lead one to believe the subsequent historians did not so much as compare the accounts of particular transactions, which they were about to publish, with those that were already abroad in the world, but that each evangelist represented the matters which are subjects of his history, as his own memory, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, suggested them to him, without considering how far they might be agreeable to the accounts which his brethren historians had already given. And as this admirably discovers the sober spirit of truth by which those writers were guided in every part of their narrations, so the modesty wherewith they have written their histories is very remarkable. For not only none of them singly has related all the transactions of our Lord's life, or affected to give a complete history thereof, but, " such things as they have thought fit to mention, though great and wonderful above measure, they have not painted with the gaudy colourings of rhetoric, nor heightened with the magnificence of pompous language, but have told them with a simplicity unexampled in so great a subject. And as they have not studied human eloquence in the composition of their histories, so they have not followed human prudence in the choice of their subjects. For although they must have been sensible that the transactions they were about to relate were not likely to be believed by the generality, being many of them opposite to the established course of nature, it is evident they were at no pains to consider what particulars were least liable to exception, nor so much as to obviate the difficulties which arose from them. This thought a late writer has well expressed. ' It does not appear,' says he, ' that it ever came into the mind of the evangelists to consider how this or that other action would appear to mankind, or what objections might be raised against them. But, without attending at all to this, they lay the facts before you, at no pains to think whether they would appear credible or not. If the reader will not believe their testimony, there is no help for it. They tell the truth, and attend to nothing else.' To conclude, it is remarkable that through the whole of their histories, the evangelists have not passed one encomium upon Jesus, or upon any of his friends, nor thrown out one reflection against his enemies, although much of both kinds might have been, and no doubt would have been done by them, had they been governed either by a spirit of imposture or enthusiasm. Christ's life is not praised in the gospels, his death is not lamented, his friends are not commended, his enemies are not reproached, nor even blamed, but every thing is told naked and unadorned, just as it happened ; and all who read are left to judge and make reflections for them-

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selves ; a manner of writing which the historians never would have fallen into, had not their minds been under the guidance of the most sober reason, and deeply impressed with the dignity, importance, and truth of their subject."

Upon the whole, by the force of the arguments now advanced, and others of a similar nature, " has the gospel history gained a belief next to universal in ages past, and by these it stands at present firmly established against the manifold violent attacks of its enemies, who, with unwearied application, are assaulting it on all quarters. In a word, founded upon these arguments, it can never be overturned in any age to come ; but, while men are capable of discerning truth, will be believed and received to the end of the world." Observe well, reader, from the undoubted truth of the gospel history, we infer with certainty that the Christian religion is divine.

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF SAINT MATTHEW.

ALTHOUGH the word *εὐαγγέλιον*, here rendered "gospel," from *εὖ*, "good," and *ἀγγελία*, "a message," properly denotes "good news, or glad tidings," and in many parts of the epistles signifies the whole doctrine of Christ, or of the New Covenant, in contradistinction to that of the dispensation of Moses, or the Old Covenant; yet when applied to the narratives written by the four evangelists, the expression properly means the history of the incarnation and life, doctrine and miracles, humiliation and exaltation, sufferings and glory of the Messiah, the Son of God. The reason why this history is termed "good news, or glad tidings," is because it really contains such, yea, the best news and most joyful tidings that ever reached any human ear; for surely no tidings can be better, or more calculated to give joy to a sinful and guilty world, exposed to the wrath of God, and liable to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, than that the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, the Maker and Lord of all things, and the final Judge of men and angels, came into the world to seek and save lost sinners. Hence, when the angel announced his birth to the shepherds, as is recorded Luke ii. 10, his words were, *Ἴδε, εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην, ἥτις ἐστὶ παντὶ τῷ λαῷ*, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." As to the English, or rather Saxon word, "*gospel*," it seems originally to mean no more than "God's spell," or "God's word," and therefore is a very imperfect translation of the Greek expression.

Now the history of these good tidings, which is first offered to our consideration in this volume, termed the New Testament, or New Covenant, is that composed by St. Matthew. Of him we know no more than what we learn in the four gospels, which is very little. He was the son of one Alphaeus, and was also called Levi, Mark ii. 14. He was of Jewish original, as both his names manifest, and probably of Galilee, as the rest of Christ's apostles were; but of what city in Galilee, and of which of the tribes of Israel, is not known. Before he was called to be a disciple of Christ, he was a publican, or tax-gatherer to the Romans, an office of bad repute among the Jews, on account of the covetousness and oppressive exactions of those who managed it. St. Matthew's office is thought to have consisted in collecting the customs imposed on all merchandise that came by the sea of Galilee, and the tribute required from passengers who went by water. And here it was that Christ found him sitting at the receipt of custom, when he first called him to be his disciple. Matthew immediately obeyed the call, and followed Jesus, although, it is probable, not statedly till he had made up and settled his accounts with those by whom he was employed. Living at Capernaum, a place where Christ frequently resided, Matthew might probably both have heard him preach and witnessed the performance of some of his miracles before this his call. Some time, but it seems not long, after this, according to the account given by both Mark and Luke, he entertained Christ and his disciples at a great dinner at his own house, whither he invited his friends and acquaintances, with many of his own profession, intending, probably, not only to take a friendly farewell of them, but to give them an opportunity of seeing and hearing that heavenly Teacher whose doctrine he had found to be the power of God to his salvation. He was soon chosen by Christ to be one of his apostles, (see Matthew x. 3,) and sent, with the other eleven, during the time of Christ's ministry on earth, to preach to the lost

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sheep of the house of Israel, in different parts of Judea. And they accordingly went through the towns and villages "preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere," Matthew x. 6; Luke ix. 2-6. Matthew continued to be associated with the other apostles till after our Lord's ascension, and the day of pentecost following; on which day, doubtless, he received the Holy Ghost with the rest of the disciples, or, as it is expressed Luke xxiv. 49, was "endued with power from on high." From this time, it seems, for at least eight, if not more years, he preached to the Jews in Judea, and the parts adjacent. Afterward, according to the tradition of the church, he devoted his labours to the propagation of the gospel among the heathen: travelling into Ethiopia, or Abyssinia, and making that country the scene of his apostolical labours; and there, it is said, he sealed the truth with his blood. But of this there is no clear evidence in any of the writings of the primitive fathers, nor that he suffered martyrdom, as some have asserted, in Persia, or elsewhere. Indeed we have no certain information when, where, or how he died.

As to the time when this gospel was composed, it has not been precisely ascertained by the learned. Some have thought it was written as early as A. D. 41, or about the eighth year after Christ's ascension. Others, and especially some modern critics, have contended that it was not written till about the year 61, or between that and 65. All antiquity, however, seems agreed in the opinion that it was the first gospel that was published; "and in a case of this kind," says Dr. Campbell, "I should not think it prudent, unless for very strong reasons, to dissent from their verdict. Of the few Christian writers of the first century whose works yet remain, there are in Barnabas, a companion of Paul, Clement of Rome, and Hermas, clear references to some passages of this history. For though the evangelist is not named, and his words are not formally quoted, the attentive reader must be sensible that the author had read the gospel which has uniformly been ascribed to Matthew, and that on some occasions he plainly alludes to it. Very early in the second century, Ignatius, in those epistles which are generally acknowledged to be genuine, and Polycarp, of whom we have no more but a single letter remaining, have manifest allusions to different parts of this gospel. The writers above named are those who are denominated 'apostolic fathers,' because they were contemporary with the apostles, and had been their disciples. Their testimony, therefore, serves to show not only their knowledge of this book, but the great and general estimation wherein it was held from the beginning."

It has been a matter of much debate among the learned, whether this gospel was originally composed in Greek or in Hebrew. But Dr. Campbell seems to have satisfactorily proved it was first written in the latter language. "The first person," says he, "upon record, who has named Matthew as the writer of this gospel, is Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, in Cesarea, who is said to have been a companion of Polycarp, and a hearer of John. Concerning Matthew, that venerable ancient affirms, that 'he wrote his gospel in the Hebrew tongue, (*Εβραϊδι διαλεκτα*,) which every one interpreted as he was able.' See Euseb. Hist. Eccl., lib. iii. cap. 39." Here we have Papias's testimony, not only that Matthew was the writer of this gospel, but that he wrote it in Hebrew. "The former of these testimonies," says Dr. Campbell, "has never, as far as I know, been controverted. On the contrary, it has been confirmed, and is still supported by all subsequent Christian authors who have touched the subject; and the latter, that this evangelist wrote his gospel in Hebrew, had a concurrence equally uniform of all succeeding writers in the church for about 1400 years." In the last two centuries, however, this point has been strongly contested, particularly by Erasmus, Cardinal Cajetan, Whitby, and several others. "The next authority," which may be brought, "is that of Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, who in his youth had been a disciple of Polycarp. He says, in the only book of his extant, that 'Matthew among the Hebrews wrote a gospel in their own language, (*τη ιδια διαλεκτο αυτων*,) while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome, and founding the church there.' Euseb. Hist., lib. v. cap. 8. And in a fragment of the same author, which Grabe and others have published, it is said, 'The gospel according to Matthew was written to the Jews, for they earnestly desired a Messiah of the posterity of David. Matthew, in order to satisfy them on this point, began his gospel with the genealogy of Jesus.' The third witness to be adduced is Origen, who flourished in the former part of the third century. Eusebius, in a chapter wherein he especially treats of Origen's account of the sacred canon, (Hist., lib. vi. cap. 25,) quotes him as saying, 'As I have learned by tradition concerning the four gospels, which alone are received, without dispute,

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by the whole church of God under heaven ; the first was written by Matthew, once a publican, after ward an apostle of Jesus Christ, who delivered it to the Jewish believers, composed in the Hebrew language, *γραμμασιν Εβραϊκοις συντεταγμενον.* In another place (Comment. in Johan.) he says, 'We begin with Matthew, who, according to tradition, wrote first, publishing his gospel to the Hebrews, or the believers who were of the circumcision.' Again, 'Matthew, writing for the Hebrews, who expected him who was to descend from Abraham and David, says, The lineage of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.' "It would be endless," says Dr. Campbell, "to bring authorities. Jerome, Augustine, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Eusebius, and many others, all attest the same thing, and attest it in such a manner as shows that they knew it to be uncontroverted, and judged it to be incontrovertible. 'But,' say some modern disputants, 'all the witnesses you can produce in support of this fact may, for aught we know, be reducible to one. Irenæus, perhaps, had his information only from Papias, and Origen from Papias and Irenæus, and so of all the rest downward, how numerous soever ; so that the whole evidence may be at bottom no more than the testimony of Papias !' But is the positive evidence of witnesses, delivered as of a well-known fact, to be overturned by a mere supposition, a 'perhaps ?' For that the case was really as they suppose, no shadow of evidence is pretended. Papias is not quoted on this article by Irenæus, nor is his name mentioned, or his testimony referred to. Nor is the testimony of either urged by Origen. As to Irenæus, from the early period in which he lived, he had advantages for information little inferior to those of Papias, having been in his younger years well acquainted with Polycarp, the disciple of the Apostle John. Had there then subsisted any account, or opinion, contradictory to the account given by Papias, Irenæus must certainly have known it, and would probably have mentioned it, either to confirm or to confute it. As the matter stands, we have here a perfect unanimity of the witnesses, not a single contradictory voice ; no mention is there, either from those fathers or from any other ancient writer, that ever another account of this matter had been heard of in the church. Shall we then admit a mere modern hypothesis to overturn the foundations of all historic evidence ?

"Let it be observed, Papias, in the words quoted from him, attested two things ; that Matthew wrote the gospel ascribed to him, and that he wrote it in Hebrew. These two points rest on the same bottom, and are equally, as matters of fact, the subjects of testimony. As to both, the authority of Papias has been equally supported by succeeding authors, and by the concurrent voice of antiquity. Now there has not any thing been advanced to invalidate his testimony, in regard to the latter of these, that may not with equal justice be urged to invalidate his testimony in regard to the former. This may be extended also to other points ; for that Mark was the writer of the gospel commonly ascribed to him, rests ultimately on the same authority. How arbitrary then is it, where the evidence is the same, and exposed to the same objections, to admit the one without hesitation, and to reject the other !—I shall conclude the argument with observing, that the truth of the report, that Matthew wrote in Hebrew, is the only plausible account that can be given of the rise of that report. Certain it is, that all the prejudices of the times, particularly among the Greek Christians, were unfavourable to such an opinion. Soon after the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, the Hebrew Church, distinguished by the name of 'Nazarene,' visibly declined every day ; the attachment which many of them still retained to the ceremonies of the law ; in like manner, the errors of the Ebionites, and other divisions, which arose among them, made them soon be looked upon by the Gentile churches as but half-Christian at the most. That an advantage of this kind would have been so readily conceded to them by the Greeks, in opposition to all their own prejudices, can be attributed only to their full conviction of the fact.

"Having said so much on the external evidence, I shall add but a few words to show, that the account of this matter given by the earliest ecclesiastical writers, is not so destitute as some may think of internal probability. In every thing that concerned the introduction of the new dispensation, a particular attention was for some time shown, and the preference, before every other nation, given to the Jews. Our Lord's ministry upon the earth was among them only. In the mission of the apostles, during his own life, they were expressly prohibited from going to the Gentiles, or so much as entering any city of the Samaritans, Matt. x. 5 ; and when, after our Lord's resurrection, the apostolical commission was greatly enlarged, being extended to all nations throughout the world, still a sort of precedency was reserved for God's ancient people, and they were commanded to 'begin'

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preaching 'at Jerusalem,' Luke xxiv. 46, 47. The orders then given were punctually executed. The apostles remained some time in Jerusalem, preaching and performing miracles in the name of the Lord Jesus with wonderful success. See also Acts xiii. 26. And even after the disciples began to spread their Master's doctrine through the neighbouring regions, we know, that till the illumination they received in the affair of Cornelius, which was several years after, they confined their teaching to their countrymen the Jews. And even after that memorable event, wherever the apostles came, they appear first to have repaired to the synagogue, if there was a synagogue in the place, and to have addressed themselves to those of the circumcision, and afterward to the Gentiles :” see Acts xiii. 46 ; where this matter is set in the strongest light. “Have we not then reason to conclude from the express order, as well as from the example, of our Lord, and from the uniform practice of his disciples, that it was suitable to the will of Providence, in this dispensation of grace, that every advantage should be first offered to the Jews, especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and that the gospel which had been first delivered to them by word, both by our Lord himself and by his apostles, should be also first presented to them in writing, in that very dialect in which many of the readers, at the time of the publication, might remember to have heard the same sacred truths, as they came from the mouth of Him who spake as never man spake, the great Oracle of the Father, the interpreter of God ?” This dialect, or language, it must be observed, was not what we commonly call Hebrew, or the language of the Old Testament ; for this was not then spoken either in Palestine, or anywhere else, being understood only by the learned. But it was what Jerome very properly calls Syro-Chaldaic, having an affinity to both the Syrian and Chaldean language, though much more to the latter than the former. It was, in short, the language which the Jews brought with them from Babylon after the captivity, blended with that of the people whom they found in the land at their return, and in the neighbouring regions. It is this which is invariably called Hebrew in the New Testament. It is true, this merciful dispensation of God to the Jewish Christians, in giving them the first written gospel in their own language, was, in effect, soon frustrated by their defection ; but this is only of a piece with what happened in regard to all the other advantages which the Jews enjoyed. “The sacred deposit was first corrupted among them, and afterward it disappeared ; for that ‘the gospel according to the Hebrews,’ used by the Nazarenes, (to which, as the original, Jerome sometimes had recourse, and which, he tells us, he had translated into Greek and Latin,) and that the gospel also used by the Ebionites, were, though greatly vitiated and interpolated, the remains of Matthew’s original, will hardly bear a reasonable doubt. Their loss of this gospel proved the prelude to the extinction of that church. But we have reason to be thankful, that what was most valuable in the work is not lost to the Christian community. The version we have in Greek is written with much evangelical simplicity, entirely in the idiom and manner of the apostles.” “And I freely acknowledge,” adds Dr. Campbell, “that if the Hebrew gospel were still extant, such as it was in the days of Jerome, or even of Origen, we should have much more reason to confide in the authenticity of the common Greek translation, than in that of an original, wherewith such unbounded freedoms have been taken” This translation was undoubtedly made and published at a very early period ; but who the translator was we have no knowledge, nor is it likely that, at this distance of time, it should be determined : probably it was the evangelist himself.

St. Matthew appears to be distinguished from the other evangelists : I. By more frequently referring to the prophecies of the Old Testament, and pointing out their fulfilment in Christ, for the conviction of the Jews : and, II. By recording more of our Lord’s parables than are mentioned by the others. He begins his history with an account of the genealogy of Christ ; which, agreeably to the custom of the Jews, and to prove Christ’s title to the kingdom of Israel, he gives in the line of his supposed father Joseph, whom he shows to be legally descended from Abraham through David. He then bears witness to his miraculous conception, and relates some circumstances concerning his birth and infancy, particularly his being visited by the wise men from the East, and his flight into Egypt and return. He gives a brief account of the ministry of John the Baptist, and its promising effects, and of the baptism and temptation of Christ, and his entrance on his public ministry. He then proceeds with the history of his miracles and discourses, till he comes to his apprehension by the Jewish rulers, his condemnation, crucifixion, death, and burial, the circumstances of all which he relates at large. He then bears witness to his resurrection, the earthquake attending it, and the appearance

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of a glorious angel, attesting it to the women, who had come to the sepulchre with a view to anoint his body. Of the many appearances of Christ to his disciples, Matthew only records two; namely, one to these women, and one to all the disciples collected together in Galilee. His history concludes with the important testimony borne by Christ, immediately before his ascension, to the exaltation of his human nature to the highest dignity and power; to which is subjoined his solemn charge to the apostles, and their successors in the ministry, to teach and baptize all nations, and his gracious promise that his presence should be with them to the end of the world.

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

SAINT MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

In this chapter we have, (1.) *The genealogy of Christ, in the line of Joseph, showing him to be descended from David and Abraham, in forty-two generations, divided into three fourteens, 1-17.* (2.) *An account of the circumstances of his birth, as far as was necessary to show that he was born of a virgin, according to the prediction of the Prophet Isaiah, (chap. vii. 14,) 18-25.*

THE book of the ^ageneration of Jesus Christ, ^bthe son of David, ^cthe son of Abraham.

Anno Mundi, or year of the World, 4000.

2 ^d Abraham begat Isaac; and A. M. 4000. ^e Isaac begat Jacob; and ^f Jacob begat Judas and his brethren.

^a Luke iii. 23. — ^b Psa. cxxxii. 11; Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; Chap. xxii. 42; John vii. 42; Acts ii. 30; xiii. 23; Rom. i. 3.

^c Gen. xii. 3; xxii. 18; Gal. iii. 16. — ^d Gen. xxi. 2. — ^e Gen. xxv. 26. — ^f Gen. xxix. 35.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *The book*—That is, *This is the book*, the verb being elegantly omitted, according to the custom of the Hebrews, and also of the Greeks and Romans; *of the generation*—Or, as the Syriac expresses it, *The writing, narrative, or account of the generation, or birth of Jesus, &c.* The word γενεαι, indeed, here rendered *generation*, sometimes signifies the history of a person's life, yet it is much more frequently used for *genealogy, or birth*; and it seems to be intended to be taken in this restrained sense here. Dr. Macknight renders the phrase, *The table of the genealogy of Jesus*: observing that the word βιβλος, *book*, is used in this limited sense Mark x. 4, where a bill of divorce is so called: and Jer. xxxii. 12, where a deed of conveyance is termed ספר, a book. Indeed, the Jews, and also the Greeks, called all writings books, whether short or long. *Of Jesus Christ*—*Jesus* is his proper name, given him by God, his true Father, Matt. i. 21; Luke i. 31; ii. 21. *Christ* is, as it were, a surname, descriptive of his unction to the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices. To the name *Christ*, that of *Jesus* is often superadded in the New Testament, not only that Christ might be pointed out for *the Saviour*, as the word *Jesus* signifies, but that *Jesus* might be shown to be the true *Messiah, or Christ*, in opposition to the unbelief of the Jews. *The son of David, the son of Abraham*—i. e., a descendant of David and Abraham; the word *son*, in the language of the Hebrews, being put for any descendant, however remote. Here the evangelist proposes what he is going to prove; viz., that *Jesus Christ*, whose history he is about to give, was the son of David and Abraham, which it was necessary he should show, because the grand

prophetical character of the Messiah was, that he was to spring from Abraham and David. The sense of the latter clause, indeed, *the son of Abraham*, is ambiguous: it may mean either that David was the son of Abraham, or, which seems the more probable sense, that Christ, who was the son of David, was also the son of Abraham. This sense accords better both with the following words, and with the design of the evangelist, which was to show, that Christ was descended from both these renowned patriarchs, and that in him was fulfilled the promises made to both. David is first named, 1. That the catalogue, to begin from Abraham, might proceed regularly, without the repetition of his name; 2. Because the memory of David was more fresh upon the minds of the Jews, and his name in greater repute than that of Abraham, especially when the discourse related to the Messiah, John vii. 42; more plain and explicit promises of him being made to David, and the prophets having spoken of Christ under the name of David. Add to this, that David was both a prophet and a king, and therefore a more manifest type of the Messiah, who sustains both of these offices, as well as that of a priest. Hence those who had entertained higher conceptions of Christ than others, termed him *the son of David*, as appears from many passages in the gospels.

Verse 2. *Abraham begat Isaac*—"The evangelist here opens his history with our Lord's genealogy by Joseph, his supposed father. Luke gives another genealogy of him, thought by many to be Joseph's also, but without foundation; for the two genealogies are entirely different, from David and downward. It is true, some have attempted to reconcile them by alleging, that they exhibit Joseph's pedi-

grec, the one by his natural, the other by his legal father. But, had that been the case, the natural and legal fathers would have been brothers, which it is plain they were not, *Jacob*, Joseph's father in Matthew, being the son of *Matthan*, the son of *Eleazar*; whereas *Eli*, the father supposed to be assigned him by Luke, was the son of *Matthat*, a different person from Matthan, because the son of *Levi*." Besides, on this supposition, we should be altogether uncertain whether our Lord's mother, from whom alone he sprang, was a daughter of David, and consequently could not prove that he had any other relation to David than that his mother was married to one of the descendants of that prince. Let the reader judge whether this would come up to the import of the passages of Scripture, which tell us he was *made of the seed of David*. See *Rom. i. 3*; *Acts ii. 30*. But this important difficulty is easily removed by supposing that Matthew gives Joseph's pedigree, and Luke, Mary's. See Mac-knight. But, taking it for granted that Luke gives us our Lord's real pedigree, and Matthew that of Joseph, his supposed father, it may reasonably be inquired why Matthew has done so? To this it may be answered, that he intended to remove the scruples of those who knew that the Messiah was to be the heir of David's crown; a reason which appears the stronger, if we suppose, with the learned writer last quoted, that Matthew wrote posterior to Luke, who has given the real pedigree. For, "though Joseph was not Christ's real father, it was directly for the evangelist's purpose to derive his pedigree from David, and show that he was the eldest surviving branch of the posterity of that prince, because, this point established, it was well enough understood that Joseph, by marrying our Lord's mother, after he knew that she was with child of him, *adopted him for his son*, and raised him both to the dignity and privileges of David's heir. Accordingly, the genealogy is concluded in terms which imply this: *Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus*. Joseph is not here called the father of Jesus, but the husband of his mother, Mary; and the privileges following this adoption will appear to be more essentially connected with it, if, as is probable, Joseph never had any child. For thus the regal line of David's descendants by Solomon, failing in Joseph, his rights were properly transferred to Joseph's adopted son, who, indeed, was of the same family, though by another branch. Matthew, therefore, has deduced our Lord's political and royal pedigree, with a view to prove his title to the kingdom of Israel, by virtue of the rights which he acquired through his adoption; whereas Luke explains his natural descent, in the several successions of those from whom he derived his human nature. That the genealogy, not only of our Lord's mother, but of his reputed father, should be given by the sacred historians, was wisely ordered; because the two taken together prove him to be descended of David and Abraham in every respect, and consequently that one of the most remarkable characters of the Messiah was fulfilled in him; the principal promises

concerning the great personage, in whom *all the families of the earth* were to be *blessed*, having been made to those patriarchs, in quality of his progenitors; first to Abraham, *Gen. xxii. 18*, then to David, *Psa. cxxxii. 11, 12*." And accordingly Matthew begins this genealogy with a plain allusion to these promises: for he evidently intended it, not so much as an introduction to his history of Christ, as to show that, *according to the flesh*, he was the son of David and the son of Abraham, as it was often foretold the Messiah should be.

If it be inquired whence Matthew had this genealogy, there being nothing of it to be found in Scripture, Dr. Whitby answers, "From the authentic genealogical tables kept by the Jews, of the line of David; for, it appears from the taxation, mentioned Luke ii., that they had genealogies of all their families and tribes, since all went to be taxed, every one to his own city, verse 3, and *Joseph went to Bethlehem, the city of David, because he was of the house and lineage of David*. And this is certain, touching the tribe of Levi, because their whole temple service, the effect of their sacrifices and expiations, depended on it. And, therefore, Josephus, being a priest, not only confidently depends on these genealogical tables for the proof of his descent, *αὐθεν εἰς ἱερέων, in a long series from priests*; but adds, that *all their priests were obliged to prove, ἐκ τῶν αρχαίων τὴν διαδοχὴν, their succession from an ancient line*; and if they could not do it, they were to be excluded from officiating as priests, and that, in whatsoever part of the world they were, they used this diligence. And again, Christ being promised as one who was to proceed out of the loins of David, and therefore called *the son of David*, it was absolutely necessary that the genealogy of the house and lineage of David should be preserved, that they might know that their Messiah was of the seed of David, according to the promise. Hence the apostle says to Timothy, *Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead*, 2 *Tim. ii. 8*. And Eusebius, (*Eccl. Hist.*, lib. i. cap. 6.) from Africanus, says, according to the version of Ruffinus, 'That all the successions of the Hebrews were kept in the secret archives of the temple, and thence they were described, *ἐκ τῆς βιβλῆ των ἡμερων*, from their ephemerides, by the kinsmen of our Saviour.' It therefore, doubtless, was from these authentic records that Matthew had his genealogy, for otherwise he would have exposed himself to the cavils of the Jews. And hence the author of the epistle to the Hebrews represents it as a thing evident to the Jews, that *our Lord sprang out of Judah*, *Heb. vii. 14*."

As to some difficulties which occur upon comparing this genealogy with that of Luke, the reader is referred to the notes on them both. We must observe, however, that if we could not satisfactorily remove some, or even any of those difficulties, it would not affect the credit of the evangelists, for it would be a sufficient vindication of them to say, that they gave Christ's pedigree as they found it in the authentic tables, preserved among the Jews in the temple registers. Upon this subject Bishop Burnet

A. M. 4000. 3 And ^aJudas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and ^bPhares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; 4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Amina-

^c Gen. xxxviii. 27.

observes, that had not this genealogy been taken with exactness out of those registers, the bare showing of them would have served to have confused the whole. For, if those registers were clear and uncontroverted in any one thing, they were so with respect to the genealogies; since these proved both that the Jews were Abraham's seed, and likewise ascertained their title to the lands, which, from the days of Joshua, were to pass down either to immediate descendants, or, as they failed, to collateral degrees. Now, this shows plainly, that there was a double office kept of their pedigrees; *one natural*, which might probably be taken when the rolls of circumcision were made up; and *the other*, relating to the division of the land; in which, when the collateral line came instead of the natural, then the last was dropped, as extinct, and the other remained. It being thus plain, from their constitution, that they had these two orders of tables, we are not at all concerned in the diversity of the two evangelists on this head; since they both might have copied them out from those two offices at the temple; and if they had not done it faithfully, the Jews could easily have demonstrated their error in endeavouring to prove that Jesus was entitled to that well-known character of the Messiah, that he was to be the son of David, by a false pedigree. Now since no exceptions were made at the time when the sight of the rolls must have ended the inquiry, it is plain they were faithfully copied out; nor are we now bound to answer such difficulties as seem to arise out of them, since they were not questioned at the time in which only an appeal could be made to the public registers themselves. See Burnet's *Four Discourses*, p. 16.

Abraham begat Isaac, &c.—Matthew, being a Jew, brings Christ's genealogy down from Abraham, for the comfort of the Jews, who deduced all their genealogies from him, because God had taken him and his seed into a peculiar covenant; Luke, a Gentile, and a companion of the apostle of the Gentiles, carries Christ's pedigree upward unto Adam, for the comfort of the Gentiles, who were not lineally of the seed of Abraham. *Jacob begat Judas and his brethren*—The words, *his brethren*, are added, probably, because they were patriarchs and heads of the people from whom the Messiah was to proceed, and to show that he was related to all the tribes as well as to that of Judah, and to comfort those of the dispersion, (many of whom were not returned out of captivity, as Judah was,) in their equal interest in the blessings of the seed of Abraham. Judah is particularly named in preference to any of them, both because it was from him our Lord came, and because to him the extraordinary promise was made, that his brethren should *praise*

dab begat Naasson; and Naasson A. M. 4000. begat Salmon;

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

^b Ruth iv. 18, &c.; 1 Chron. ii. 5, 9, &c.

and *bow down* to him, and that his descendants should continue a distinct tribe, with some form of government among them, till Shiloh, who was to spring from his loins, should come.

Verse 3. *And Judas begat Phares and Zara*—Some have observed that these sons of Judah are mentioned together because they were twins born at the same time: but if this had been a reason for assigning Zara the honour of being named in this genealogy, Esau, the twin brother of Jacob, ought to have obtained it likewise. He seems rather to be mentioned to prevent any mistake. For if he had not, considering the infamy of Pharez's birth, we might have been apt to imagine that not the Pharez whom Judah begat in incest, but another son of Judah, called Pharez, was our Lord's progenitor, it being no uncommon thing among the Jews to have several children of the same name. Wherefore, to put the matter beyond doubt, Thamar, as well as Zara, is mentioned in the genealogy, if her name be not rather added because she was remarkable in the sacred history. This reason certainly must be assigned why three other women are named in this catalogue, viz., *Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba*. They were all remarkable characters, and their story is particularly related in the Old Testament. This seems much more probable than the opinion of those who think they are mentioned, either because they were great sinners, to teach us that Christ came to save such, or with a view to obviate the cavils of the Jews against the mean condition of the mother of our Lord; their renowned ancestors, such as even David and Solomon, being descended of women whose quality rendered them much meaner than she was. It was, however, one degree of our Saviour's humiliation, that he would be born of such sinners, and it certainly may encourage the vilest to come unto him, and expect salvation from him. Nor shall they be disappointed, if, in true repentance and lively faith, they turn from their sins to God.

Verse 4. *And Aram begat Aminadab*—Of these, to Jesse, little is said in Scripture, for either they lived in slavery in Egypt, or in trouble in the wilderness, or in obscurity in Canaan before the kingdom was settled. Naasson, as we learn Num. i. 7, was head of the house of Judah, not, as some through mistake have affirmed, when the Israelites entered Canaan, but when they were numbered and marshalled in the wilderness of Sinai, in the second year after they were come out of Egypt. Accordingly, in the catalogue given 1 Chron. ii. 10, he is termed *prince of the children of Judah*, where Salmon his son is called Salma.

Verse 5. *Salmon begat Booz of Rachab*—Viz., after their settlement in Canaan. It is not exact

A. M. 4000. 6 And ¹Jesse begat David the king; and ²David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;
7 And ¹Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;
8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat

¹ 1 Sam. xvi. 1; xvii. 12.—² 2 Sam. xii. 24.

said that this woman was Rahab of Jericho, commonly called the harlot, but it is highly probable she was; for that Rahab was contemporary with Salmon, and a remarkable person, and there was no other of that name, especially of that age, of whom the compiler of the table could possibly suppose his reader to have any knowledge. It is true she was of one of those idolatrous nations with which the Israelites were forbidden to marry. But as the reason of that prohibition was only lest they should be tempted to idolatry, it could have no force in the case of Rahab, who, before her marriage with Salmon, undoubtedly acknowledged the God of Israel for the true God, and became a proselyte of righteousness. *And Booz begat Obed of Ruth*—Although the son of a Moabite by an Israelitish woman was forbidden to enter into the congregation of the Lord; that is, at least was rendered incapable of being a prince in Israel, and perhaps even of being naturalized by circumcision; yet it evidently appears from this celebrated instance, Ruth being a Moabitess, that this precept was not understood as excluding the descendants of an Israelite by a Moabitish woman from any hereditary honours and privileges, otherwise the kinsman of Booz would not have wanted a much better reason than any he assigned, (Ruth iv. 6.) for refusing to marry Ruth, when she became a widow. *And Obed begat Jesse*—Inasmuch as there were at least 300 years between Salmon and David, and only three persons are here named as intervening to fill up that space of time, viz., Booz, Obed, and Jesse, they must each of them have been about 100 years old at the birth of his son, here named, which is not to be wondered at, considering the age in which they lived. Moses, a little before their time, had lived 120 years, when his natural strength was not abated. And Caleb, at 85, was strong and fit for war. Add to this, that they were persons of eminent piety, and therefore, probably, God vouchsafed to each of them a longer life than ordinary, and continued their strength to a late period thereof.

Verse 6. *And Jesse begat David the king*—David has the title of king given him in this genealogy, because he was the first king of his family, and because he had the kingdom entailed upon his children; in which respect he had greatly the advantage of Saul, from whose family the kingdom was taken away almost as soon as it was conferred. It is true, ten of the twelve tribes revolted from David's grandson. Nevertheless, the promise of God remained sure, for whereas an end was soon put to the kingdom of the ten tribes, the empire of the

begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;
9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;
10 And ^mEzekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

¹ 1 Chron. iii. 10, &c.—^m 2 Kings xx. 21; 1 Chron. iii. 13.

two which adhered to David's family was of much longer duration, not to mention that the tribe of Judah, out of which the Messiah was to spring, was one of those two that continued in their allegiance to his house. This kingdom also was a type of the kingdom of Christ, which indeed might be said to be begun by him. For to him the promise of the Messiah was made, and of his seed the Messiah was to be raised up, to possess his throne, and establish it for ever. Ezek. xxxvii. 25. *And David begat Solomon of her that had been the wife, &c.*—In the original it is, *of her of Urias; εκ της τῆς Ουριαν.* Though David, in this unhappy affair, acted in a way most unworthy of his character, yet God, on his deep repentance, not only graciously forgave him, but entailed the promise on his seed by this very woman. An amazing instance this of his boundless mercy!

Verse 7. *And Solomon begat Roboam*—From whose government ten of the tribes revolting, chose Jeroboam for their king, who, to prevent them from returning to their subjection to the house of David, introduced the worship of the golden calves, and led the whole nation into the dreadful crime of gross idolatry; a crime from which they were never totally reclaimed, and which was the chief source of their misery and ruin, bringing down the divine vengeance upon them in repeated punishments, till they were so reduced as to become an easy prey to the Assyrian monarchy.

Verse 8. *And Joram begat Ozias*—By Ozias, Uziah is intended, and it is certain from the history of the Kings and Chronicles that he was the son of Amaziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1; Amaziah, of Joash, ch. xxiv. 27; Joash, of Ahaziah, ch. xxii. 11; and Ahaziah, of Jehoram. But, according to the language of the Hebrews, *the children of children* are reputed the sons or daughters, not only of their immediate parents, but of their ancestors, and these ancestors are said to beget those who are removed some generations from them. Thus Isaiah says to Hezekiah, *Of thy sons which thou shalt beget shall they take away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon*: which prediction was not fulfilled until the days of Jeconiah, long after the days of Hezekiah. But it will be asked, why these three in particular are left out of the catalogue? The best answer to this question seems to be, that the evangelist followed the Jewish tables in writing this list, and that he found them left out in these. But if he himself, though he found them in the tables, omitted their names, it must, as Dr. Doddridge observes, have been "by some peculiar

A. M. 4000. 11 And ¹Josias^a begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were °carried away to Babylon :

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, ²Jechonias begat Salathiel ; and Salathiel begat ³Zorobabel ;

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud ; and Abiud begat Eliakim ; and Eliakim begat Azor ;

¹ Some read, *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jechonias.*
^a 1 Chron. iii. 15, 16.—² 2 Kings xxiv. 14-16; xxv. 11; 2 Chr.

divine direction, that the sin of *Jehoram* is thus animadverted upon, even to the fourth generation, his intermediate descendants being thus blotted out of the records of Christ's family, and overlooked as if they had never been."

Verse 11. *Josias begat Jechonias*—According to the Bodleian and other MSS., (of which notice is taken in the margin of our Bibles,) we must read *Josiah begat Jehoiakim, and Jehoiakim begat Jechoniah*. And this indeed seems absolutely necessary to keep up the number of *fourteen generations*; unless we suppose, with Dr. Whitby, that the *Jechoniah* here is a different person from that *Jechoniah* mentioned in the next verse, which seems a very unreasonable supposition, since it is certain that throughout this whole *table* each person is mentioned twice, first as the son of the preceding, and then as the father of the following. *And his brethren*—*Jehoahaz* and *Zedekiah*, who were both kings of Judah, the former the predecessor to *Jehoiakim*, and the latter the successor of his son *Jehoiachin*. Of the history of these persons see the notes on 2 Kings xxiii. 30, 31; and xxiv. 1-30; and xxv. 1-7. *About the time they were carried away to Babylon*—There were two transportations to Babylon of the tribes which composed the kingdom of Judah. The first happened in the eighth year of the reign of *Jehoiachin* the son of *Jehoiakim*. For *Jehoiachin* delivered up the city to *Nebuchadnezzar*, and, by treaty, agreed to go with the Chaldeans to Babylon, at which time the princes and the mighty men, even 10,000 captives, with all the craftsmen and smiths, were carried away to Babylon. 2 Kings xxiv. 12-16. The second transportation happened in the 11th year of the reign of *Zedekiah*, when the city was taken by storm, and all the people made prisoners of war and carried off. The seventy years of the captivity were dated from the first transportation, here properly called *μετοικεσία, a removal or migration*: and it is of this that the evangelist speaks in this genealogy: the other is more properly termed *αχμαλωσία, a being taken and carried away captive*.

Verse 12. *And after they were brought to Babylon*—After the Babylonish captivity commenced, *Jechonias begat Salathiel*—It is here objected, that God said concerning this *Jechoniah*, called also *Coniah*, Jer. xxii. 30, *Write ye this man childless: How then did he beget Salathiel?* This objection is easily answered, for that verse, (where see the

14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and A. M. 4000. Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud ;

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar ; and Eleazar begat Matthan ; and Matthan begat Jacob ;

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

xxxvi. 10, 20; Jer. xxvii. 20; xxxix. 9; lii. 11, 15, 28-30; Dan. i. 2.—² 1 Chron. iii. 17, 19.—³ Ezra iii. 2; Neh. xii. 1.

note,) expounds itself: it being added, *a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah*. The expression, therefore, manifestly means, *without a child that shall actually succeed in the kingdom*: for the text itself supposes that he should have seed, but none that should prosper, sitting on the throne of David and ruling in Judah: which is according to the sacred history, (2 Chron. xxxvi.) for the king of Babylon set up *Zedekiah*, his uncle, in his stead, who was the last king of Judah, in the 11th year of whose reign the Jews were carried away captive. *Salathiel begat Zorobabel*—Here is another difficulty: for, 1 Chron. iii. 19, we read, *The sons of Pedaiah were Zerubbabel and Shimei*: now if *Zerubbabel* was the son of *Pedaiah*, how could he be the son of *Salathiel*? In answer to this, let it be observed, 1st, that *Salathiel* might die without issue, and *Pedaiah*, his brother, might marry his widow, (according to the law of God, Deut. xxv. 5,) to raise up seed to his brother. *Zerubbabel*, being the fruit of this marriage, would of course be called the son of *Salathiel* and the son of *Pedaiah*. Or, 2dly, there might be *two* persons of the name of *Zerubbabel*; *one* the son of *Salathiel*, and the *other* the son of his brother *Pedaiah*. This seems very likely, considering that the word *Zerubbabel* signifies *a stranger in Babylon*, a name which very probably would be given to several children born in the captivity. Be this as it may, the *Zerubbabel* here mentioned was that illustrious person who was the chief instrument of restoring and settling the Jewish commonwealth, on their return from captivity.

Verse 16. *Jacob begat Joseph*—It is evident that *Joseph* was properly the son of *Jacob*, and only the son-in-law of *Eli*: Luke iii. 23. See note on verse 2. Though *Joseph* was not the true father of Christ, yet Christ's pedigree was reckoned by him, because he had no other father as man, and *Joseph* was his supposed father, being the husband of *Mary*, his mother; and the mother being transplanted into her husband's family, the child must go for one of that family. And therefore *Joseph's* family was to be set down, lest, if it had not been known, the Jews should have taken occasion to reject Christ on that account, for it was generally received among them that *Jesus* was the son of the carpenter, Matt. xiii. 55; the son of *Joseph*, John vi. 42. If, there-

A. M. 4000. 17 So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away

into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; A. M. 4000. and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

fore, Joseph had not been acknowledged to have been of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, they would undoubtedly have considered this as a strong objection to Christ's pretences of being the Messiah. Hence the Divine Wisdom was pleased to direct this apostle to remove that stumbling-block. Let it be observed, further, that "it was a received rule among the Jews, that the family of the mother is not called a family; all their pedigrees being reckoned and deduced from the father. This is the reason why Matthew has here set down the genealogy of Joseph; and thus Jesus Christ is the son of David, because Joseph's marriage with Mary gave to Jesus a right to all the privileges which a child, that is born of strange parents, was entitled to by adoption, and which were granted by law to the posterity of a man who had married his brother's widow. It is, moreover, very probable, that Mary was an only daughter, and an heiress, and consequently obliged to marry in her own family. See Num. xxxvi. 7-9. So that by giving the genealogy of Joseph, Matthew gives at the same time that of Mary. He is called the *husband of Mary*; for the names of *husband and wife* were given by the Jews to persons who were only betrothed. See Gen. xxix. 21; Deut. xxii. 24. Some copies, however, read, *Joseph, to whom the virgin Mary was betrothed.*" *Of whom was born Jesus*—This is elegantly said, for he was the seed of the woman, not of the man. *Who is called Christ*—i. e., Who is known by that name, and is really the *Christ*, or, the *anointed one*. Matthew adds this that he may distinguish the Saviour from others, who, either then or before, might have been called Jesus. Among the Hebrews, those who were raised, by the singular providence of God, to eminent dignities, were termed משיח, *Messiahs*, or, anointed persons, even though, strictly speaking, they had not been anointed with oil, as Abraham and Isaac, Psa. cv. 15; Cyrus, Isa. xlv. 1; and the king of Tyre, Ezek. xxviii. 14. Much more those who, by an unction, were consecrated to any particular office, as their prophets, high priests, and kings, had that appellation given them. In particular their *kings*, as long as royalty remained in the family of David, were called *Christs*, or, anointed ones. But after the destruction of the kingdom, this name, as appears from Dan. ix. 25, 26, began to be referred to one Redeemer, whom the Jews, encouraged by the predictions of the prophets, and especially of the last named, Daniel, looked for from God, to be their chief ruler and teacher, John iv. 25; and by whom a perfect reparation of the breach was expected to be made. That supereminent and singular Christ, Jesus professed himself to be, and both he and his disciples assigned, as a reason of the appellation, that he was furnished with power manifestly extraordinary and unparalleled, as well for the declaring and confirming his heavenly doctrine,

as for the executing of all his other offices. See Luke iv. 18; John iii. 34; Acts iv. 27; and x. 36, 38.

As all the offices mentioned above, the prophetic, the priestly, the kingly, were to meet in him, and to be sustained by him in an infinitely higher degree than they were by any persons under the Jewish dispensation, who were no more than types of him, so he is represented as anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, Heb. i. 9. He is immeasurably filled with the Holy Ghost, even as to his human nature, and most completely qualified for sustaining every office and character in which we need him. *Are we ignorant of God and of divine things?* He is a teacher come from God, a prophet *like*, nay, superior to Moses, and him we are to hear on pain of eternal destruction. He is the *truth*, and *wisdom*, and *word of God*: yea, the *light of the world*, and they that believe in him *shall not abide in darkness*, but *shall have the light of life*. Have we sinned and come short of the glory of God? Are we guilty before God, and subject to his just judgment? He is the high priest of our profession, a *priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek*, a priest possessed of an *unchangeable priesthood*, and who, by *one offering of himself, once made, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*; having *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and ever living to make intercession for us*. Are we the servants of sin, and therefore the subjects of Satan, captivated by his power, and held under his dominion? Does this present world tyrannise over us, and the law in our members war against the law of our mind and lead us captive to the law of sin that is in our members? And are we subject also to the law of death, and in bondage to the fear of it? He is exalted a *prince and a saviour*; is a king set upon the holy hill of Zion; and as to this office, also, *the Spirit of the Lord God is upon him, because the Lord hath anointed him to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound: to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord;—to deliver us from this present evil world;—to make us free from the law of sin and death;—to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;—and to deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their life long subject to bondage.*

Verse 17. *So all the generations, &c.*—"Matthew, designing to show that Jesus was the Messiah, began his genealogy at Abraham, to whom the promise was originally made, that *in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed*. But the succession of Christ's ancestors, from Abraham downward, naturally resolved itself into three classes; viz., first of private persons from Abraham to David; next of kings from David to Jehoiakim; and then of private persons from the Babylonish captivity, when an end was put to the royal dignity of our Lord's progenitors." For Jehoiachin, the

A. M. 4000. 18 ¶ *Now the birth† of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Jo-

seph, before they came together, she was found with child * of the Holy Ghost.

* Sunday after Christmas-day, gospel, verse 18, to the end. † Luke i. 27.

† The fifth year before the common account called Anno Domini.— Luke i. 35.

son of Jehoiakim, was reduced to the condition of a private person, being made a captive; "and as for Salathiel and Zerubbabel, notwithstanding they had the supreme command, after their return from the captivity, they were not vested either with the titles or powers of princes, being only lieutenants of the kings of Persia. Wherefore the evangelist, thus invited by his subject, fitly distributes Christ's ancestors into three classes, the first and last of which consisting exactly of fourteen successions, he mentions only fourteen in the middle class, though in reality it contained three more, viz. Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. But omissions of this kind are not uncommon in the Jewish genealogies. For example, Ezra vii. 3, Azariah is called the son of Meraioth, although it is evident, from 1 Chron. vi. 7-9, that there were six descendants between them."—MacKnight. We may observe also, that God's chosen people, in each of these several intervals, were under a different kind of government, and the end of each interval produced a great alteration in their state. In the first, they were under patriarchs, prophets, and judges; in the second, under kings; and in the third, under the Asmonæan priests and generals. The first fourteen generations brought their state to dignity and glory in the kingdom of David; the second, to disgrace and misery in the captivity of Babylon; and the third, to honour and glory again in the kingdom of Christ. The first begins with Abraham, who received the promise, and ends in David, to whom it was renewed and revealed more fully; the second begins with the building of the temple, and ends with its destruction; the third begins with their temporal captivity in Babylon, and ends with their spiritual deliverance by Christ. "When we survey such a series of generations," says Dr. Doddridge, "it is obvious to reflect, how, like the leaves of a tree, one passeth away, and another cometh; yet the earth still abideth. And with it, the goodness of the Lord, which runs on from generation to generation, the common hope of parents and children. Of those who formerly lived upon earth, and perhaps made the most conspicuous figure among the children of men, how many are there whose names are perished with them! and how many of whom only the names are remaining! Thus are we likewise passing away! And thus shall we shortly be forgotten! Happy, if, while we are forgotten by men, we are remembered by God, and our names are found written in the book of life! There will they make a much brighter appearance than in the records of fame, or than they would do even in such a catalogue as this of those who were related to Christ according to the flesh; whose memory is here preserved, when that of many, who were once the wonder and terror of the mighty in the land of the living, is lost in perpetual oblivion."

Verse 18. *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise, ὡς ἦν, was thus*—It was not in the ordinary course of nature, or manner in which children are conceived and born, but in the wonderful manner following. Not only the birth, but the conception of Christ, and what preceded it, are here included in the word γεννησας, which some critics have unwarily confounded with the word γενεας, used in the first verse of this chapter. *When his mother was espoused to Joseph*—According to the custom of the Jews, who did not usually marry without previous espousals. This was nothing but a solemn promise of marriage, made by the parties to each other, before witnesses, to be accomplished at such a distance of time as they agreed upon, which, it seems, was sometimes longer and sometimes shorter, according as the age of the persons, or other circumstances, might demand or advise. It was a custom, if not ordained, at least approved of by God, as appears from Deut. xx. 7, and had many advantages attending it. The parties had hereby time to think seriously of the great change they were soon to make in their lives, and to seek unto God for his blessing upon them. And they might converse together more freely about their household affairs, and the management of their family, than they could well have done consistently with modesty, without such a previous betrothing. God would have Mary to be espoused, for the safety and honour of Christ in his infancy, and the credit and comfort of his mother. *Before they came together*—Viz., to cohabit as man and wife; *she was found with child*—Very unexpectedly, doubtless; perhaps by Joseph, who, with the care of a husband, observed his intended wife, and from whose sight she did not conceal herself, being conscious she had not dishonoured him. *Of, or rather, by the Holy Ghost*—Mary knew it was by the Holy Ghost she had conceived with child; both because she was sure she had not known man, as she told the angel, and because the angel had assured her, *the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadow her*. This, no doubt, she would reveal to some of her friends, who, considering her great piety, and the testimony borne by her cousin Elizabeth, probably, fully believed her. But certainly she had not mentioned it to Joseph, as despairing, perhaps, of his giving credit to what was so improbable, or judging it better to commit the matter to God, by whom, as she had learned, it had already been revealed to her cousin Elizabeth, and by whom she might hope it would be revealed to Joseph also. Indeed, it is not easy to conceive how he should know or believe it, otherwise than in consequence of some supernatural revelation made to himself. This, therefore, in tenderness to her reputation, and out of regard to their mutual peace when they should come together, as

A. M. 4000. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing [†] to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, be-

[†] Deut. xxiv. 1.

well as to prepare the way for Joseph's acknowledging Jesus for the true Messiah and his Saviour, God was graciously pleased to grant him. We may observe here, it became Christ to be born thus by the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit forming his human nature of the body of a virgin, as he formed Adam out of the dust of the earth, 1, that he might have no other father but God: 2, that the womb of the virgin being sanctified by the Spirit of holiness, there might be no tradition of original sin, which would have been contrary both to the majesty of his person, and the execution of his office: 3, that his nativity might be perfectly free from every defilement of lust and impurity. And as it was necessary that he should be born of a virgin that he might be born without sin, and that the ancient promise might be fulfilled, (see Isa. vii. 14,) so it was wisely ordered that he should be born of a *betrothed* virgin. For hereby he was preserved from coming under the reproach of illegitimacy, and his mother from being subjected to the punishment of the judicial law. And at the same time, by this means she was not destitute of one to take care of her during her confinement, nor Jesus of a guard during his infancy. "Never was a daughter of Eve so dignified as the virgin Mary, yet she was in danger of falling under the imputation of one of the worst of crimes. We find not, however, that she tormented herself about it; but, conscious of her own innocency, she kept her mind calm and easy, and committed her cause to him who judgeth righteously; and, like her, those who are careful to keep a good conscience, may cheerfully trust God with the keeping of their good name."

Verse 19. *Joseph her husband, being a just* [or *righteous*] *man*—That is, as many understand it, a strict observer of the law, and of the customs of his ancestors, and therefore not judging it right to retain her under these circumstances. But the following words, *and not willing to make her a public example*, seem manifestly to lead to another and even an opposite sense of the word here rendered *just*, or *righteous*. Hence some interpret the clause thus: Joseph, being a *good-natured, merciful, and tender-hearted* man, was unwilling to go to the utmost rigour of the law, but chose rather to treat her with as much lenity as the case allowed. But, Dr. Doddridge very well observes, it is without any good reason that *δικαιος* should be here rendered *merciful* or *good-natured*, because, "if we consider the information which Joseph might have received from persons of such an extraordinary character as Zachariah and Elizabeth, who would certainly think themselves obliged to interpose on such an occasion, and whose story so remarkably carried its own evi-

hold, the angel of the Lord appeared A. M. 4000. unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: ^α for that which is ²conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

^α Luke i. 35.—² Gr. *begotten*.

dence along with it; besides the intimation the prophecy of Isaiah gave, and the satisfaction he undoubtedly had in the virtuous character of Mary herself; we must conclude that he would have acted a very severe and unrighteous part, had he proceeded to extremities without serious deliberation; and that *putting her away privately* would, in these circumstances, have been the hardest measure which justice would have suffered him to take. It seems the expression, *παρὰ δόξης*, here rendered to *make her a public example*, "may perhaps refer to that exemplary punishment which the law inflicted on those who had violated the faith of their espousals before the marriage was completed. See Deut. xxii. 23, 24, where it is expressly ordered that a betrothed virgin, if she lay with another man, should be stoned. We may suppose, however, that the infamy of a public divorce, though she had not been stoned, may also be expressed by the same word. But then there was besides a private kind of divorce, in which no reason was assigned, and the dowry was not forfeited as in the former case, and by this she would not have been so much defamed." But it must be observed, that as their being betrothed to each other was a thing publicly known, he could not have put her away so privately, but there must have been witnesses of it, two at least, her parents, suppose, or some of her nearest relations.

Verse 20. *But while he thought on these things*—While he was revolving them in his mind, in the night season, ignorant as he then was of the divine conception in Mary; while he was inclined to divorce her in this private way, but had not absolutely determined upon it; and while there was a conflict in his breast from opposite considerations; justice showing, on the one hand, what was due to himself; and on the other, what was due to one of Mary's character;—while he was thus deliberating with himself, and in danger of innocently doing wrong, *the angel of the Lord appeared unto him*—Here we have a remarkable instance of the care which God takes of good men, both in keeping them from sin, and in affording them direction in time of need. Joseph had formed that determination which every prudent and wise man would have formed in similar circumstances; and yet, if he had executed his design, he would have greatly injured the holy virgin, in deserting her, and exposing her to censure and reproach. He kept the matter in his own breast, and discovered it to no living creature. But it was not concealed from God, who is privy to the most secret things, and who cannot suffer any that fear him, and look for his direction, to take any step that will be to the injury or loss of the innocent. So constantly does the divine providence superintend

A. M. 4000. 21 ² And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name ³ JESUS:

² Luke i. 31.—³ That is, Saviour, Heb.

the affairs of men, and watch for the salvation of the righteous, even while they sleep.—An angel foretold to Mary, that she should be the mother of Christ; and an angel appointed Joseph to be the foster-father of the child, when born; angels ministered to Christ after his temptation; angels strengthened him in his agony; angels bore testimony, as to his nativity, so also to his resurrection, for it was proper that they should pay a peculiar respect to him by whom they had been created, and to whom they were, and were to be, subject.

In a dream—The angel appeared to Mary while awake, because faith and consent were required in her that she might conceive by the Holy Ghost; but he appeared to Joseph while sleeping, because that was sufficient in his case, and he was about to believe easily. For we more easily believe those things possible to have been done, which are done already by the divine power, and contrary to the law of nature, than the things which are yet to be done. Hence it was, that the matter was not signified to Joseph before the virgin had conceived, which, indeed, if it had been, might have left room for suspicion. In proportion as Joseph was the more and the longer perplexed with doubt, so much the stronger and more weighty is his testimony, after he is informed of the truth. *Saying, Joseph, thou son of David*—The angel reminds Joseph of the nobility of the stock from whence he sprung, that he might not think of any thing mean, but might raise his mind to the expectation of great things. He who made David, who was the son of a shepherd, a king, why should he not also give a carpenter a son that should be a king? Who promised David that the Messiah should arise from his posterity, *He* will certainly make his promise good, and will sooner change the whole order of nature than suffer what he hath foretold to fail of accomplishment. *Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife*—i. e., Who is betrothed to thee to be thy wife. For it is a mistake to interpret these words, as some have done, as if she had been already married to Joseph, and he had abstained from all conjugal intercourse with her, in consequence of some vow he had made. Dr. Waterland reads this clause, *Scruple not the taking of Mary thy wife*. It seems that Joseph had been induced, by a fear of offending God, to think of divorcing his wife, either because he thought she belonged to another man, or because he knew it was by no means lawful or honourable for him to cherish an adulteress. The angel's words imply, Fear not to take her home to thee, and treat her kindly as a wife ought to be treated, according to the espousals that have passed between you, though there may seem to be some danger of bringing a reflection on thyself and family; *for that which is conceived in her* is of no human original, but produced by the miraculous and unexampled operation

for ⁷ he shall save his people from A. M. 4000 their sins.

⁷ Acts iv. 12; v. 31; xiii. 23, 38.

of the Holy Ghost. Thus, after Matthew has related how Christ was of royal descent, he now shows that he was also of much higher birth, and had a divine original. Now, although no example be extant of such a wonderful nativity, it nevertheless ought not to be rashly called in question by any especially by the Jews, since they believe that Abraham, the father of the nation, had a son by Sarah after she was past child-bearing; since they believe that Adam, the first man, was produced without father or mother; and that all the dead will be restored to life. That Joseph's scruples about taking Mary did not proceed, as some of the fathers supposed, from veneration, appears from the reason here given by the angel why he should take her, which, in that case, would have been the only reason against taking her. And we may observe, too, that the angel's terming her his *wife*, and encouraging him to take her, shows on what a flimsy foundation the belief of her perpetual virginity, entertained by the papists and others, is built.

Verse 21. *She shall bring forth a son*—Hers, not thine, for he does not say to thee, Christ being *απατωρ, without father*, as man. *And thou shalt call his name Jesus*—It belonged to Joseph, as being reputed his father, and the person under whose protection Christ was placed during his infancy, to give him his name. "Six men," says Rabbi Eliezer, "have been named before they were born; viz., Isaac, Ishmael, Moses our lawgiver, Solomon, Josiah, and King Messiah." To these we may add, *Cyrus* and *John the Baptist*, and observe, that those persons to whom a name has been given by God before their birth, have always been remarkable persons. The name *Jesus*, in Greek, answers to *Joshua*, or rather, *Jehoshuah*, in Hebrew, which signifies *Jehovah shall save*; for *Jah*, or *Jehorah*, enters into the composition of the name, as Bishop Pearson has largely and clearly shown in his most learned and instructive Exposition of the Creed, pp. 69-71. So that Christ's being called *Jesus*, was in effect an accomplishment of the prophecy that he should be called *Emmanuel*. It was not without reason that the successor of Moses was called by this name; for, by subduing the Canaanites, and putting the tribes of Israel in possession of the promised land, he showed himself to be, under God, the Saviour of his people. But this name agrees much better to our *Jesus*, who both delivers his followers from much more dangerous enemies, and divides unto them a much more glorious inheritance. Thus, in the next clause, *he shall save his people from their sins*—Joseph, by his people, could not understand any other than the Jewish nation, which is generally signified by that name in the Scriptures; and to them he was peculiarly sent, and them he will at length fully gather, save, and restore. We know, however, that all the true Israel of God, including even the Gentiles that

A. M. 4000. 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

* Isa. vii. 14.

should believe in him, are included. All these, it is here said, he should save from their sins, i. e., from the guilt, power, and pollution of them, by procuring, through his death, and receiving, in consequence of his ascension into heaven, an ample pardon for them, and the Holy Spirit to write that pardon on their hearts, and renew them after the divine image, that, in consequence of a life of holiness on earth, they might be raised to a state of complete perfection and felicity in heaven. How plain it is from hence that, although the gospel offers us salvation by faith, and not by works, yet it effectually secures the practice of holiness, since holiness is a part of that salvation wherewith Christ came to save sinners; for he came to *save them from their sins*. It is worth observing, on this occasion, what an excellent example of gentleness and prudence is here set us by Joseph! In an affair which appeared dubious, he chose, as we should always do, rather to err on the favourable than on the severe extreme. He is careful to avoid any precipitate steps; and, in the moment of deliberation, God interposes to guide and determine his resolves. Let us reflect, with what wonder and pleasure he would receive the important message from the angel, which not only assured him of the unstained virtue and eminent piety of her he loved, and confirmed his choice of her, as the partner of his future life, but brought him tidings of a divine Saviour, a *Jesus*, an *Emmanuel*, who should be *God with men*, and should save his people from their sins; and assured him, moreover, that the object of his affections, his beloved, espoused Mary, should, by a miraculous conception, be the happy mother of this heavenly offspring, and should therefore through all generations be entitled *blessed*. Let us also receive these glad tidings of great joy, designed for the consolation of all people, with suitable humility and gratitude, and seek unto this Jesus that he may answer his divine name in us, and save us, his people, from our sins. Let our souls bow to this Emmanuel, our incarnate God, and, while with holy wonder we survey the various scenes of his humiliation, let us remember, too, his native dignity and divine glory, and pay him the worship and service which are his undoubted due.

Verse 22. *Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled*—That is, by the doing of all this was fulfilled the following prophecy. For we are not to suppose that the bare accomplishment of an ancient prediction was the end God had in view in sending his Son into the world; which would imply that, if no such prediction had been given, God would not have sent his Son. No: God's design was the salvation of mankind, and the prophecy was fulfilled, as it were, by the way, without being primarily intended. For the events foretold by the prophets

23 * Behold, a virgin shall be with A. M. 4000. child, and shall bring forth a son, and * they shall call his name Emmanuel,

* Or, his name shall be called.

came to pass, not because of the prophecies which predicted them, but the prophecies predicted them because they would come to pass. Thus, in other places, what was merely a consequence of things being done, is represented as the chief end of doing them, as Rom. v. 20, *The law came in* (viz., between Adam and Christ,) *that the offence might abound*. Certainly God did not give the law with a design to make men's sins abound; but this was the consequence of its being given. For, like a dam placed in the way of a stream, it made the corruption of mankind rise the higher and spread the wider. To this may be added, however, that he who had foretold these things because he had determined to do them, in due time actually did them, that he might show himself true to his word and promise.

Verse 23. *Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth, &c.*—Some have unhappily supposed that this famous prophecy immediately related to the birth of a child of Isaiah's in a natural way, and that it only referred to Christ in a secondary sense. But surely a son's being born of one then a virgin, when she was married, was no such extraordinary event as to answer such a pompous introduction as we meet with in the viiith of Isaiah. Had this been all, what need was there of these words, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign? What need of that solemn notice, Behold!* there being nothing new or strange in all this. Besides, the promise, *A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel*, is made as a sign or miracle, to confirm the house of David in God's promise made to him, respecting the perpetuity of his kingdom. But what sign or miracle could it be, that a woman should be with child after the ordinary manner? what wonder was there in this? As to Isaiah, ch. vii. 16, *Before the child* (or, as it is in the Hebrew, *this child*,) *shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings*, it seems most reasonable to interpret it as referring to Shear-jashub, whom Isaiah was ordered to take in his hand for no other imaginable reason but that something remarkable was to be said of him. So that their deliverance from the two kings of Syria and Israel, before Isaiah's son, (whom he had taken in his hand,) should be able to distinguish between good and evil, was to be considered by them as typical of a much greater deliverance by the Messiah, in due time to be born of a future virgin. See notes on Isa. vii. 11–16. Thus, according to the usual manner of the prophets, the people of God, in their present distress, are comforted with the promise of the Messiah hereafter to appear. *They shall call his name*—That is, his name shall be called; a personal verb being put for an impersonal, as is frequently the case; or, as some copies read it, *Thou*

A. M. 4000. which, being interpreted, is, God with us.

24 Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden

* Exod. xiii. 2 ;

shalt call, or, he shall be owned and accounted ; *Emmanuel, God with us*—God in our nature, by whose incarnation, God is united to our nature ; and by whose mediation, God is reconciled to us and is present with us. The names of Christ, it must be observed, are of two kinds : 1st, proper and distinguishing, pointing out his person ; 2dly, descriptive, either of his person or offices, such as there are many in Scripture, as *David*, the *Branch*, *Wonderful*, *Counsellor*. It is to be observed, that in the Scripture language, *to be called*, and *to be*, are the same thing. It is, therefore, no objection against the application of these words to Christ, that he did not bear the name Emmanuel, if he really was *God with us*, which is the import of it. And that he was, is sufficiently proved from his being entitled the *mighty God* by Isaiah, ch. ix. 6. Now, he who is properly called *El, God*, and is also *emmanu, with us*, must infallibly be that *Emmanuel*, who is *God with us*.

Verses 24, 25. *Joseph did as the angel had bidden him*—This sudden change of his resolution, shows his great faith and ready obedience to God. When God speaks to our hearts, we speedily and cheerfully do what before we not only scrupled, but thought, perhaps, most inconvenient and displeasing, and even contrary to the dictates of reason. *And took unto him his wife*—That is, he took her home to his house. Nevertheless, in expectation of this wonderful event, and out of reverence to this sacred birth, he *knew her not* as his wife, though she dwelt under his roof ; but she continued a pure virgin till at least Jesus was born. “On what terms they afterward lived,” says an eminent divine, “is of so little importance to us, that one cannot but wonder it should have been the subject of so much debate. It is sufficient for us to know that she was a *virgin*, not only at the time of Christ’s conception, but at his birth, as the prophecy foretold she should be. The evangelist, therefore, wisely contented himself

him, and took unto him his wife : A. M. 4000. 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth * her firstborn son : and he called his name JESUS.

Luke ii. 7, 21.

with recording this, without affirming any thing further, either way, on this delicate subject.” We must observe, however, that the expression, *Till she had brought forth her firstborn son*, does not necessarily imply that he knew her afterward, any more than the Lord’s words to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 15, *I will not leave thee till I have done all that which I have spoken to thee of*, imply that the Lord left Jacob after he had fulfilled his promises to him ; or what is said, 2 Sam. vi. 23, of *Michal*, Saul’s daughter, that *she had no child till the day of her death*, that she bore a child or children afterward ; nor will the expression, *her firstborn son*, prove that she had afterward any more children, being in Scripture applied continually to the person that first opened the womb, as the phrase is, whether there were any more children or not. Indeed, the Greek here, *τον υιον αυτης, τον πρωτοτοκον*, is literally, *her son, the firstborn, or that firstborn*, viz., that person eminent and dear to God above others that were the firstborn, whom all the firstborn in the Old Testament prefigured, whom the angels adore, Heb. i. 6, and in whom those that believe become the firstborn, and the first fruits of God’s creatures. Nevertheless, when it is considered what is the great end of marriage, that Joseph took Mary to wife by the command of God himself, and that his law not only *permits*, but even *enjoins* husbands to perform the marriage duty, it is, as Dr. Whitby observes, “not easy to be conceived, that he should live twelve years with her he loved so well, and all that time deny that duty which was not to be diminished when the wife was less beloved :” especially as no just reason whatever can be assigned for such conduct. Be this as it may, we may safely conclude with St. Basil, an ancient father of the Church, that till she had brought forth her firstborn her virginity was necessary : “but what she was afterward let us leave undiscussed, as being of small concern to the mystery.”

CHAPTER II.

This chapter represents, (1,) The solicitous inquiry of some wise Gentiles after Christ, with the information and direction given them by King Herod, 1–8. (2,) Their guidance to him at Bethlehem by a star ; their worship of and liberal donations to him, and their return homeward, 9–12. (3,) The divinely-directed flight of Christ and his parents into Egypt, to avoid the intended cruelty of Herod, 13–15. (4,) Herod’s barbarous murder of the infants about Bethlehem, in order to murder Christ among them, 16–19. (5,) Christ and his parents, divinely inspired, return from Egypt to the land of Israel, and retire to Nazareth in Galilee, 19–23.

A. M. 4000. **N**OW* when ^a Jesus was † born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of

Herod the king, behold, there came wise men ^b from the east to Jerusalem, A. M. 4000.

* The Fourth year before the common account called Anno Domini.

^a Luke ii. 4, 6, 7.—† *Epiphany*, gospel, verse 1 to verse 13.
^b Gen. x. 30; xxv. 6; 1 Kings iv. 30.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *Now when Jesus was born*—It is matter of great doubt when the following remarkable occurrence happened. The received time of celebrating the Epiphany imports that it was within thirteen days of the birth of Christ. But as it is not likely that the star made its appearance till he was born, so it does not seem at all probable that the wise men could have prepared for and accomplished so long a journey in so short a space of time, especially as they tarried some days, at the least, at Jerusalem, on their way to Bethlehem. Add to this, that immediately after their departure, (verse 13,) Joseph, with his wife and the child, are sent away into Egypt, which could not have been before the end of the forty days of Mary's purification. But although this visit of the wise men did not happen so soon after the birth of Christ as the calendar supposes, it might happen before Jesus was presented in the temple. For it is certain, when they came to Bethlehem they found Jesus and his mother there; but, according to Luke, ch. ii. 22, when the days of Mary's purification were ended, *they brought the child Jesus to present him to the Lord*; and we never read of their returning with him to Bethlehem. On the contrary, we are told, *when they had performed all things according to the law, they returned together to their own city Nazareth*. According to this hypothesis, Jesus was brought to Jerusalem while Herod was waiting for the return of the wise men, and the angel appeared to Joseph there to command him to flee into Egypt with the young child and his mother, which they might do the very night after Jesus was presented in the temple.

In Bethlehem of Judea—Judea here means the district so named from the tribe of Judah, under which, however, the tribe of Benjamin was comprehended; and it is distinguished from Samaria, Peræa, Trachonitis, and both Galilees. It must be observed, there was another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zabulon, in the lower Galilee. *In the days of Herod the king*—Viz., Herod the Great, the son of Antipater, born at Ascalon, about 70 years before Christ. According to some, he was a native Jew; according to others, an Idumean by the father's side, and by the mother's an Arabian. The most probable opinion is, that he was originally an Idumean; but that his ancestors had, for some ages, been proselytes to the Jewish religion. The Jews being at that time in subjection to the Romans, he was made king of Judea by the Roman senate. At his death, which happened soon after this, he divided his dominions by his last will among his sons, appointing Archelaus, mentioned verse 22, to succeed him as king of Judea; Herod Antipas, mentioned chap. xiv., to be tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa; and Philip, mentioned Luke iii., to be tetrarch of Trachonitis and the neighbouring countries. Herod Agrippa, mentioned

Acts xii., was his grandson. It is to be observed, that the history of the New Testament begins with Herod the Great, and ends with Agrippa, the last king of the Jews. *Behold!* The evangelist calls our attention by this word to the following very memorable occurrence. *There came wise men*—Probably Chaldean or Arabian astronomers, who, by divine grace, had been led from the knowledge of nature, to that of nature's God. Although they are termed in the original, *μαγοι, magi*, we must not imagine that they were what we call *magicians*, or sorcerers; for the appellation was by no means appropriated in ancient times to such as practised wicked arts, but was frequently given to *philosophers*, or *men of learning*, particularly those that were curious in examining the works of nature, and observing the motions of the heavenly bodies. *Came from the east*—It is impossible to determine absolutely from what part of the East they came; although it is probable it was from Arabia, rather than Chaldea, for it lay east of Judea, and is mentioned by Tacitus as its boundary eastward, and certainly was famous for *gold, frankincense, and myrrh*, commodities which (see verse 11) they brought with them. Myrrh, according to Grotius, is not produced save in Arabia, where, if we may believe Pliny, it is found in such abundance, with other spices, that no other kinds of wood are in use, not even to make fires of, but such as are odoriferous. Neither is frankincense found save among the Sabæans, a part of Arabia. And as to gold, another commodity which they brought, this is well known to be produced in such great abundance in Arabia Felix, that the furniture of the whole nation shines with it. David and Solomon, to whom the promise of the land of Canaan was fully made good, extended their dominions over those countries, even to the Euphrates, and the inhabitants of them were chiefly the seed of Abraham. Now it is more likely that these first fruits of the Gentiles should be brought to do homage to the King of the Jews, from a country that had done as much to David and Solomon, the types of Christ, than from a foreign and more remote nation; and that they should be of the seed of Abraham rather than of another race. Add to this, that Arabia abounded with magi, and was anciently so famous for wisdom, that, according to Porphyry, Pythagoras himself travelled thither to acquire it. Nay, if we may credit the learned Dr. Alix, the Jews were of opinion that there were prophets in the kingdoms of Saba and Arabia, and that they prophesied or taught successively, in the name of God, what they had received by tradition from the mouth of Abraham, of whose posterity they were, by Keturah. In the Old Testament it is frequently called the *East*, as Judg. vi. 3; Job i. 3; whereas Chaldea lay not so properly to the *east* as to the *north* of Judea, and is often spoken of in

A. M. 4000. 2 Saying, ° Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen

his star in the east, and are come to worship him. A. M. 4000.

° Luke ii. 11.

⁴ Num. xxiv. 17; Isa. lx. 3.

Scripture in that light. See Jer. i. 14, 15; vi. 22; Joel ii. 20. Had these wise men been, as some have supposed, a deputation from all the magi in Persia, Media, Arabia, and Chaldea; or had they been *kings*, as the papists fancy; so grand a circumstance as either of these would, in all probability, have been expressly recorded. *To Jerusalem*—The capital of the kingdom, and the seat of learning. For it seems these wise men did not suppose that so illustrious a king would be born in an ignoble village, but that he must be sought for in the royal city, in the palace itself, and in the family which then reigned. It was, however, no doubt, by the divine providence that they were directed to Jerusalem, as well that the Jews might be left without excuse, as that the birth of Christ the King might be announced by the Gentiles before he was acknowledged by the Jews, lest the testimony of the Jews concerning their own King should come under suspicion.

Verse 2. *Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews*—That is, their lawful and hereditary sovereign, Herod not being such. The wise men are under no kind of doubts in their inquiry; but being fully persuaded that he was born, and believing that this was known to all there, they only inquire where he was born. By this inquiry the birth of Christ was more publicly declared to the Jews, and more fully attested; the coming of these grave and understanding persons from a distant country in consequence of what they believed to be supernatural direction, being a very extraordinary occurrence. It is to be observed, that, according to Tacitus and Suetonius, historians of undoubted credit, it was expected through the whole East that *at that time a king was to arise in Judea who should rule all the world*. What gave birth to that expectation might be this: From the time of the Babylonish captivity, the Jews were dispersed through all the provinces of the Persian monarchy: and that in such numbers, that they were able to gather together and defend themselves against their enemies in those provinces. See Esther iii. 8; viii. 17; ix. 2, 16; and many of the people of the land became Jews. After their return into their own land they increased so mightily that they were soon dispersed over Asia, Africa, and many parts of Europe, and, as Josephus assures us, wherever they came they made proselytes to their religion. Now it was one principal article of their faith, and branch of their religion, to believe in and expect the appearance of the promised Messiah. Wherever they came, therefore, they would spread this faith and expectation; so that it is no wonder it became so general. Now these wise men, living at no very great distance from Judea, the seat of this prophecy, and conversing with the Jews among them, who were everywhere expecting the completion of it at that time;

being also skilled in astronomy, and seeing this star or light appearing in Judea, might reasonably conjecture that it signified the completion of that celebrated prophecy touching the king of the Jews, over the centre of whose land, they, being in the east, saw it hang. For it is not at all probable that this star appeared to the eastward of them, in which case it would have denoted something among the Indians, or other eastern nations, rather than among the Jews; but that it was seen to the west of themselves, and over the very place where the king was to be born.

We have seen his star—Which points him out, and is the token of his nativity. These wise men, learned in astronomy, and curious in marking the rising and setting and other phenomena of the heavenly bodies, observed at this time a star which they had never seen before, and were amazed at it as at a new, portentous appearance which did certainly forebode something of great consequence to the world, and the Jews in particular, over whose country it seemed to hang. But how could they know that this was *his star*, or that it signified the birth of a king? Many of the ancient fathers answer, that they learned this from the words of Balaam, Num. xxiv. 17, *There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre, &c.* And though, it is certain, these words properly speak not of a star that should arise at any prince's birth, but of a king who should be glorious and resplendent in his dominions, as stars are in the firmament, and should vanquish and possess these nations; yet considering that, according to the hieroglyphics of the East, and the figurative language of prophecy, stars are emblems of princes, it was very natural for them to consider the rising of a new star as foretelling the rise of a new king. And as Balaam's prophecy signified that the king should arise in Judea, and the new and extraordinary star they had seen appeared over that country, it was quite natural for them to conclude, that the king whose rise was foretold, was now born there. And though we know of no record in which this prophecy was preserved but the books of Moses, yet are we not sure there was no other; nor is it certain the books of Moses were unknown in Arabia. It seems more probable, considering its bordering upon Judea, and David and Solomon's extending their dominions over, at least, a part of it, as well as from the intercourse the Arabians had with the Jews, certainly greater than the Ethiopians had with them, to whom, nevertheless, it appears from Acts viii. 26, &c. that the Old Testament was not unknown; it seems likely, from these considerations, that they were not unacquainted with the divine Oracles, and particularly with this delivered by one of their own country. But if, after all, this should seem improbable, then we need make no scruple at all of believing that they were favoured by a divine

A. M. 4000. 3 ¶ When Herod the king had heard *these things*, * he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all † the chief priests and ‡ scribes of the people together, † he

* Proverbs 21. 1, 2.— † 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 14.
‡ 2 Chronicles xxxiv. 13.

revelation touching this matter, by which it is plain they were guided in their return. *To worship him*—Or to do him homage by prostrating ourselves before him, an honour which the Eastern nations were accustomed to pay their monarchs.

Verse 3. *When Herod heard, &c.*—*he was troubled*—Or, *alarmed*, as Dr. Waterland renders *εραπαθῶν*. The word properly signifies a great emotion of mind, whatever the cause thereof be. Being a prince of a very suspicious temper, and his cruelties having rendered him obnoxious to his subjects, he feared losing his kingdom, especially as he had taken Jerusalem by force, and was settled on his throne by the aid of the Romans. Hence it is no wonder that he was concerned to hear of the birth of one that was to be king, and especially to have such an extraordinary confirmation of it, as that of persons coming from a far country, directed by an extraordinary impulse upon the sight of a new star, which pointed to Judæa as the seat of his empire. *And all Jerusalem with him*—Fearing he should make it an occasion of renewing some of those tyrannical actions which had lately filled them with so much horror, as is related at large by Josephus. They dreaded likewise, it seems, a change of government, as knowing it does not usually happen without bloodshed, and that the Romans had great power, and would oppose any change in their affairs.

Verse 4. *And when he had gathered all the chief priests*—This expression must be intended to comprehend not only the high priest for the time being, and his deputy, with those who had formerly borne that office, but also the heads of the twenty-four courses, as well as any other persons of peculiar eminence in the priesthood, in which sense Josephus uses the word, *Antiq.* lib. xx. cap. viii. (al. 6,) § 8, p. 973. *The scribes of the people*—It would seem, from Ezra vii. 11, 12; 1 Chron. xxiv. 6; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 13, that they were of the tribe of Levi only, and so were either priests or Levites. As their office was to transcribe and prepare fair copies of the law of Moses, and other parts of the Old Testament, (a very necessary work before printing was invented,) they became, of course, well acquainted with the Scriptures, and were ordinarily employed in explaining them to the people: whence the chief of them were called *doctors of the law*. They, or at least some of them, together with the chief priests and elders, constituted the sanhedrim, or great council of the nation. But in this place, when no public business was to be done, but only the predictions of the ancient prophets were to be searched into by those who were thought to excel others in the

demand of them where Christ should be born. A. M. 4000.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet,
6 † And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judæa,

† Malachi ii. 7.—‡ Micah v. 2; Luke ii. 4.
John vii. 42.

knowledge of them, it does not appear that any fixed and legal council was summoned; but only that an extraordinary meeting of learned men was called by the king, that they might judge of the question of the wise men. *He demanded of them where Christ*, i. e., the promised Messiah, was to be born. The wise men had said nothing about *Christ*, or the Messiah, but only about a *king*, or, the *king of the Jews*. But Herod presently conceived that this king of the Jews that was born must be the Messiah promised Psa. ii.; Dan. ix.; and therefore desired to know of them the place of his birth, according to their received traditions, and sense of the prophecies of Scripture. But it is to be well observed, that we must understand Herod as inquiring, not concerning an event considered by him as already come to pass, but concerning a matter yet future and uncertain. For although he understood from the wise men that the birth of the Messiah had even now taken place, yet he concealed his knowledge of this, and his whole design, from the Jews. It is easy to observe how strongly all this story implies that a general expectation of the Messiah now prevailed: and it is plain Herod, in a sense, both believed the Jewish Scriptures, and that the birth of the Messiah was foretold in them. And yet, which discovered the height of madness, as well as of impiety and cruelty, he was contriving to destroy him! to destroy him whose birth, and reign, and glory, God in his word, he believed, had infallibly foretold!

Verse 6. *Thou Bethlehem, &c., art not the least among the princes of Judæa*—It is justly observed by Dr. Doddridge, after Erasmus, here, that “when this and several other quotations from the Old Testament, which we find in the New, come to be compared with the original, and even with the Septuagint, it plainly appears that the apostles did not always think it necessary to transcribe the passages they cited, but sometimes contented themselves with giving the general sense in some little diversity of language.” The words of Micah, which we render, *Though thou be little*, may be rendered, *Art thou little?* And his expression, *thousands of Judæa*; and that of the evangelist here, *princes, or governors of Judæa*, are in sense the same, the word *thousands* being used by the prophet, in allusion to the first division of the tribes of Israel into thousands, hundreds, and other subordinate divisions, over every one of which thousands was a *prince* or chief. But for a full explanation of both passages the reader is referred to the note on Micah v. 2.

A. M. 4000. art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, ¹ that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

¹ Rev. ii. 27.

Verse 7. *Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, &c.*—He thought it prudent to keep the matter as close as possible, lest the Jews, understanding the time of the birth of the Messiah, should, from thence, take occasion to rebel: for not having an hereditary right to the kingdom, and having been guilty of many acts of cruelty among them, he had no reason to presume upon their good-will toward him. He feared, likewise, lest, if it should be noised abroad that the Messiah was born, his purpose of destroying him should be prevented. But there is no wisdom or counsel against the Most High! He inquired of them diligently—Or, as the words *ἠκρίβωσεν παρ' αὐτῶν*, more properly signify, *inquired of them the exact time, or, got exact information from them, what time the star appeared*—That is, at what time it began to appear, judging, as probably the fact was, that the star first appeared at the time the child was born. His view in this was, that he might thereby form some conjecture concerning the age of the child to whose birth it referred. For on the one hand, it seems, he did not wish to destroy more children than the accomplishment of his design appeared to require; and on the other, not to leave this child alive.

Verse 8. *When ye have found him, bring me word again*—Viz., concerning the young child, his condition, and that of his parents, and all circumstances. It seems probable that Herod did not believe he was born, otherwise it is amazing that so suspicious and artful a prince as he was should put this important affair on so precarious a footing. How easily might he, if he had not himself accompanied these learned strangers, under pretence of doing honour to them, have sent a guard of soldiers with them, who might, humanly speaking, without any difficulty have slaughtered the child and his parents on the spot. But, perhaps, he might be unwilling to commit such an act of cruelty in the presence of these sages, lest their report of it should render him infamous abroad. Or rather, we must refer his conduct, in this matter, to that secret influence with which God, whenever he pleases, can infatuate the most sagacious of mankind, and disappoint their designs. See Doddridge. *That I may come and worship him also*—That I also, who would permit no interest of mine to interfere with the decrees of Heaven, may come with my family and court to pay homage to this new-born king; a duty to which I look upon myself as peculiarly obliged. Mark the hypocrisy of this perfidious tyrant! We may observe here, it is a peculiar excellence in the sacred writers, that they often describe a person's charac-

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, A. M. 4000. and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 ¶ When they had heard the king, they

¹ Or, feed.

ter in one sentence, or even in one word, and that, by the by, when they are pursuing another object. An instance of this we have in verse 3, where the evangelist mentions Herod's being *troubled* at the tidings brought by the wise men, an expression which exactly marked his character. Here again his disposition is perfectly developed; deep, crafty, subtle; pretending one thing but intending another; professing to have a design of worshipping Jesus, when his purpose was to murder him! In like manner having, according to Josephus, lib. xv. cap. 3, out of pretended friendship invited Aristobulus to an entertainment at Jericho, he contrived after dinner to have him drowned in a fish-pond, in which he was persuaded to bathe along with several of Herod's attendants. For they, by Herod's direction, as if in play and sport, dipped him so often, and kept him so long under water, that he died in their hands. And then, as if his death had been an unfortunate accident, which had happened without any previous design, Herod pretended great sorrow for it, shed abundance of tears, and bestowed upon his body a very splendid and expensive funeral.

Verse 9. *When they had heard the king, they departed*—Viz., from Jerusalem, without the least suspicion, it seems, of his treacherous and cruel designs. As these sages came from a distant country into Judea upon such an important discovery, and Bethlehem was so near, it is matter of wonder that none of the Jews attended them on their journey. But it is probable they were afraid of Herod. Or, perhaps, the dismissal of the wise men might be kept a secret in Jerusalem; so that if any of the Jews had had an inclination to have gone with them, they might not have had an opportunity. And Herod might avoid sending any one with them, lest he should raise suspicion in the minds of the parents or relations of the child; or lest the Jews, suspecting a plot, should contrive to bring about a revolt, or raise sedition. Or rather, the whole matter is to be referred to the providence of God, so ordering it that they should go unaccompanied, that the child might not be discovered to Herod. The Lord, however, prepared these illustrious strangers a better guide. For, lo, the star which they saw in the east—In their own country, went before them—This intimates that it had not been their guide in their journey from their own country. Nor was it needful they should have a guide, Jerusalem being sufficiently known. It had shone, it seems, on the night of his nativity, and then had disappeared till the present time. By its not appearing for a time, occasion was given for their inquiries at Jerusalem,

A. M. 4000. departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

which gave notice to the Jews of the birth of Christ; an event of which, it is likely, they would have had no information, if the star had led the wise men first to Bethlehem. And the reappearance of the star was probably intended of God to prevent their being discouraged at their not only not finding the king they sought in the royal city, but not being able to learn that any thing was known there concerning his birth, and especially in perceiving that when they had brought intelligence of it, all ranks seemed to be troubled, and not a single person of those whose native king he was offered himself as a companion to them, though come from a foreign land to worship him. Thus, also, their taking offence at the low condition in which they found Christ and his parents, was prevented. At the same time, it was a great confirmation of their faith, to be thus miraculously conducted to the very town pointed out in the Scriptures as the place of the birth of the Messiah. It left them not till it came and stood over where the young child was—Thus pointing out the very house, lest if they should have been obliged to make anxious inquiry concerning the child, there should be some who might have carried the matter to Herod, and have discovered him and his parents. Here, therefore, the star stopped, and proceeded no further, and not long after, viz., as soon as the wise men arrived at the place, as is most probable, entirely vanished. Hence it appears, that this star was not in the higher heavens, but in the lower regions of the air; for no star in the heavens could have exactly pointed out a particular house. Nothing is said here concerning a ray descending from the star to the top of the house, or concerning the descent of the body of the star. It is therefore probable it was a meteor, which to them had the appearance of a star, as meteors frequently have. This appears, further, from its moving by intervals, sometimes moving and sometimes standing still, which the stars, properly so called, never do. Dr. Whitby conjectures that what the wise men saw in the east might be that very light which shone upon the shepherds at Bethlehem, when the angel came to impart unto them the tidings of our Saviour's birth. This light certainly was exceeding great, as is clear from its being styled the *glory of the Lord*, and it was a *light from heaven*, hanging over their heads, and *shining round about them*. Now such a light, at a great distance, would appear as a star: or, as it ascended up from the shepherds it might be formed into the likeness of a star. A similar body of light, when they journeyed from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, was formed into the same likeness in which it had formerly appeared, and went before them in the air to the latter city, and then sunk down so low as to point out the very house where the babe lay. In this case the star must have been seen by the wise men on the very day of Christ's nativity.

10 When they saw the star, they A. M. 4000 rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 ¶ And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his

Verses 10, 11. *When they saw the star*—Thus standing over where the child was, *they rejoiced with exceeding great joy*—The original expression, *εχαρησαν χαραν μεγαλην σφοδρα*, is remarkably emphatical, and might be rendered, *They joyed a great joy, very much*, a translation which, though very bad English, as Dr. Doddridge observes, comes near to a literal version. They thus rejoiced because they were now confirmed in the certainty of the child's being born, and also because they saw themselves in so remarkable a manner under the divine direction, and conducted with such certainty to the glorious person whom they came to seek. *And when they were come into the house*—Mary, it seems, was now better accommodated than at the time of her delivery: she was now in a *house*, (though probably a poor one,) and not in a stable. Some think that Joseph had now changed the place of his abode, and taken up his residence at Bethlehem, but this is not clear from the story. *They saw the young child with Mary his mother*—And how different soever the condition in which they found them might be from what they had expected, they were not offended at its meanness, but, falling down on their faces before him, they *worshipped him*—That is, they did him honour after the manner of the East, whose inhabitants were wont to prostrate themselves before their kings. They wisely considered, that such miraculous honours as the star gave him were far beyond any external circumstance, and therefore paid him, though a child in a poor cottage, without attendants, or any mark of royal descent, their homage, as readily as if they had found him in the most splendid palace, surrounded with servants and guards. "An amiable example this, of that humble, ingenuous temper, which fits a man for the reception of the gospel!" *And when they had opened their treasures*—Which they had brought along with them for this purpose, *they presented to him gifts*—It was customary in those countries for persons to offer some present to any illustrious personage whom they came to visit, as appears from many passages of the Old Testament; and Maundrell, Chardin, and many other modern writers of the best credit assure us, that the custom is yet retained, and that no person of rank is approached without a present. In this instance the gifts, consisting of the most valuable productions of their country, constituted a present very proper to the occasion. Perhaps this was all that these wise men intended by their offerings of *gold, frankincense, and myrrh*; and that there is no need to have recourse to allegory. "Nevertheless, if we will have it," says Grotius, "that the Divine Wisdom intended something mysterious here, it would not displease me to hear it intimated, that those three things, which we now offer to God through Christ, in consequence of the abolition of the ancient sacrifices,

A. M. 4000. mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, ^kthey ²presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God ¹in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

^k Psa. lxxii. 10; Isa. lx. 6.—² Or, offered.—Chap. i. 20.

may be signified by these gifts, viz., *works of mercy*, Phil. iv. 18; *bodily purity*, Rom. xii. 1; and *prayers*, Psa. cxli. 2; Rev. v. 8. The two texts last quoted manifestly show that prayers may be signified by frankincense; gold is, as it were; the common measure of the good things of this life, wherewith we relieve the wants of others. And, as we learn from Pliny, and St. John, ch. xix. 30, there is hardly any other use of myrrh than to preserve bodies from corruption." But if we may believe the ancient fathers, the wise men, by these gifts which they offered, showed who he was that was worshipped by them; offering *myrrh*, says Irenæus, because he was to die for mankind; *gold*, because he was a king, whose kingdom should have no end; thus, as it were, paying him tribute; and *frankincense*, because he was God, and God was wont to be honoured with the smoke of incense. To the same purpose speak Tertullian and Origen. Perhaps, however, there is more of fancy than truth in this doctrine. Be this as it may, we cannot but acknowledge the providence of God in sending the holy family such a seasonable supply in their low circumstances, especially as they were to take so long and expensive a journey as that into Egypt; a country where they were entirely strangers, and were to stay for a considerable time.

Verse 12. *And being warned of God in a dream, that they should not return to Herod*—Which, it is probable, in the simplicity of their hearts, they were preparing to do, *they departed into their own country another way*—Not at all solicitous as to the consequences of Herod's resentment. Thus did the providence of God watch over these devout Gentiles, as well as over Jesus and his parents, and would not suffer their honest simplicity to be abused, and made a prey of by the crafty designs of Herod. For into what grief and perplexity would they have been brought, had they been made even the innocent instruments of an assault on the holy child! But God delivered them, and guided their way. For while he was waiting for their return, they had time to get out of his reach, before his passion rose, which might have been fatal to them.

Verse 13. *And when they were departed*—Probably very soon after; for Bethlehem being only about two hours' journey from Jerusalem, no doubt Herod would have speedy intelligence of the motions of the wise men: *the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, take the young child, &c.*—How watchful was the providence of God over this holy child and his righteous parents:

13 And when they were departed, A. M. 4000. behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.*

* *Innocents' Day*; gospel, verse 13 to verse 19.

while Joseph and Mary slept secure, enriched by the presents of the wise men, God watches for their safety, and makes them acquainted with the danger which hung over them. They are commanded to flee into Egypt, which was situated so near to Bethlehem, that they could easily arrive there in a few days. And the same divine providence also superintends and preserves all that have an eye thereto, and confide therein, and are God's true people. Only they must obey his voice, and use the means he has appointed for their preservation. Even Jesus, the *only begotten* and *beloved Son* of the Father is not preserved without being taken into a foreign country. The command given by the angel to Joseph and Mary, to *flee into Egypt*, shows, that this vision happened before their return to Nazareth. For otherwise, it is much more probable they would have been ordered to flee into Syria, which was much nearer to Nazareth than Egypt; to which they could not have passed from thence without going through the very heart of Herod's dominions, unless they had taken a very large circuit with great expense and danger. *For Herod will seek the young child to destroy him*—Being alarmed by the extraordinary circumstances which had lately taken place, and fearing lest this child should, in time, be a formidable rival to his family. For when the wise men had come so far to pay their homage to a new-born prince, the several reports of what had lately happened would, upon this occasion, be revived; and the behaviour of two such celebrated persons as Simeon and Anna, on the presentation of Christ in the temple, which might at first be only taken notice of by a few pious persons, would, probably, be now reported to Herod, and must add to the alarm which the inquiry of the sages gave him. Respecting Egypt, to which the holy family was commanded to flee, we may here observe, that after the death of Antony and Cleopatra it became a Roman province, and many Jews fixed their abode there, who, speaking the Greek language, made use of the Greek version of the Scriptures, and had even a temple there, which Onias had built them. These circumstances, doubtless, would make the abode of Joseph and Mary in that country more comfortable to them than it otherwise would have been; yet it is natural to suppose, that this information and command from the angel would be a great trial of their faith. To say nothing of the concern it must give them to learn that the life of this divine child was threatened by so crafty, powerful, and bloody a prince as Herod

A. M. 4000. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt;

15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of

— Hosea xi. 1.

Joseph was but a carpenter, and therefore, we may suppose, in low circumstances; and Egypt was a strange land, and a land where, it is likely, he had few, if any, acquaintances, and no visible way of subsistence. But, no doubt, he was able to trust that God whose *beloved Son* was given him in charge, and who had appeared in so signal and manifest a manner for the redemption of his people, and for the child's protection.

Verses 14, 15. *When he arose*—Viz., from his bed, *he took the young child, &c.*—He immediately obeyed the heavenly vision, *and departed into Egypt*—With as hasty a flight as their circumstances would allow. *And was there until the death of Herod*—Which happened a few months after. *That it might be fulfilled*—That is, fulfilled again, *which was spoken by the prophet*—Viz., Hosea, on another occasion, *Out of Egypt have I called my son*—These words of Hosea, without doubt, were primarily spoken of God's bringing Israel out of Egypt under the conduct of Moses, the prophet referring to God's message to Pharaoh, recorded Exod. iv. 22, 23, *Israel is my son, even my firstborn; let my son go that he may serve me.* Now this deliverance of the Israelites, God's adopted son, was a type of his bringing Christ his real son from thence, and the meaning here is, that the words were now, as it were, fulfilled anew, and more eminently than before, Christ being in a far higher sense the son of God than Israel, of whom the words were originally spoken. For as a prophetic prediction is then fulfilled when what was foretold has come to pass, so a type is fulfilled when that is accomplished in the antitype, which was done in the type before. If the reader will consult the note on Hosea xi. 1, he will find this passage fully, and, it is hoped, satisfactorily explained and vindicated; and the consistency of the evangelist's words with those of the prophet clearly shown. It may not, however, be improper to add here to what is there advanced, that the lot of the Messiah in Egypt was now afflictive, like that of his ancestors formerly in the same country. And the same love of God which induced him to deliver Israel out of Egyptian bondage, was the cause also why he would not leave Christ in Egypt, but bring him back to his own people, whom he was about to enlighten with his heavenly doctrine, and redeem by his sufferings and death. Nor would it be absurd to carry the allegory still further, and to compare Herod to Pharaoh. For, as by the just judgment of God, both the firstborn of Pharaoh, the enemy of the Jews, was slain, and a little after Pharaoh himself perished; so Herod, not long after he had formed the wicked but vain design of putting Christ to death,

the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." A. M. 4000.

16 ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that

in a fit of diabolical rage killed his firstborn son, and afterward himself perished, suffering the greatest tortures.—Westein.

Verse 16. *Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men*—The word *επειαιχθη*, here rendered, *was mocked*, "properly signifies *was played with*, and well expresses the view in which the pride of Herod taught him to regard this action, as if it were intended to expose him to the derision of his subjects, *and to treat him as a child*, rather than as a prince of so great experience and renown." Dr. Campbell reads, *deceived*, observing, that, "in the Jewish style, any treatment which appeared disrespectful, came under the general appellation of *mockery*. Thus, Potiphar's wife, in the false accusation she preferred against Joseph, of making an attempt upon her chastity, says, that he came in *to mock her*, Gen. xxxix, 17;" where the same word is employed by the LXX. which is here used. "Balaam accused his ass of *mocking him*, when she would not yield to his direction, Num. xxii. 29. And Delilah said to Samson, Judges xvi. 10, *Thou hast mocked (i. e., deceived) me, and told me lies.* As one who deceived them appeared to treat them contemptuously, they were naturally led to express the former by the latter." *Was exceeding wroth*—Very highly incensed and enraged; and in order to make the destruction of this unknown infant as sure as possible, *sent forth*—Not immediately, it seems, but a little time after the departure of the wise men, a party of soldiers, *and slew all the children*—*The male children, as τες παιδας* properly signifies. *From two years old and under*—Or, as the words *απο διετες και κατωτερω* are rendered by the last-mentioned writer, *From those entering the second year, down to the time whereof he had procured exact information from the magians.* "There can be no doubt," as the doctor observes, "that in this direction, Herod intended to specify both the age above which and the age under which infants were not to be involved in this massacre. But there is some scope for inquiry into the import of the description given. Were those of the second year included or excluded by it? By the common translation they are included, by the other excluded. Plausible things may be advanced on each side." Dr. Campbell, however, for divers reasons, which he assigns, adopts the latter, and thinks that the import of the direction was, "that they should kill none above twelve months old, or under six." It is probable that Herod, in his passion, ordered the slaughter of the infants as soon as he perceived that he was disappointed in his expectation of the return of the wise men, lest otherwise the child he was so jealous of should be removed. Some have

A. M. 4000. were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

inferred from hence, that it was not till some considerable time after the birth of Christ, that he was visited by the wise men. But there is little account to be given of the actions of a tyrant who slew three of his own sons, and who, it is reasonable to suppose, would wish to make sure work in this case, and therefore would, no doubt, extend the slaughter to those born before the first appearance of the star, thinking, perhaps, that it might not appear immediately upon the conception or birth of the child, but some time after. Accordingly, though the scribes told him the child was to be born in Bethlehem, he is not content to slay the infants there, but added thereto the slaughter of those in all the coasts. Who can avoid reflecting here on the horrible wickedness manifested in slaying these infants, who could neither hurt others nor defend themselves, and whom the king, as the guardian of the laws, was bound to have defended against the injuries of all lawless persons? But the wrath of wicked princes is usually extravagant and destructive. Thus Saul, when David had escaped, not only commanded Abimelech, with eighty-five priests, to be slaughtered, but also all the people of the city, not excepting even the women and children. This action of Herod was no less impious than unjust and cruel; for, to endeavour to make void the counsel of the Almighty God, declared by prophecies, by the appearance of a star, and by the consent of scribes and priests; what was it else but directly and designedly to oppose and fight against God? What cause we have to be "thankful that we are not under the arbitrary power of a tyrant, whose sallies of distracted fury might spread desolation through houses and provinces. Let us not say, Where was the great Regent of the universe when such horrible butchery was transacted? His all-wise counsels knew how to bring good out of all the evil of it. The agony of a few moments transmitted these oppressed innocents to peace and joy, while the impotent rage of Herod only heaped on his own head guilt, infamy, and horror."—Doddridge.

Verse 17. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy*—The words of Jeremiah here referred to (chap. xxxi. 15, where see the notes) were primarily meant of the Jews carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, Ramah being the place where they were assembled to be led away to Babylon. But, as this cruel execution here related by the evangelist, extended itself to all the neighbouring places, and in particular to this same Ramah, a town of Benjamin, which lay near to Bethlehem, the prophet's words are, with great propriety, applied to this melancholy event likewise, and are represented as receiving a second accomplishment in the bloody slaughter of these infants. And when it is

17 Then was fulfilled that which A. M. 4000. was spoken by ^a Jeremy the prophet, saying,

18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lament-

^a Jeremiah xxxi. 15.

considered that the Jews who were carried captive were not slain, but lived many of them to return again, as the Prophet Jeremiah foretold, *to their own border*, it must be allowed, that the prediction was much more literally fulfilled on this latter than on the former occasion. This application of the prophecy by the evangelist affords a sure proof that a passage of Scripture, whether prophetic, historical, or poetical, may, in the language of the New Testament, be said to be fulfilled, when an event happens to which it may with great propriety be accommodated.

Verse 18. *In Rama was a voice heard—Rachel weeping for her children*—Benjamin, it is well known, was the son of Rachel: his posterity, therefore, who inhabited Ramah and the parts adjacent, sprung from her, and, according to the Scripture language, were *her children*. The slaughter of the inhabitants of Bethlehem, also, might with propriety enough be termed the slaughter of her children; she being buried there, Gen. xxxv. 19, and the Bethlehemites being the offspring of her husband and sister. It is by a very striking and beautiful figure of speech, by which she is here represented as awaked by the cries of the infants, and as rising out of her grave, and bitterly bewailing her little ones, who lie slaughtered in heaps around her. *Because they are not*—That is, are not among men, are taken away from the land of the living, are dead. The same phrase is frequently used in the same sense in the Old Testament. Now, as it was not true of those that were carried into captivity in Jeremiah's days, that they *were not*, in this sense, why should it be thought strange that so literal a completion of the prophecy as took place in the days of Herod, should be referred to by the Holy Ghost? Here observe, The first crown of martyrdom for Jesus was won by these infant sufferers, and the honour to which they are advanced infinitely repays the short pains they endured. Some have questioned the authenticity of the evangelist's narrative of the slaughter of these infants, on account of the diabolical wickedness of the action; but the following account, given by Prideaux, of Herod's last deed and purpose, will convince any one that there was nothing too bad for that miserable man to perpetrate:—"Knowing the hatred the Jews had for him, he concluded aright, that there would be no lamentations at his death, but rather gladness and rejoicing all the country over. To prevent this, he framed a project and resolution in his mind, which was one of the most horrid and wicked, perchance, that ever entered into the heart of man. For, having issued out a summons to all the principal Jews of his kingdom, commanding their appearance at Jericho, (where he then lay,) on pain

A. M. 4000. ation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

of death, at a day appointed; on their arrival thither, he shut them all up in the circus, and then, sending for Salome his sister, and Alexas her husband, commanded them that, as soon as he was dead, they should send in the soldiers upon them, and put them all to the sword. 'For this,' said he, 'will provide mourning for my funeral all over the land, and make the Jews in every family lament my death, whether they will or not:' and when he had adjured them hereto, some hours after, he died. But they, not being wicked enough to do what they had been solemnly made to promise, rather chose to break their obligation, than to make themselves the executioners of so bloody and horrid a design."

Since Josephus, who has given us the history of Herod's transactions at large, has taken no notice of the slaughter of these children, some have been ready to suspect his fidelity as an historian, or, which is worse, that of St. Matthew. But there is no need to do either. For surely it is not to be supposed, that an historian lessens his credibility as often as he relates the facts omitted by another; or passes over those recorded by another. For it is hardly possible it should be otherwise, unless one should exactly copy from another. Besides, Josephus has so many instances exactly similar to this, and those so remarkable, that he might think it needless to add this. For, as Is. Vossius, a man by no means superstitious or credulous, has observed, after so many examples of Herod's cruelty at Jerusalem and through all Judea, after so many sons, so many wives, relations, and friends, cut off by a variety of torments, it does not seem to have been a great thing to have also put to death the infants of a town or village, with the territory belonging to it, the slaughter of which could not have been very great in so small a place, especially since not all, but only the male infants were destroyed, and of these only such as were under two years old. What Tacitus has observed, *Anal.* vi. 7, is very applicable here: "I am not ignorant," says he, "that the dangers and punishments undergone by many have been omitted by most writers, either because they were tired of relating such a multitude of instances, or feared that the things which had been wearisome and disagreeable to them would be equally so to their readers."—Wetstein. Indeed, Josephus was not old enough to remember it himself, and if he did not find it in the *Memoirs* of Nicholas of Damascus, (that flattering historian, of whom we know he made great use in compiling the life of Herod,) he might be unwilling to introduce it, even if he were particularly acquainted with it; lest the occasion might have led him to mention what, generally, at least, he is solicitous to decline—I mean, Christian affairs. It is sufficient that this cruelty of Herod is preserved in Macrobius, who, in a chapter "concerning the jests of Augustus upon others, and

19 ¶ But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, A. M. 4001.

of others upon him," says, "When he heard that among those male infants about two years old, which Herod the king of the Jews ordered to be slain in Syria, one of his sons was also murdered, he said, 'It is better to be Herod's hog than his son.'" The saying alludes to his professing Judaism, which forbade his killing swine, or eating their flesh; therefore, his hog would have been safe where his son lost his life.

Verse 19. *When Herod was dead*—His death, of which Josephus has given us a very affecting account, happened, according to some, within three or four months of his perpetrating the above-mentioned bloody act, and was a fearful instance of that vengeance which God, even in this world, sometimes takes on his enemies, and those of his people. He died eaten with worms, at the age of seventy-one, after a reign of forty years, having endured such excruciating, lingering, and loathsome diseases, as rendered him intolerable to himself and others also. And his innate cruelty being thus exasperated, he became more barbarous than ever, and just before his death caused Antipater, his son and the heir apparent of his kingdom, to be executed on some groundless suspicion. God, it seems, made him, in a remarkable manner, a terror to himself and to all round about him. Eusebius, the ancient ecclesiastical historian, thought his death so great an illustration of the gospel history, that he has inserted it at large in his work. *An angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt*—Probably the same angel which had appeared to him before, and directed him to flee into Egypt, and abide there till he should bring him word again. That word is now brought him, and in obedience to it he returns with the child and his mother into the land of Israel. Let us, in like manner, remember, it is God's part to direct, and ours to obey. Nor can we be out of the way of safety and comfort while we are in the way of duty, following his directions, and steering our course by the intimations of his pleasure. For, "the preservation of the holy child Jesus may be considered as a figure of God's care over his Church and people, in their greatest dangers. He doth not often, as he easily could, strike their persecutors with immediate destruction, but he provides a *hiding place* for his children, and by methods not less effectual, though less pompous, preserves them from being swept away even when *the enemy comes in like a flood*. Egypt, that was once the seat of persecution and oppression to the Israel of God, is now a refuge to his Son: and thus all places will be to us what Divine Providence will be pleased to make them. When, like Joseph and Mary, we are cut off from the worship of his temple, and, perhaps, removed into a strange land, he can be a *little sanctuary* to us, and give us, in his gracious presence, a rich equivalent for all we have lost."—Doddridge.

A. M. 4001. 20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did

° Chap. iii. 13; Luke ii. 39.—→ John i. 45.

Verse 20. *They are dead which sought the young child's life*—It has been conjectured by some, that Antipater, the son of Herod, who died but five days before his father, might also be referred to in these words, *They are dead, &c.* At the time when Christ was born, he was heir apparent to the crown, and was a prince so cruel and ambitious, that he had procured the death of his two elder brothers, to clear his way to the succession, and no doubt he would be an active counsellor and instrument in seeking the destruction of the new-born Jesus, and in advising the slaughter of the infants.

Verses 21, 22. *And he arose*—Joseph obeyed the angel, and, it appears, would gladly have gone to Judea, probably to Bethlehem, because from his own knowledge of the prophecies, as well as from the decision of the scribes, an account of which he might have received from the magi, he fancied his son's education in Bethlehem was as necessary to his being acknowledged the Messiah, as his birth, which had been so providentially ordered to happen there. Nevertheless, *when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, he was afraid to go thither*, knowing the jealous and cruel disposition of that prince. Archelaus was the sixth son of Herod, and the most cruel of all those that survived him. His father appointed him his successor, with regal authority, but Augustus gave him only the title of *ethnarch*, or ruler of the nation, annexing to his government Samaria and Idumæa. In the very beginning of his reign, he massacred 3,000 Jews at once in the temple, and was afterward, viz., in the tenth year of his government, banished by Augustus to Vienna in Gaul, on a complaint brought against him by the chief of the Jews, for his various cruelties. Joseph, therefore, might well be afraid to settle in a country that was under the government of such a cruel tyrant. *Being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee*—which was under the government of Herod Antipas, (see note on verse 2,) a prince of a milder character than Archelaus, and then on such hostile terms with him, that there was no danger of his giving up Joseph and Mary into his power. Add to this, that, being intent upon building the cities of Julius and Tiberias, he endeavoured, by promises and immunities, as well as by a mild government, to allure strangers to come and settle there. We may observe here, that although Joseph's near relation to Jesus exposed him to many difficulties and dangers, such as he had been a stranger to till it commenced,

reign in Judea in the room of his father A. M. 4001 Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside ° into the parts of Galilee:

23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled ¶ which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

¶ Judges xiii. 5; 1 Samuel i. 11.

yet it made him ample amends for that inconvenience, by placing him and his under the peculiar care of a watchful Providence, ever attentive to his safety, and that of his little family; and by procuring him the favour of so many extraordinary visitations and supernatural discoveries of the divine will. This is no less than the fourth message sent him from the court of heaven since he became the husband of Mary!

Verse 23. *He dwelt in a city called Nazareth*—Where he had formerly resided before he went to Bethlehem. Nazareth, as appears from Luke iv. 29, was built upon a rock, not far from mount Tabor. The country about it, according to Antoninus the martyr, was like a paradise, abounding in wheat and fruits of all kinds. Wine, oil, and honey, of the best kind, were produced there: but it was a place so very contemptible among the Jews, that it was grown into a proverb with them, *That no good thing could be expected from thence*; so that by Jesus's returning to Nazareth, and being brought up and educated in it, a way was further opened by the providence of God, for the fulfilment of the many Scriptures which foretold that he should appear in mean and despicable circumstances, and be set up as a mark of public contempt and reproach. This seems to be the most probable solution of this difficult text. *He shall be called a Nazarene*—That is, he shall be reputed vile and abject, and shall be despised and rejected of men, an event which many of the prophets had particularly foretold. And it is to be observed, that St. Matthew does not cite any particular prophet for these words, as he had done before, ch. i. 22; and here, verses 15, 17, and in other places, but only says, this was *spoken by the prophets*, viz., in general, whereby, as Jerome observes, he shows that he took not the words from the prophets, but only the sense. See Psa. lxxix. 9, 10; Isa. liii. 3. Now it is certain the *Nazarene* was a term of contempt and infamy put upon Christ, both by the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, and that because he was supposed to come out of this very city. There was, among the Jews, a celebrated thief, called *Ben-Nezer*, and in allusion to him, they gave the name to Christ. His very going to dwell at Nazareth, was an occasion of his being despised and rejected by the Jews. Thus, when Philip said to Nathanael, *We have found Jesus of Nazareth, of whom Moses spake*, Nathanael answered, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* And when Nicodemus seemed to favour him, the rest of the coun-

eil said to him, *Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.* Here then we have a plain sense of these words. He was sent to this contemptible place that he might there have a name of infamy and contempt put upon him, according to the frequent intimations of the prophets. If, after all, this interpretation is not acquiesced in, we may, with many of the ancient Christians, particularly Chrysostom, suppose, that the evangelist may refer to some writings of the prophets, which were then

extant, but are now lost, or to some writings not put into the Sacred Canon, or to some paraphrases upon the writings. As to the interpretations which refer this to Christ's being called *Netzer, the Branch*, Isa. xi. 1; *Jer. xxiii. 5*; or *Nazir, one Separated*, or, the *Holy One*, they all fail in this, that they give no account how this was fulfilled by Christ's living at Nazareth, he being as much the *Branch*, the *Holy One*, when he was born at Bethlehem, and before he went to Nazareth, as after

CHAPTER III.

This chapter exhibits, (1.) The life and doctrine of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ; his baptizing multitudes, and solemn calling to them to repent and receive the Messiah, who was about to be manifested, 1-12. (2.) The baptism of Jesus by John at Jordan, and the solemn attestation of his person by the Holy Ghost and the Father, 13-17.

A. M. 4030. **I**N those days came ^a John the Baptist, A. D. 26. preaching ^b in the wilderness of Judea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for ^c the A. M. 4030 kingdom of heaven is at hand. A. D. 26.

^a Mark i. 4, 15; Luke iii. 2, 3; John i. 28.

^b Josh. xiv. 10.—^c Dan. ii. 44; Chap. iv. 17; x. 7.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. *In those days*—That is, in those years. For, as these events happened near thirty years after those recorded in the former chapter, this phrase is to be taken, in a very extensive sense, for that age of which he had spoken in the preceding words. And it is here used with the greater propriety, because John did indeed appear in his public character while Christ continued to dwell at Nazareth, which was the event that Matthew had last mentioned. Christ was now about thirty years of age, before which time of life no priest, teacher, or prophet was allowed to perform his office, as the Hebrews tell us, and as may be collected from the Scripture, 1 Chron. xxiii. 3. Hence we learn that great preparation is necessary for sacred offices. The evangelists, therefore, pass over almost in entire silence our Saviour's minority, only mentioning his disputing with the doctors in the temple, Luke ii. 46. And yet it is probable many other remarkable things happened during that period, which, if they had been recorded, we should have read with pleasure and profit. But as the Holy Ghost has not been pleased to favour us in this respect, let us be thankful for, and duly improve, what is made known to us. *Came John*—The son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, who had lived for several years retired in the wilderness of Judea: *the Baptist*—So called, either because he was the first who, by God's command, baptized penitents, or because by him God instituted the ordinance of baptism. For, admitting that the Jews received proselytes by baptism, yet he baptized Jews themselves, and from his time the ordinance of baptism must be dated. Before Christ's entering upon the first part of his work, that of declaring the will of God, was recorded, it was necessary that the office of John should be spoken of, because he was his harbinge, or forerunner, and proclaimed his coming beforehand; and because, at the time of John's baptizing Jesus, the Holy Ghost visibly descended

on him, and consecrated him to his prophetic office. *Preaching*—The original word, κηρυσσων, means *proclaiming, or crying aloud*. It is properly used of those who make proclamation in the streets or camps, or who lift up their voice in the open air, and declare the things which are to be promulgated by public or royal authority, and which they have in charge from another. *In the wilderness of Judea*—That is, in the uncultivated and thinly-inhabited parts of Judea, where, it seems, his father Zacharias lived, Luke i. 39, 40. For we are not to suppose that John shunned the society of men, as those afterward did, who, on that account, were called *hermits*; but he had been brought up and had always lived in the country, and not in the city, and had had a plain country education, and not an academical or courtly one, at Jerusalem. We must observe, that the term *wilderness*, among the Jews, did not signify a place wholly void of inhabitants, but a place in which they were fewer, and their habitations more dispersed, than in villages and cities. Hence we read of six cities with their villages, in the wilderness, Jos. xv. 61, 62; that *Nabal* dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, 1 Sam. xxv. 1, 2; and *Joab* had his house in the wilderness, 1 Kings ii. 34. John began his preaching in the desert, in which he had been brought up, Luke i. 80, as Jesus, in like manner, began his in Galilee, Acts x. 37. There was, however, this difference between them, that Christ preached in Galilee, a country the most populous of any in that neighbourhood, but John in the desert, that is, in a place but thinly inhabited, and little cultivated. The former of which was suitable to the benignity of our Saviour, and the latter to the austerity of his forerunner. Lastly, John, who had begun to preach in Judea, is imprisoned and put to death in the dominions of Herod; Christ, on the other hand, who entered upon his ministry in the tetrarchy of Herod, is crucified at Jerusalem, in Judea.

Verse 2. *Repent ye, &c.*—Be sorry for your sins,

A. M. 4030. 3 For this is he that was spoken of
A. D. 26. by the Prophet Esaias, saying, ^dThe
voice of one crying in the wilderness, ^ePrepare

ye the way of the Lord, make his A. M. 4030.
paths straight. A. D. 26.

4 And ^fthe same John ^ghad his raiment of

^d Isa. xl. 3; Mark i. 3; Luke iii. 4; John i. 23.—^e Luke i. 76.

^f Mark i. 6.—^g 2 Kings i. 8; Zech. xiii. 4.

and amend your lives; for the original word, *μετανοειτε*, here used, implies this. It properly signifies, says Beza, *to be wise after the action*, and so to grieve for a fault committed as to amend it, which, in Latin, is properly expressed by *resipiscere*. In this respect it differs from another Greek word, which the evangelists sometimes use, viz., *μεταμελομαι*, which simply signifies to be *distressed*, and *anxious after any thing done*, but does not necessarily imply any change of mind, or reformation of life. Therefore Matthew uses the latter word of Judas, the traitor, ch. xxvii. 3, but not the former. Thus Christ and his apostles began their preaching, confirming John's doctrine. John taught other things also, but this he began with, and this was the main scope of his preaching. He did not give them any new precepts of life, but charged them with breaking the law they had already, and called upon them to be sensible of it, sorry for it, and to reform their conduct: to lay aside the false opinions they had imbibed, whether from the Pharisees or Sadducees; to acknowledge, condemn, and lament the faults they had committed, and to turn from all error and all sin, to true faith in, and piety toward, God. He that so deplores some sins as to commit others, or to repeat the commission of those he deplores, either counterfeits, or is ignorant of repentance. Repentance is, as Jerome speaks, *secunda post naufragium tabula*—a lucky plank after a shipwreck. The first degree of happiness is, not to sin; the second, to know our sins, and repent of them. For repentance not only implies sorrow for sin, or sincerely wishing it undone, but a change of mind, and reformation of life. *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*—As if he had said, God is about to appear in an extraordinary manner, to erect that kingdom spoken of by Daniel, (ch. ii. 44; and vii. 13, 14,) as the kingdom of the God of heaven, which he would set up, and give to the *Son of man*, making it finally victorious over all other kingdoms. This phrase, *the kingdom of heaven*, is used thirty times by St. Matthew. The other evangelists, and St. Paul, term it generally, *the kingdom of God*, and sometimes, *the kingdom of Christ*. These different phrases mean the same thing, and were in familiar use among the Jews, as plainly appears from divers passages of the gospels. They seem to have borrowed them from the above-mentioned passages in the book of Daniel, which they wholly misunderstood and misinterpreted, inferring from them that God would erect a temporal kingdom the seat of which would be at Jerusalem, which would become, instead of Rome, the capital of the world. The expected sovereign of this kingdom, they learned, from Daniel, to call *the Son of man*, by which title they understood the promised Messiah, or the Anointed One of God. Both John the Bap-

tist, then, and Christ took up this phrase, and used it as they found it, and gradually taught the Jews to affix right ideas to it, though it was a lesson which that worldly people were remarkably unwilling to learn. This very demand of repentance showed that it was a spiritual kingdom which was spoken of; and that no wicked man, how politic or brave, how learned and renowned soever, could possibly be a genuine subject of it. As the term *kingdom* implies the dominion of a king over his subjects, so the kingdom of God, or heaven, is God's reigning in and over his rational creatures, whether angels or men; and, as to the latter, whether on earth or in heaven, that is, whether of the church militant or the church triumphant. The expression properly signifies the gospel dispensation, in and by which subjects were to be gathered to God by his Son, and a society formed, which was to subsist first in more imperfect circumstances on earth, and afterward in complete perfection and felicity in the world of glory. In some places of Scripture the phrase more particularly signifies the former, and denotes *the state of Christ's kingdom on earth*, as Matt. xiii., especially ver. 41, 47; Matt. xx. 1; and sometimes it signifies only that most blessed state of things which shall take place after the resurrection, when *God will be all in all*. See 1 Cor. vi. 9; and xv. 50. But it generally includes both; and what is closely connected therewith, God's subduing, or executing judgment upon his and his people's enemies. For God's regal power is exercised in delivering, assisting, defending, and rewarding all his faithful subjects, and in warning, punishing, and destroying his obdurate enemies. This latter particular, namely, the *punishing and destroying* his enemies, seems, at least, to be partly meant in this passage, as appears by the context. For, to enforce his doctrine of repentance, he warns them of approaching wrath that would speedily come upon the impenitent, verses 7 and 10, the executing of which wrath, first upon the unbelieving Jews, and then upon the persecuting Gentiles, is elsewhere represented as *the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom*.

Verse 3. *For this is he, &c.*—These may be the words of John himself, (comp. John i. 22, 23,) but it is more likely that they are the words of the evangelists; *spoken of by the Prophet Esaias, saying, The voice, &c.*—Isaias, in the passage referred to, ch. xl. 3, &c., is to be understood as speaking first, though not principally, concerning the Jews returning from the Babylonish captivity, as appears from the preceding chapter. As, however, the prophet intended, under the emblem of that deliverance of God's people, to shadow out a redemption of an infinitely higher and more important nature, the evangelists, with the greatest pro-

priety, apply his words to the opening of the gospel dispensation by the preaching of John, and to the introduction of the kingdom of the Messiah, who was to effect a much greater deliverance of the people of God, Gentiles as well as Jews, from the captivity of sin, and the power of death. And the same thing may be affirmed concerning many other passages of the prophets. See notes on Isa. xl. 3, 4. This expression, *The voice of one crying*, is as much as to say, *A herald is at hand proclaiming*. The word *crying*, implies that John's testimony concerning Christ was uttered, not secretly, negligently, or doubtfully, but openly and publicly, freely, expressly, and resolutely, with a fervent spirit, and an audible, or strong voice. *In the wilderness*—These words are generally considered as connected with the preceding, so as to signify that John preached in the wilderness of Judea; and some interpret the expression figuratively as well as literally, and by *the wilderness of Judea*, understand the desert state of the Jewish Church at that time, destitute of religious culture, and the trees and fruits of righteousness. But Bishop Lowth connects Isaiah's words with the following clause, and translates them, *A voice crieth: In the wilderness prepare ye the way of Jehovah*, which he thus interprets: "The prophet hears a crier giving orders, by solemn proclamation, to prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness; to remove all obstructions before Jehovah marching through the desert; through the wild, uninhabited, and unpassable country;" the idea, he thinks, "being taken from the practice of the eastern monarchs, who, whenever they entered upon an expedition, or took a journey, especially through desert countries, sent harbingers before them to prepare all things for their passage, and pioneers to open the passes, to level the ways, and to remove all impediments." Thus John the Baptist, the harbinger of Christ, who was *God manifest in the flesh*, is sent to prepare his way before him, by calling the people to repentance and to faith in him, their great Redeemer and Saviour. *Make his paths straight*—The paths of our God. Remove all obstructions out of his way, particularly all sin and unbelief, all carnal desires and worldly views, affections, and expectations, that your Saviour and your King may have a ready passage, and free access to your hearts, and may there erect his spiritual kingdom of *righteousness, peace, and joy in*, and by, *the Holy Ghost*; and may rule your lives, your whole conversation and conduct by his righteous and holy laws. Though this could only be done by divine grace, and it is grace which prepares for further grace, yet as man must concur with God, and *be a worker together with him*, John with propriety calls on the people thus to prepare the Lord's way, that his grace might not be received in vain. The words imply that they were unprepared for receiving the Messiah and his salvation, which indeed they were in every sense, being neither in a fit disposition to relish, or even understand, his doctrine, to be convinced by his miracles, receive his Spirit, follow his example, rely on his mediation, or become his subjects. An earthly,

sensual, and devilish disposition had taken possession of their minds and hearts, even the whole spirit of the world, and obstructed the entrance of Christ's spiritual kingdom into them and among them. It was necessary, therefore, that these hinderances should be removed out of the way, that they might become the true people and followers of the Messiah.

Verse 4. *And the same John*—The following description of John is added, that it might appear he did not live in obscurity, but was sufficiently known to all: *had his raiment of camel's hair*—Not, as some have supposed, a camel's skin, raw and undressed, but a kind of sackcloth, coarse and rough, made of the raw long hair of camels, and not of their fine and soft hair, dressed and spun into thread. The difference between these two is as great as that between flax rude or unprepared, and the same dressed or spun; or between that which we now call *hair cloth*, made of undressed hair, and *camlet*, that is made of it when it is softened, and spun, and prepared; in imitation of which, though made of wool, is the English camlet. Elijah seems to have wore a similar garment, and therefore was called a *hairy man*; which expression is supposed to refer to his clothing rather than his body. Most of the ancient prophets wore such garments, whence we read of the false prophets putting on a *rough garment to deceive*, Zech. xiii. 4; and of the witnesses *prophesying in sackcloth*, Rev. vi. 12; and xi. 3. *And a leathern girdle about his loins*—In this respect, also, being like Elijah, in whose *spirit and power* he came, Mal. iv. 5; Luke i. 17. Hereby, as also by his spare diet, he gave an example of repentance, and of his expectation of a heavenly kingdom. *And his meat was locusts*—The insects called locusts are undoubtedly intended, a kind of large-winged grasshoppers. See Rev. ix. 3, 7, 9. It is true, according to Sandys (*Trav.* p. 183) and many others, it appears there is, in these parts, a shrub termed the *locust tree*, the buds of which resemble *asparagus*; yet it is not probable that this is here meant, nor the wild fruits of any trees, nor the tops of herbs and plants, as some, both ancients and moderns, have supposed; because the original word here used, in the LXX. and elsewhere, generally signifies the animal which we call a locust, which it is certain the law allowed the Jews to eat, and which, Pliny assures us, made a considerable part of the food of the Parthians and Ethiopians. Dr. Shaw tells us that when sprinkled with salt and fried they taste much like the river cray-fish. See his excellent *Travels*, p. 258. *And wild honey*—Such as, in those parts, was often found in hollow trees, or in the clefts of the rocks, 1 Sam. xiv. 26; Judg. xiv. 8; Psa. lxxxi. 16. John used such a diet and such clothing as was cheap and easily obtained. He drank no wine, and frequently fasted, not through poverty, for he was the only son of a priest, but of his own free-will, as well that his severe and mortified manner of life might correspond with his doctrine, which enjoined frequent fasting to his disciples, as that in this way he might fortify both his body and mind, and prepare himself to undergo dangers, imprisonment, and death undauntedly. As

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about his loins; and his meat was

^h locusts and ⁱ wild honey.

5 ^h Then went out to him Jerusalem, and

^h Leviticus xi. 22.—ⁱ 1 Samuel xiv. 25, 26.

the months of April and May are the time when locusts abound, it has been conjectured that John began his ministry about that season of the year, which might also seem more convenient for receiving, and especially for baptizing, so great a number of people, than the winter could have been.

Verse 5. *Then went out to him Jerusalem*—That is, the citizens of it, famed as they were for wisdom and virtue: *and all Judea, &c.*—The preacher being described, the evangelist proceeds to tell us what auditors he had. All sorts and ranks of persons, and the generality of the people there, flocked to hear him. The uncommon circumstances of John's public appearance could scarcely fail to awaken the attention of the people to his person and ministry, which would be yet more excited by the time of it: for the Roman yoke began to bear hard upon them, and their uneasiness under it raised in their minds the most impatient desire of the Messiah's arrival, by whom they expected not only deliverance, but universal monarchy. No wonder, therefore, that they flocked to the Baptist from all parts, and listened attentively while he proclaimed this long-expected Messiah's approach, and denounced the divine vengeance upon such as rejected him. Add to this, the novelty of a prophet's appearance in Israel, (for it seems they had had none among them since Malachi's time;) the family of John, the circumstances of his birth, and the extraordinary character he had no doubt maintained for strict and undissembled piety; the new doctrine he taught, and his fervent manner of urging it, together with the new rite of baptism which he brought in;—all concurred, with the cause mentioned above, to draw such vast multitudes after him. And, it appears, great numbers of them were brought under very serious impressions by his faithful remonstrances, expostulations, and warnings. Here we observe a remarkable difference between John and Jesus. That the people might hear John they were under the necessity of going out of the city, and travelling to him into the desert: but Jesus, of his own accord, went to his hearers.

Verse 6. *And were baptized of him in Jordan*—Namely, those that were awakened to repentance. It has been questioned by many, whether John baptized these immense multitudes by dipping them in Jordan? In answer to which it has been observed, "that such prodigious numbers could hardly be baptized by immersing their whole bodies under water: nor can we think they were provided with change of raiment for it, which was scarce practicable for such vast multitudes. And yet they could not be immersed naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety." It has been thought, therefore, "that they stood in ranks on the edge of

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all Judea, and all the region round
A. M. 4030.
A. D. 26.

about Jordan,
6 ¹ And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

^h Mark i. 5; Luke iii. 7.—ⁱ Acts xix. 4, 18.

the river, and that John, passing along before them, cast water on their heads, or faces, by which means, he might baptize many thousands in a day." This, it must be confessed, most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them *with the Holy Ghost* and *with fire*, which John spoke of as prefigured by his baptizing with water: and which was eminently fulfilled when the Holy Ghost sat upon the disciples, in the appearance of tongues, or flames of fire. But be this as it may: supposing that John baptized by immersion, it will not follow from hence, that immersion is essential to baptism; the washing of the soul from the guilt of sin, by the blood of Christ, or from the power and pollution of sin, by the Spirit of God, (the things signified by baptism,) being expressed by sprinkling or pouring water on a person, as well as by plunging him in it. See Isaiah xlv. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Col. ii. 12. And as Cyprian observes, in his 76th Epistle to Magnus: "Baptism is rather of the mind by faith, than of the body by immersion in water: this being only a visible sign of an invisible baptism." It is admired by some, that this practice of John did not excite more stir, and meet with more opposition among the Jews. But it must be observed, that *baptizing* was not a ceremony entirely new. For, "there were two kinds of baptism in use among the Jews; one was that of the priests at their consecration, Lev. viii. 6; the other was that of the heathens proselyted to the Jewish religion. It was, therefore, no unheard-of rite which the Messiah's harbinger made use of. His countrymen were well acquainted both with the thing itself and its signification. They knew that it denoted some great change, either in the opinions or practices of those who submitted to it, and implied a promise of acceptance with God. Moreover, they had been led by a passage in their sacred books, Zech. xiii. 1, to expect, that either the Messiah himself, or some of his attendants, would baptize; as is evident from the question which the messengers of the Sanhedrim put to the Baptist, John i. 25: *Why baptizest thou, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias?* They must have known, therefore, that John's baptism represented purification both of heart and life, as necessary even to Jews themselves, before they could become the subjects of so holy a prince as the Messiah; and that it was a solemn obligation, binding those who received it to lead such lives. Hence, as Dr. Whitby observes, they are mistaken who think John's baptism the same in kind with that which Christ afterward instituted, for admission of disciples into his Church. The difference between the two was considerable: 1st, John did not baptize either in the name of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost; much less did he baptize them with the Holy Ghost, a circum-

A. M. 4030. 7 ¶ But when he saw many of
A. D. 26. the Pharisees and Sadducees come

to his baptism, he said unto them, A. M. 4030.
O generation of vipers, who hath A. D. 26.

== Chap. xii. 34 ; xxiii. 33 ;

Luke iii. 7-9.

stance mentioned by himself, as what remarkably distinguished Christ's baptism from his. 2, They who were baptized with John's baptism did not profess their faith in the Messiah as actually come, neither did they receive his baptism in testimony of their entertaining that belief; for after having administered it he exhorted his disciples to believe on Him who was to come. Therefore his baptism could not initiate men into the Christian Church, as appears likewise by the apostles' rebaptizing some who had been baptized by John. Acts xix. 4, 5. 3d, John's was the baptism of repentance, whereby all that had a sense of their sins, and professed repentance, were promised pardon, and exhorted to believe in the Messiah, who was soon to appear. Or, it was a washing with water, to show the Jews that they must be cleansed, not only from their prejudices and vices, but that they must relinquish Judaism in order to their becoming fit members of the Messiah's kingdom."—Macknight. Indeed, John, properly speaking, was not a gospel minister, nor his ministry a gospel ministry; for that state of the Church was not then begun; but, as he was a middle person between both testaments, greater than the prophets, less than a gospel minister, Matt. xi. 11, 13, so his ministry was a sort of middle ministry, the chief drift whereof was to prepare people to receive Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah: in order whereunto he laboured to convince them of their sins, and their need of a Saviour, by preaching repentance, verse 2; and pointed out the Messiah to them, John i. 29; and baptized them as a sign of repentance, on their part, and an assurance of pardon on God's part. John's baptism, therefore, was only a temporary sacrament or institution, set up upon a particular occasion; which, as it agreed with Christ's in the external sign, so was perfected by his. See Grotius. *Confessing their sins*—Acknowledging their offences, and condemning their former lives, and that freely and of their own accord: for it does not appear that the Baptist required them to do it. It is not said whether this confession was made to God or man: but it is probable it was to both: only, so far as it was made to John, it must have been merely general. For how could one man have sufficed to hearken to a particular confession of all the offences of this immense multitude made secretly in his ears. It seems to have been like the confessions recorded in the Old Testament; (see Ezra ix.; Neh. ix.; Dan. ix. ;) and that made by the high priest on the day of atonement, Lev. xvi. 21. They acknowledged in words their sinfulness and guilt, professed repentance for, and a detestation of all their sins, and submitted to be baptized in token of their being convinced of their need of pardon and purification. And it must be observed, that this was the confession, not of persons who had been baptized, con-

cerning sins committed after baptism, but of those who were to be baptized. It therefore differs widely from, and gives no countenance to, the auricular confession of the Church of Rome.

Verse 7. *When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, &c.*—These are not names of office, but of sects, or sorts of persons of different opinions in matters of religion. There were three religious sects among the Jews,—the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Of the latter, indeed, we read nothing in the Holy Scriptures. We shall only, therefore, observe concerning them, that their way of life was very singular. They did not marry, but adopted the children of others, whom they brought up in the institutions of their sect. They despised riches, and had all things in common, and never changed their clothes till they were entirely worn out. When initiated they were strictly bound not to communicate the mysteries of their sect to others; and if any of their members were found guilty of any enormous crime they were expelled. As to their doctrine, they allowed a future state, but denied the resurrection of the body. The reason why we find no mention of them in the New Testament may be their recluse and retired way of life, no less than their great simplicity and honesty, in consequence of which they lay open to no censure or reproof.—The *Pharisees* were a very ancient sect. They are said to have made their first appearance about 150 years before Christ. It is certain from the account given by Josephus, *Ant.*, lib. xii., cap. 10., sect. 5, 6, that in the time of John Hyrcanus, the high priest, about 108 years before Christ, the sect was not only formed, but made a considerable figure; and that it had advanced to a high degree of popularity and power about thirty years after that period. They took their name from the Hebrew word פָּרָס, *pharas*, which signifies to separate, because they seemed to separate themselves from all others by their peculiar manner of living. They pretended to have greater knowledge of the rites of the Jewish worship and of the customs of their country than other people, and were very strict in the observance of them, as also of all the traditions of the elders. They fasted often, made long prayers, rigorously kept the sabbath, and put on an appearance of great sanctity, with much display of zeal for Moses and the law. On all these accounts they were in high esteem among the people: and some of them, we have reason to hope, had a measure of true piety; but it is evident from several of the discourses of our Lord, recorded by the evangelists, that they were in general devoid of that humility, and sincere love of God, which are essential to true religion. Though they acknowledged the existence of angels, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and a future state of rewards and punishments, yet they were involved in many great

A. M. 4030. warned you to flee from ^a the wrath
A. D. 26. to come ?

^a Rom. v. 9; 1 Thess. i. 10.

and destructive errors, both in principle and practice. They held the unwritten traditions of the elders to be of equal authority with the written word, pretending that both were delivered to Moses from mount Sinai. From their rigorous observance of these traditions they considered themselves as more holy than other men, and held their own righteousness to be sufficient for their justification before God; having no proper conception of the spirituality, extent, and obligation of the divine law. Accordingly they neglected the weightier matters of it, justice, mercy, and the love of God, and rendered its holy precepts of none effect through their traditions, while they were scrupulously exact in little and trivial things, such as *washing cups, &c.*, Mark iv., and tithing mint, anise, and cummin.

The *Sadducees* also were a sect of great antiquity, having existed, as well as the Pharisees, according to Josephus, from the time of the Maccabees. They had their name from their founder, Sadoc. Antigonus of Socho, president of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem, and teacher of the law in the divinity school in that city, having often in his lectures asserted to his scholars that they ought not to serve God in a servile manner, with respect to reward, but only out of filial love and fear; two of his scholars, Sadoc and Baithus, inferred from thence that there were no rewards or punishments after this life; and therefore, separating from the school of their master, they taught that there was no resurrection nor future state. Many embracing this opinion gave rise to the sect of the Sadducees, who were a kind of Epicureans, but differing from them in this, that, though they denied a future state, yet they allowed that the world was created by the power of God, and governed by his providence, whereas the followers of Epicurus denied both. *The Sadducees*, says Luke, (Acts xxiii. 8,) *say, there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit.* Add to this, that they not only rejected all unwritten traditions, but all the books of the Old Testament, excepting those of Moses. They were not very numerous, but being the wealthiest of the three sects, the rich and great gave in to their opinions; whereas the people were firm in the interest of the Pharisees, and so attached to their notions, that, if a Pharisee should happen to throw out reflections, either upon the high priest or king, he was sure to be believed; for every thing that concerned divine worship was regulated by the Pharisees. So that when the Sadducees took upon them any public employment they were obliged, though never so much against their own interest, to obey the injunction of the Pharisees, which had they presumed to refuse, the consequences would have been dangerous, and would have set the people in an uproar. *O generation of rippers*—A wicked offspring of wicked parents, crafty, malignant, mischievous creatures.

8 Bring forth therefore fruits ¹ meet A. M. 4030.
for repentance : A. D. 26.

¹ Or, *answerable to amendment of life.*

In like manner the crafty Herod is styled *a fox*, and persons of insidious, ravenous, profane, or sensual dispositions, are named respectively by Him who saw their hearts, *serpents, dogs, wolves, and swine*; terms which are not the random language of passion, but a judicious designation of the persons meant by them. For it was fitting such men should be marked out, either for a caution to others, or a warning to themselves. *Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*—To put on this form of humility and repentance? What hath moved you to it? How came you to think yourselves in any danger of divine and future wrath, or to use any means to escape it? since you Pharisees think yourselves secure from it, on account of the sanctity of your lives, and you Sadducees imagine there is no such wrath, and that all that is spoken of it is a mere fable and delusion?

Verse 8. *Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance*—That is, a change of temper and behaviour, answerable thereto; *forsake*, as well as *confess*, your sins, and let the integrity, regularity, holiness, and usefulness of your lives, manifest the sincerity of your repentance. It is a metaphor taken from trees, which discover what quality they are of by the fruits they bear; in allusion to which, pious men are called *trees of righteousness*, Isa. lxi. 3; and their works, *fruits of righteousness*, Phil. i. 11. Let it be observed, further, that as the original word, *μετανοια*, here rendered *repentance*, properly signifies *a change of mind*, from the approbation and love of sin to an aversion and hatred to it, in consequence of a deep conviction of its evil nature and destructive tendency; (see on verse 2;) so, wherever this is, there will, of course, be an entire reformation of life, *a ceasing to do evil*, in all respects, according to the knowledge and ability of the penitent, and *a learning to do well*. Hence it is styled *repentance from dead works*, Heb. vi. 1; and *repentance unto salvation not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10; that is, such as is not reversed by any voluntary returning or relapsing into our former sins. And, seeing God is unchangeably holy, and must for ever hate all sin with a perfect hatred, it is certain, from his very nature, that he cannot be reconciled to or have communion with the sinner, till a change be wrought in his spirit and conduct, and he cease from the commission of known iniquity. For a change there must be in God or man; and, since God's nature is immutable, and it cannot be in him, it must of necessity be in man. Now it is evident, both from reason and experience, that confession of sins, a present sorrow for them, and displeasure against them, with a warm resolution to forsake them, are by no means always attended with this change, and, therefore, that these alone cannot be *fruits meet for repentance*. And O, how necessary was this admonition for the men of that

A. M. 4030. 9 And think not to say within
A. D. 26. yourselves, ° We have Abraham to
our father: for I say unto you, that God is
able of these stones to raise up children unto
Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root

° John viii. 33, 39; Acts xiii. 26; Rom. iv. 1, 11, 16.
P Ch. vii. 19; Luke xiii. 7, 9; John xv. 6.

age, who placed their repentance, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, in a mere verbal confession of their sins; and is it not equally necessary for too many of our own age?

Verse 9. *And think not to say*—Or, as the words, μη δοξητε λεγειν, rather signify, *Presume not to say, or, Say not confidently, within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father*—As if he had said, Being called upon to *bring forth fruits meet for repentance*, begin not to obstruct the efficacy of the admonition with those thoughts which are so common among you, that you are secure from wrath by being the children of Abraham. It is almost incredible how great the presumption of the Jews was, on this their relation to Abraham. "Abraham," says the Talmud, (a book in high repute among them,) "sits near the gates of hell, and does not permit any wicked Israelite to go down into it." And Justin informs us, that the Jewish rabbins assured them, "That, being Abraham's seed, though they continued in disobedience to God, and in infidelity, the kingdom of heaven should still be given them." And it is to be feared that many professors of Christianity build their hopes of salvation on a foundation equally false, depending on their baptism, their knowledge, their orthodoxy, their forms of godliness, their deeds of charity, or their fancied interest in the merits of Christ, while they live in sin, and are lukewarm and negligent in pursuit of that holiness, *without which no man shall see the Lord*.

For I say unto you—This preface always denotes the importance of what follows: *God is able of these stones*—He probably pointed to those which lay before them: *to raise up children to Abraham*—You think that because you are the only Church of God upon earth, and if you were destroyed God would then have no seed of Abraham to show mercy to, and keep his covenant with, therefore judgment shall not come upon you: but mistake not; that God who raised Adam from the dust of the earth, and children to Abraham from the dead womb of Sarah, can, if he please, animate and sanctify these very stones, which are before your eyes, and transform them into children of Abraham; into persons who shall inherit Abraham's faith and piety, and who, by imitating his obedience, shall become his spiritual seed, to whom the promises made to him shall be fulfilled, and in whom the church shall still subsist, though all you should be destroyed. And he would sooner work such a miracle as this, than he would suffer his promise to fail, or admit you to the blessings of his approaching kingdom,

of the trees: ° therefore every tree A. M. 4030.
which bringeth not forth good fruit is A. D. 26.
hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 ° I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy

° Mark l. 8; Luke iii. 16; John i. 15, 26, 33; Acts i. 5;
xi. 16; xix. 4.

merely because you have the abused honour to descend from that peculiar favourite of Heaven. Thus the Baptist took from those presumptuous men the ground of their confidence, by affirming that God could perform his promises to Abraham, though the whole Jewish nation should be rejected by him; the seed, like the stars for multitude, that was principally intended in the promise, being a spiritual progeny.

Verse 10. *And now, also, the axe, &c.*—To enforce his exhortation, he informs them that they had no time to delay their repentance, because the patience of God was very near exhausted, and come to an end with respect to them. His judgments were at hand and ready to be inflicted, so that, if they continued unfruitful, notwithstanding the extraordinary means that were now to be tried with them, destruction would speedily overtake them; as if he had said, God now once more offers you his grace in and through his Son, which, if you refuse, he will no longer bear with you. You think of national deliverances, but I am sent to warn you of national judgments; judgments, which even now hang over your heads, and are ready to fall upon you if you still continue barren, or do not bring forth good fruit: for I assure you, the hand of God is lifted up to strike the fatal blow. There is an allusion in the words to a woodman, who, having marked a tree for excision, lays his axe at the root of it, till he puts off his upper garment, and then immediately goes to work to cut it down. *Therefore, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit*—Every one that, while he professes to be one of God's people, contradicts that profession by a wicked life, or by the neglect of vital and practical religion, *is cut down, &c.*—Instantly, without further delay; *and cast into the fire*—Of hell: a prediction this, 1st, of that dreadful destruction which, within the short period of forty-four years, came, by the Romans, upon the whole Jewish nation; as if he had said, The Babylonians formerly lopped off your branches, but now the tree shall be cut down; your commonwealth shall be destroyed, and your temple, city, and nation totally ruined: and, 2dly, it is a prediction of that particular destruction which shall soon overtake all that reject the counsel of God against themselves, or, as the apostle expresses it, *that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Verse 11. *I indeed baptize you with water*—I call you to repentance, and admit the penitent to the baptism of water, as a sign and token of their being washed from their past sins, and of their engaging

A. M. 4030. to bear : [†] he shall baptize you with
A. D. 26. the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire :

12 [†] Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat

[†] Isa. iv. 4; xlv. 3; Mal. iii. 2; Acts ii. 3, 4; 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[†] Mal. iii. 3.

to walk henceforward in newness of life. He answers the question put to him, John i. 19, 25, by the priests and Levites sent from Jerusalem. *But he that cometh after me*—That succeeds me in preaching and baptizing, *is mightier than I*—Is endowed with unspeakably greater authority and power; *Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear*—That is, for whom I am unworthy to perform the humblest office of menial service: *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire*—He shall not only administer the outward element, or sign, to his disciples, but the thing signified thereby, viz., the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, which, in their operations and effects, are like fire, enlightening, quickening, and purifying men's souls, and kindling therein pious and devout affections; inflaming their hearts with love to God and all mankind, and with a degree of zeal for his glory and the salvation of sinners which all the waters of difficulty and danger, of persecution and tribulation, which they may be called to pass through, shall not be able to quench. And this baptism he will communicate in so abundant a measure, that you shall seem to be overflowed therewith. Now this promise was fulfilled, even with a visible appearance, as of fire, on the day of pentecost; and it is fulfilled without that appearance to this day, with respect to all that believe in Christ with a *faith that worketh by love*.

Verse 12. *Whose fan is in his hand*—That is, the doctrine of the gospel, which is of such a nature as effectually discovers what is the real disposition of the hearts of men, and perfectly distinguishes between the hypocritical and the sincere. Perhaps, also, the Baptist might refer to the persecutions and tribulations which should attend the preaching of the gospel. Dr. Campbell renders the original expression, το πτυον, *winnowing shovel*, mentioned Isa. xxx. 24, "an implement of husbandry, very ancient, simple, and properly manual: whereas the fan, (or van, as it is sometimes called,) is more complex, and, being contrived for raising an artificial wind, by the help of sails, can hardly be considered as proper for being carried about in the hand." "In the eastern countries," says Dr. Shaw, "after the grain is trodden out, they winnow it by throwing it up against the wind with a shovel." "To understand the Baptist's meaning aright, we should observe, that in this verse he describes the authority of Christ's ministry, as in verse 16 he had described its efficacy. As if he had said, The Messiah is infinitely mightier than I, not only as he will bestow on you the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, but as he has power to reward those who obey him with eternal life, and to punish such with everlasting destruction, as reject him."—Macknight. *He will thoroughly purge*

into the garner; but he will [†] burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

13 ¶ [†] Then cometh Jesus [†] from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

[†] Mal. iv. 1; Chap. xiii. 30.—[†] Mark i. 9; Luke iii. 21.
[†] Chap. ii. 22.

his floor—His Church, at present covered with a mixture of wheat and chaff. As if he had said, Though, for the present, the good and bad, the fruitful and unfruitful, are joined together in the visible Church, yet in due time he will sever them, Mal. iii. 2, 3; and rid his Church of all hypocrites and ungodly persons. *And gather his wheat*—The truly pious, *into his garner*—Will lay them up in heaven as his peculiar treasure. *But the chaff*—Those who have only a show of religion, without the power, and produce not the fruits of righteousness, *he will burn with unquenchable fire*—He will treat them as men do the refuse of the floor. He will destroy them as worthless and unprofitable trash. There is, in these words, an evident allusion to the custom of burning the chaff after winnowing, that it might not, by the wind's changing, be blown back again, and so be mingled with the wheat. And though this may in part refer to the calamities to come upon the Jewish nation for rejecting Christ, yet, it seems chiefly to intend the final destruction of all sinners in hell, which alone is properly opposed to the *gathering the wheat into the garner*. See chapter xiii. 40–42. And certainly this *burning of the chaff with unquenchable fire*, is absolutely inconsistent with all views of the restoration of the wicked, nor can it, by any easy or just interpretation, be reconciled with their annihilation, which, it is certain, no punishment of mind or body can, of itself, effect.

Verse 13. *Then cometh Jesus*—Who was now about thirty years of age, *from Galilee*—Where he had long lived, in a retired manner, *unto John, to be baptized of him*—Not in testimony of his repentance, or for the remission of sins, for, being without sin, he neither needed repentance nor remission; but that he might honour John's ministry, and acknowledge his commission to baptize, and might confirm the institution of baptism by water. He thus, also, offered himself to receive that testimony which he knew his heavenly Father would give him, and conformed himself to what he appointed for his followers; for which last reason he drank likewise of the sacramental cup. Thus the apostolical constitutions inform us that Christ was baptized, *not that he needed any purgation, but to testify the truth of John's baptism, and to be an example to us*. We may consider this as a plain argument that baptism may be rightly administered to, and received by those that are incapable of many of the chief ends of it, provided they be capable of some other end for which it also was designed. For Christ, being *without sin*, could neither repent nor promise amendment of life; being *the wisdom of the Father*, he could be taught nothing; being *the Christ*, he could not profess he would believe on

A. M. 4031. 14 But John forbade him, saying,
A. D. 27. I have need to be baptized of thee,
and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to

him that should come after him, that is, on himself. He, therefore, was baptized, 1st, to testify that he owned the Baptist as one commissioned by God to perform this office; 2d, that by this rite he might profess his willingness to fulfil all righteousness; and, 3d, that by this he might be initiated into his prophetic office, and consecrated to the service of God. Therefore, though infants can neither be taught, nor believe, nor give the answer of a good conscience, at baptism, yet they may be baptized; 1st, that by this ceremony they may be obliged to observe the laws of that Jesus, into whose name they are baptized, even as, under the Mosaic dispensation, the infant, by virtue of circumcision, became a debtor to observe the whole law of Moses, Acts xv. 5; Gal. v. 3; 2dly, that by this rite they may enter into covenant with God, of which they are declared capable by Moses, Deut. xxix. 11.

Verse 14. *But John forbade him*—Out of modesty he would have declined the service, saying, *I have need to be baptized of thee*—To receive a larger measure of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit from thee, *and comest thou to me*—on such an occasion as this? It has been questioned, how John knew him to be the Christ, before the Spirit descended on him? But this question will be easily resolved, if it be considered that John was a prophet filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. No doubt he knew by a secret intimation from that Spirit, that he, who then came to him, was the person on whom the Holy Ghost should descend, and on whom he should abide in so large a measure, or, rather, without measure, that he might impart him to others, such matters being frequently imparted to prophets by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Thus Simeon, having been told that he should not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ, had an intimation given him in the temple that the child Jesus was that Christ, Luke ii. 26-32; as had, also, Anna the prophetess. And Samuel, being told by God that on the morrow a man should come to him to be captain over his people Israel, 1 Sam. ix. 15, when Saul appeared, he had another intimation given him respecting the person, the Lord saying, verse 17, *Behold the man of whom I spake to thee*. Just so the Baptist, being to testify, when he baptized with water, that another should baptize them with the Holy Ghost, God tells him that of this he should see an evidence by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon Him who, from his fulness, was to impart this Spirit to all true believers; and when our Saviour came to be baptized, God tells him again, this was that very person.

Verse 15. *Suffer it to be so now*—In this my state of humiliation: *For thus*—By this appearance in

fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. A. M. 4031. A. D. 27.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and

Mark i. 10.

the form of a sinner, and stooping to thee, my inferior; *it becomes us*—Me, and my disciples according to my example, *to fulfil all righteousness*—To do whatsoever is just, fit, and requisite in our circumstances. Or, it becometh every messenger of God, and even every follower of mine, to observe every divine appointment, and to honour every divine ordinance. I therefore offer myself to be baptized, that I may show my readiness to obey all God's righteous precepts, and to justify God and approve his counsel, Luke vii. 29, 30, and celebrate his wisdom in sending thee to prepare his and my way, by calling men to repentance, and in that way fitting them for the blessings of my kingdom. "Our Lord's baptism tended," says Dr. Macknight, "to promote the ends both of his own mission and of his fore-runner's, as it established the authority of both. It established John's mission, great honour being done him by the Messiah's receiving his baptism. It established our Lord's mission also; for after he was baptized, the testimonies of the Spirit and voice from heaven were given him in the presence of the multitude assembled at Jordan. That these testimonies should have been given on this occasion, rather than on any other, was fit; because it was an august manner of opening our Lord's ministry, was the most public occasion that could be found, and pointed him out as Messiah to the Baptist, who was thereby qualified for the principal duty of his mission, John i. 31." By this we are taught a holy exactness in the observance even of those institutions which owe their obligations merely to a divine appointment. Surely thus *it becometh* all his followers *to fulfil all righteousness*. Jesus had no sin to wash away, and yet he was baptized. And God owned his ordinance so as to make it the season of pouring forth the Holy Spirit upon him. And where can we expect this sacred effusion, but in a humble attendance on divine appointments? *Then he suffered him*—He that sins through ignorance, will correct his error upon better information.

Verse 16. *And Jesus, when he was baptized, &c.*—Hereby he was, 1st, installed into his ministerial office, as the priests were by washing, Exod. xxix. 4; Lev. viii. 6; 2d, engaged solemnly in the same military work with us against sin and Satan; 3d, admitted a member of the gospel Church, as he was before of the Jewish, by circumcision; 4th, he was baptized as a public person, the Head of his Church, in whom, and by virtue of whose baptism, all his members are baptized spiritually, Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12. *Went up straightway out of the water*—Or, as the original, *ἀνέβη ἀπο τοῦ ὕδατος*, rather signifies, *ascended from the water*, namely, went up from the banks of Jordan. *The heavens were opened unto*

A. M. 4031. he saw ^a the Spirit of God descend-
A. D. 27. ing like a dove, and lighting upon
him :

^a Isa. xi. 2 ; xlii. 1 ; Luke iii. 22 ; John i. 32, 33.
^b John xii. 28.

him—For his sake, appearing as if they had been rent asunder directly over his head. It is probable they might resemble that opening of the heavens which we often see in a time of great lightning, when the sky seems to divide, to make the fuller and clearer way for the lightning: although, doubtless, this was much more striking and glorious. *And he saw*—Christ himself saw, and also John the Baptist, as appears by John, ch. i. 33, 34 ; and by this he was further confirmed that this was the very Christ:—*the Spirit of God descending like a dove*—Not only in a hovering, dove-like motion, but, it seems, with a bright flame, in the shape of a dove, for St. Luke says, ch. iii. 22, *σωματικῶς εἶδεν, ὡσεὶ περιστερᾶν, in a bodily shape, as a dove.* See also John i. 32. The Holy Spirit descended upon him in this form to signify what Christ is, 1st, in his own nature to them that come to him, meek and loving ; 2d, in the execution of his office, reconciling us to the Father, and bringing us good tidings of peace and reconciliation, as the dove brought Noah tidings of the deluge being assuaged ; 3d, in the operations of his Spirit upon his people, whereby they are made meek, lowly, and harmless as doves. *And lighting upon him*—As a visible token of a new degree of the Holy Ghost's operation in Christ, now at his entrance upon his public employment, even of that Spirit by which, according to the intimations God had given in his word, he was anointed in a peculiar manner, and abundantly fitted for his public work. *Psa. xlv. 7 ; Isa. lxi. 1.* And thus was Christ installed into his ministerial function, both by baptism and the unction of the Holy Ghost, as the priests of old were by washing and anointing.

17 ^a And lo, a voice from heaven, A. M. 4031.
saying, ^b This is my beloved Son, in A. D. 27.
whom I am well pleased.

^b *Psa. ii. 7 ; Isa. xlii. 1 ; Chap. xii. 18 ; xvii. 5 ; Mark i. 11 ; Luke ix. 35 ; Eph. i. 6 ; Col. i. 13 ; 2 Pet. i. 17.*

Verse 17. *And lo!*—As a further token of the divine regard to Christ, and of the glorious dignity of his person, *a voice from heaven, saying, to John, concerning Christ, This is my beloved Son,* and to Christ himself, *Thou art my beloved Son,* Luke iii. 22. For it is not improbable that both sentences were pronounced; the voice uttering the words, *Thou art my beloved Son, &c.* while the Spirit was descending, as if they had been directed to Jesus alone, in answer to his prayer; and, after the Spirit rested on Jesus, the voice, speaking to the Baptist and the multitude, said, *This is my beloved Son, &c.* St. Luke informs us, that he was praying when this happened, and it is observable that all the voices from heaven, by which the Father bore witness to Christ, were pronounced while he was praying, or quickly after. *Luke ix. 29, 35 ; John xii. 28.* *In whom I am well pleased*—Or, *in whom I delight,* That is, whose character I perfectly approve, and in whom I acquiesce as the great Mediator, through whom will I show myself favourable unto sinful creatures. See *Isa. xlii. 1.* The original word properly signifies an entire acquiescence, or a special and singular complacency and satisfaction. This the Father took, in the person and undertaking of Christ; and this, through him, he takes in all true believers, who, by faith, are united to him, and made members of his body. And O, how poor, in comparison of this, are all other kinds of praise, yea, and all other pleasures! To have the approbation, and be the delight of God; this is praise, this is pleasure indeed! This is, at once, true glory and true happiness, and is the highest and brightest light that virtue can appear in.

CHAPTER IV.

In this chapter we have, (1,) An account of Christ's fasting forty days, and being afterward assaulted in three different ways by Satan, but overcoming in each assault, 1-11. (2,) Of his beginning to preach in Galilee and parts adjacent, 12-17. (3,) Of his calling disciples to attend him, viz., Peter and Andrew, James and John, 18-22. (4,) Of his miraculously healing multitudes, and being greatly followed by the people for his cures and instructions, 23-25.

THEN ^a was ^a Jesus led up ^b of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

^a First Sunday in Lent, gospel, verse 1 to verse 12.
^b Mark i. 12, &c. ; Luke iv. 1, &c.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *Then*—After the afore-mentioned glorious manifestation of his Father's love, by which he was armed for the combat. *Was Jesus led by the Spirit*—By a strong impulse of the Spirit of God, of which he was full; *into the wilderness*—

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward a hungered.

^b 1 Kings xviii. 12 ; Ezek. iii. 14 ; viii. 3 ; xi. 1, 24 ; xl. 2 ; xliii. 5 ; Acts viii. 39.

Probably, the wilderness near Jordan, which, as Mr. Maundrell, who travelled through it, assures us, is a miserable and horrid place, consisting of high, barren mountains, so that it looks as if nature had suffered some violent convulsions there. Our Lord, probably, was assaulted in the northern part of it,

A. M. 4031. 3 And when the tempter came to
A. D. 27. him, he said, If thou be the Son of

God, command that these stones be
A. M. 4031. made bread. A. D. 27.

near the sea of Galilee, because he is said by Luke to be returning to Nazareth, from whence he came to be baptized. *To be tempted of the devil*—That is, the chief of the devils, Satan, the everlasting enemy of God and man. The proper meaning of the original word here, and in other places of the Old and New Testaments, translated to *tempt*, is to try. Hence we sometimes, as Gen. xxii. 1, read of God's tempting men, as well as of the devil's tempting them. But there is this difference between the temptations, or trials, that are immediately from God, and those that are from Satan, by God's permission. We are tempted, or tried, by God, that our righteousness, our faith, love, patience, and every grace and virtue, may be manifested, approved, and further increased: and therefore, as James says, *Blessed is the man who*, in this sense, *endureth temptation*. But the devil *tempts*, or *tries* us, in expectation of finding us insincere, or unstable, and with a view to lead us into sin by his subtlety and power; in which sense *God*, who *cannot be tempted with evil*, or see any thing desirable in it, *tempteth no man*. Doubtless, it must have been for some very great and good ends that the Holy Spirit thus moved our Lord to repair into the wilderness, *to be tempted of the devil*. For though, by his repairing thither, he might partly intend to enjoy a devout retirement, that as man he might give vent to those sacred passions which the late grand occurrences of the descent of the Spirit upon him, and the miraculous attestation of a voice from heaven, had such a tendency to inspire; yet no doubt he foresaw that this season of intercourse with heaven would be followed by a violent assault from hell, and he went into the wilderness with a view also to meet and combat with the grand adversary of mankind. Probably, as Theophylact observes, one grand end might be to teach us that when we have consecrated ourselves to God's service, and have been favoured with peculiar marks of divine acceptance, and the consolations of his Spirit, we must expect temptations; and to teach us, by our Lord's example, how we may best and most effectually resist them, even by an *unshaken faith*, 1 Pet. v. 9; and by the sword of the Spirit, which is the *word of God*, Eph. vi. 17. 2d, Our Lord was tempted thus, that his perfect holiness might be tried and approved. 3d, That Satan might be conquered, which he never had perfectly been by any man before. 4th, That Christ might become a merciful and faithful high priest, one who can succour his people in time of need, and pity them when they happen to fall by temptation. The apostle assigns this reason expressly, Heb. ii. 17, 18. And, 5th, That assurance might be given to his people of an everlasting victory over, and deliverance from, the power of Satan.

Verse 2. *And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights*—As Moses, the giver, and Elias, the restorer of the law, had done before: *he was afterward a hungered*—That is, he was as sharply as

saulted with hunger, as any man is at any time for want of food. Thus he was fitted for the ensuing trial of his trust in God. And, as an ancient writer observes, We are then especially to expect temptations, when we are alone, and when we are in straits and exigencies, from which we see no ordinary way of deliverance, which was the case with Christ. For he was hungry, and in a wild wilderness, where was no food, and was at last fed miraculously by angels ministering unto him.

Verse 3. *And when the tempter came to him*—In a visible shape and appearance, to tempt him outwardly, as he had done inwardly before. For it appears from the account which Mark and Luke have given us of this matter, that our Lord had been tempted by the devil invisibly during the whole of the above-mentioned forty days—but now, it seems, he came to him in a visible form, probably in the human, as one that desired to inquire further into the evidences of his mission. Accordingly he said, *If thou be the Son of God*—In such an extraordinary sense as thou hast been declared to be, and if thou art indeed the promised Messiah, expected under that character, *command that these stones be made bread*—To relieve thy hunger, for in such circumstances it will undoubtedly be done. Thus Satan took advantage of our Lord's distress to tempt him to doubt his being the Son of God in the sense in which he had just been declared to be so; and it seems the object of this first temptation was, to excite in his mind a distrust of the care and kindness of his heavenly Father, and to induce him to use unwarranted means to relieve his hunger. But it is objected here, If Christ were God, why should he be tempted? Was it to show that God was able to overcome the temptations of the devil? Could there be any doubt of this? We answer, he was *man*, *very man*, as well as God, "of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting," and it was only as *man* that he was tempted. If it be replied, that seeing his human nature was personally united to the divine, it must still be superfluous to show that even his human nature, thus influenced, should be able to baffle the assaults of Satan: Irenæus, an eminent father of the second century, answering this very objection, then made by the Ebionites, (the elder brethren of the Photinians and Socinians,) observes that, *as he was man, that he might be tempted, so he was the Word, that he might be glorified; the Word, (or Godhead,) being quiescent in his temptation, crucifixion, and death*. These words being preserved and cited, says Dr. Whitby, by Theodoret, show that the latter fathers approved of this solution of this difficulty. Among the reasons assigned of our Lord's temptation, one is, the consolation of his members conflicting with the adversary of their souls. For, *in that he suffered, being tempted, he can sympathize with, and succour those that are tempted*; affording them the same Spirit that was in him, that they may resist the devil with

A. M. 4031. 4 But he answered and said, It is
A. D. 27. written, ° Man shall not live by bread
alone, but by every word that proceedeth out
of the mouth of God.

5 Then the devil taketh him up ^d into the
holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the
temple,

° Deut. viii. 3.—^d Neh. xi. 1, 18; Isa. xlvi. 2;

the same weapons, and overcome him with the same assistance, by which he, in his human nature, combated and conquered. Now this ground of comfort would be wholly taken from us, if Christ overcame Satan merely by virtue of that nature, by which he was *απειραγος κακων*, James i. 13, incapable of being overcome by temptation. But if, with Irenæus, we affirm that the divinity was then quiescent in him, and that he overcame Satan by virtue of the Spirit given to him, we, who have the same *unction from the Holy One*, may also hope to do it by his aid.

Verse 4. *It is written*—There is no better way of answering the tempter, than by opposing the word of God to his temptations. This is that sword of the Spirit that must put him to flight. The Church of Rome, therefore, by taking from the people the word of God, disarm them as to the spiritual combat. *Man shall not live by bread alone*—These words are quoted from Deut. viii. 3, and signify that bread, or ordinary sustenance, is not necessary to support the life of man; that God can feed and sustain him by other means: *but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God shall man live*—That is, by whatsoever he shall appoint for his sustenance; or even by his bare word. Therefore, it is not needful that I should work a miracle to procure bread, without any intimation of my Father's will. He can support me without bread, as he fed the Israelites in the wilderness; and, on the other hand, even bread itself, if these stones were turned into it, could not nourish me without his blessing; which I could not expect, were I to attempt a miracle of this kind merely in compliance with thy suggestions. Here we are taught, in imitation of Christ, always to maintain such an humble dependance on the divine blessing, as never to venture out of the way of it, be our necessity ever so urgent.

Verses 5-7. *Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city*—That is, the city Jerusalem, frequently called *the holy city* in Scripture, see Neh. xi. 1; Isa. lii. 1; Dan. ix. 24; and that with great propriety, as being for ages the place of the special residence of Jehovah. It has been supposed by many, that Satan transported our Lord through the air, but whether he did or not cannot be determined from this passage, the original word, *παραλαμβάνει*, signifying no more than that he took him along with him. *And setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple*—That is, one of the battlements, for it is not to be supposed that our Lord stood on the *point of a spire*. The roof of the temple, like that of their houses, was flat, and had a kind of balustrade round it, to

6 And saith unto him, If thou be A. M. 4031.
the Son of God, cast thyself down: A. D. 27.

for it is written, ° He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again,

lii. 1; Chap. xxvii. 53; Rev. xi. 2.—° Psa. xci. 11, 12.

prevent people falling off, and somewhere on the edge of this we may suppose that Satan placed Christ, in his attacking him with this temptation. This, in some parts of it, and particularly over the porch, was so exceedingly high that one could hardly bear to look down from it. *And saith, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down*—Thereby to show to all the people about the temple, that thou art indeed the Son of God; which they will fully believe when they shall see thee fly without falling, or fall without being hurt. As in the former assault, Satan tempted Christ to distrust the care of divine providence, so he now tries to persuade him to presume upon it, and to expose himself to danger unnecessarily; nay, in effect, to take the direct course to destroy himself, and try whether God would preserve him as his Son. *For it is written, &c.*—In the former temptation the devil did not quote Scripture, but having been repelled in that assault by *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*, he here takes up the same weapon. *He shall give his angels charge concerning thee*—As if he had said, Since thou trustest so much in providence as to expect to be sustained by it, even without food, now throw thyself down, to give more undoubted evidence of thy dependance upon it: and, as the miracle will be a full proof that thou art the Son of God and will undeniably convince the people of it, so thou canst have no room to doubt of thy safety, the Scripture having declared that his angels shall take care of thee. Jerome, and many after him, have well observed here, that though Satan quotes Scripture, he does it falsely. He artfully leaves out the words, *In all thy ways*. To throw himself down, and fly through the air, was none of our Lord's *ways*. He had no call, no warrant, from God, to decline the stairs by which he might go down from the top of the temple, and precipitate himself from the battlements thereof. God had never granted, nor even promised to any, the protection of angels in sinful and forbidden ways; nor adjudged that his special providence should watch over and preserve them, who should voluntarily throw themselves into dangers which they might lawfully avoid. Add to this, that Satan seems to mock our Saviour's true use of Scripture by this abuse of applying it, not to instruct but to deceive, separating the protection of God's providence from man's duty, and extending the promise of the former to those who neglected the latter; and putting God upon working a miracle, to declare that which he had already made sufficiently evident. We learn from our Lord's ex-

A. M. 4031. † Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy
A. D. 27. God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them ;

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I

† Deuteronomy vi. 16.—‡ Deuteronomy vi. 13 ; x. 20 ;

ample here, that it is never right to expose ourselves to unnecessary danger in expectation of an extraordinary deliverance. And we learn, too, that it is not only necessary that we should take *the sword of the Spirit, the word of God*, and make ourselves familiarly acquainted with it, that we may be furnished for the combat with the prince of darkness, but that we should enter into the design and meaning of it, in order that, if Satan attempt to draw his artillery from thence, we may be able to guard against that most dangerous stratagem, and to answer perverted passages of Holy Writ by others more justly applicable. *Jesus said, It is written again*—Viz., Deut. vi. 16, to prevent the ungrateful abuse of such promises as these, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*—By demanding further evidence of what is already made sufficiently plain, as my being the Son of God is, by the miraculous and glorious testimony he has so lately given me. I shall not, therefore, require any more signs to prove it, nor express any doubt of God's power or goodness toward me; nor shall I act as the Israelites did, when they said, Ex. xvii. 7, *Is the Lord among us or not?* when he had given them ample proof that he was present with them, and had taken, and would take care of them, and provide for them. It is to be observed that the above precept, respecting *tempting God*, does not forbid too much, but too little confidence in God, and the calling in question his presence with, and care over his people. But in the general, to make an undue and unwarrantable trial of God, is to *tempt him*, whether the trial respect his power or goodness. See Num. xiv. 22 ; Psa. lxxviii. 18 ; Isa. vii. 12 ; chap. xvi. 1.

Verses 8, 9. *Again the devil taketh him up*—In what way is not said ; *into an exceeding high mountain*—Probably one of the mountains in the wilderness, and from that eminence, partly by the advantage of the place, from which he might behold many magnificent buildings, rich fields, pleasant meadows, hills covered with wood and cattle, rivers rolling through the fertile valleys, and washing the cities as they passed along ; and partly by an artful visionary representation, *showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*—Whatsoever was gay, splendid, or glorious, either in respect of the honours, riches, or pleasures of the world ; their great and opulent cities, sumptuous edifices, costly attire, equipage, pomp, and splendour ; displaying to his view one of the finest prospects that the most pleasurable and triumphant scenes could furnish out ; and all this, not one after another, but in a moment of time, that so they might amaze and affect him

give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. A. M. 4031.
A. D. 27.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan : for it is written, † Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Joshua xxiv. 14 ; 1 Samuel vii. 3.

the more with their splendour, and on a sudden prevail upon him, which otherwise they would not have been so likely to do. *And saith unto him*—With the most egregious impudence, falsehood, and pride ; *All these things will I give thee*—All this glory and power, and all these possessions, *if thou wilt fall down and worship me*—The devil now showed clearly who he was, and therefore Christ, in answering this suggestion, calls him by his proper name, *Satan*, which, though he undoubtedly knew him, he had not done before. We may learn from hence not to conclude we are utterly abandoned of God when we are assaulted with horrible temptations ; Christ himself, we see, was tempted even to worship the devil : but in such cases let us, like Jesus, resolutely repel the temptation, rather than parley with it. Dr. Doddridge observes, that, if we suppose Satan, in these two last temptations, to have worn the form of an angel of light, it will make them both appear more plausible ; “ for thus he might pretend, in the former, to take charge of Christ in his fall, as one of his celestial guards ; and in this latter to resign to him a province which God had committed to his administration and care.” And this, he thinks, may not be inconsistent “ with supposing that he first appeared as a man, (it may be as a hungry traveller, who pretended to ask the miracle of turning stones into loaves for his own supply,) for angels, under the Old Testament, had often worn a human form.”

Verse 10. *Then saith Jesus, Get thee hence, Satan*—The expression, *ῥαγε, Σατανα*, plainly expresses Christ's authority over Satan, as well as his detestation of so vile a suggestion : *for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, &c.*—It would therefore be unlawful to worship thee, who art no other than a mere creature, even though thou wast indeed his deputy on earth ; and how much more then must it be so, as thou art, in reality, the great avowed enemy of God and man ! for such, under all thy disguise, I well know thee to be. It appears from these words, that religious worship, or service, is due to God alone, and cannot be lawfully given to a creature. From whence we must infer, that Christ is not a mere creature : for all men are to *honour him, even as they honour the Father*, John v. 23. And *all the angels of God* are commanded to *worship him*, Heb. i. 6 : and it is given as the character of all Christians, 1 Cor. i. 2, that they *call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord* : and Col. iii. 24, *That they serve the Lord Christ*. As to the answer made by some to this irrefragable argument in favour of our Lord's divinity, it appears from this

A. M. 4031. 11 Then the devil leaveth him,
A. D. 27. and, behold, ^hangels came and ministered unto him.

A. M. 4034. 12 ¶ ⁱ Now, when Jesus had heard
A. D. 31. that John was ² cast into prison, he departed into Galilee ;

^h Heb. i. 14. — ⁱ Mark i. 14 ; Luke iii. 20 ;

very passage to have no weight in it. God alone, say they, is to be worshipped as the first and principal cause of all things, and the chief author of our salvation ; but yet, religious worship and service may be paid to Christ, as the intermediate cause of that salvation which God, by him, hath revealed and brought to us. For as there are no footsteps of this distinction in the holy Scriptures, so it is plain that our Lord's reply to Satan here entirely condemns it. The devil, it is manifest, did not require to be worshipped by Jesus as the original cause and supreme governor of the world. He frankly owns that all the power he had over the kingdoms of the earth was given to him. He claims, therefore, only a subordinate worship ; and yet our Lord rejects his claim, not on the ground of his being a liar and usurper, who had no such power, and therefore had no right to any such worship ; but on the ground of God only having a right to any kind of religious worship, saying, in the words of Moses, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*. Christ, therefore, cannot be worshipped lawfully, if he be not God as well as man.

Verse 11. *Then the devil*—Being so baffled and confounded as not to be able to present any other temptation which seemed more likely to prevail, *leaveth him*—Namely, for a season, as Luke observes, meditating no doubt some future assault, and especially designing, by and by, to use all stratagems to take away his life. *And, behold, angels came and ministered unto him*—Not only furnishing him with proper supplies for his hunger, but also congratulating him on so illustrious a victory over the prince of darkness ; and doing him honour by the appearance of a number of them, (for one of them would have sufficed to bring him food,) after this horrible combat with Satan, to which, for wise and gracious reasons, he was pleased to condescend. And it may encourage us in all our temptations to remember, that if our conflict be thus maintained, the struggle will, ere long, be over ; and angels, who are now spectators of the combat, will at length congratulate our victory. God teaches us, by all this, that our lives are to have their vicissitudes of temptation and consolation, and that our temptation shall have a happy issue, and that when ordinary means fail we may expect extraordinary helps.

Verse 12. *Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison*—Namely, for reproving Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, for taking his brother Philip's wife, and for other evils, ch. xiv. 3, 4 : *he departed into Galilee*—Viz., from Judea. This it seems he did, partly to avoid the envy of the Pharisees, John iv. 3, and partly to encourage John's disciples,

13 And leaving Nazareth, he came ^{A. M. 4034.}
^{A. D. 31.} and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephtholim ;

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

iv. 14, 31 ; John iv. 43.—² Or, *delivered up*

and to continue the preaching interrupted by his confinement, being desirous to improve those good impressions which the ministry of John had made on the minds of the people, and which would not be erased but deepened by the injurious things they saw him suffer. Thus it becomes one messenger of God to carry on the work begun by another. But it is to be observed, that this was not the first, but the second time of Jesus's going into Galilee. Nor did he take this journey immediately upon his temptation ; but at some distance of time, viz., after the events had taken place which are recorded in the latter part of the first, and in the second and third chapters of John's gospel. His first journey from Judea into Galilee is mentioned John i. 43, and ii. 1. Then he went into Judea again, and celebrated the passover at Jerusalem, John ii. 13. He baptized in Judea, while John was baptizing at Enon, John iii. 22, 23. All this time John was at liberty. But the Pharisees being offended, chap. iv. 1, and John put in prison, he then took this journey into Galilee.

Verse 13. *Leaving Nazareth*—Namely, when they had rejected his word, and even attempted to kill him, as is described Luke iv. 29 : *he came and dwelt in Capernaum, upon the sea-coast*—“ Capernaum is nowhere mentioned in the Old Testament, either by its own name or by any other. Probably it was one of those towns which the Jews built after their return from Babylon. Its exact situation has not, as yet, been determined with certainty by geographers : only, from its being on the confines of the two tribes, Rehad and others conjecture that it stood somewhere on the north-west shore of the lake of Gennesareth. According to Josephus, *Bell.*, iii. 18, the length of this lake was one hundred furlongs, or twelve miles and a half, and its breadth forty furlongs, or five miles. Pliny says it was sixteen miles long, and six broad. Anciently, the lake of Gennesareth was called the *sea of Chinneroth*, Num. xxxiv. 11 ; but in later times, it was named the *sea of Galilee*, because that country formed part of its shore, and the *sea of Tiberias*, from the city Tiberias, lying on the south-west coast thereof. Its bottom is gravel, which gives its waters both a good colour and taste. The river Jordan runs through the middle of it, and stocks it with a variety of excellent fish. In the countries round this lake, our Lord spent a great part of the two former years of his public life ; and though he afterward enlarged the compass of his journeys, yet they always enjoyed a considerable share of his blessed company and divine instructions.”—Macknight.

Verses 14, 15. *That it might be fulfilled*—Or, whereby was fulfilled, *that which was spoken by*

A. M. 4035. 15 ¹ The land of Zabulon, and the
A. D. 31. land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of
the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;
16 ¹ The people which sat in darkness saw
great light; and to them which sat in the
region and shadow of death, light is sprung
up.

¹ Isa. ix. 1, 2.—² Isa. xlii. 7; Luke ii. 32.—³ Mark i. 14, 15.
⁴ Chap. iii. 2; x. 7.

Esaias—Namely, chap. ix. 1, 2, where see the notes. *The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, &c.*—Isaiah, in this passage, comforts the Jewish Church of his time against the desolation about to be made through the Assyrian invasion, by foretelling that they who should have the greatest share in that calamity should afterward enjoy, in the greatest plenty, the means of salvation through Christ's abode and preaching among them: *By the way of the sea*—That is, on the coasts of the lake of Gennesareth, commonly called a sea: *Galilee of the Gentiles*—Or nations; that is, Galilee in the confines of, or encompassed by, the heathen nations. Or, perhaps the reason of the name may rather be, that many Gentiles were early settled there, and had filled the country with a variety of superstitions, in consequence of Solomon's giving a tract of land here to Hiram. See 1 Kings ix. 11–13. Hence it was soon filled with foreigners, and peopled with a mixture of Phœnicians, Egyptians, and Arabians, as we learn from Strabo, an ancient writer.

Verse 16. *The people who sat in darkness*—They whose predecessors were afflicted by the Assyrians, and who, before Christ visited them, were captives of Satan, and had lived in gross ignorance of God and religion, being far from Jerusalem, the place of worship, and intermixed with the Tyrians, Sidonians, and other wicked heathen: *saw a great light*—This is spoken by Isaiah in the prophetic style, which represents things future as already accomplished, because certainly to be accomplished. This whole country had been overspread with spiritual darkness, but, by the example and preaching of Christ, the day-spring from on high visited it, diffusing among its inhabitants knowledge and holiness, and *guiding their feet into the way of peace*. "There were several reasons," says Dr. Macknight, "which might determine Jesus to be so much about the sea of Galilee. 1st, The countries which surrounded this sea were large, fertile, and populous, especially the two Galilees. For, according to Josephus, *Bell.*, iii. 2, they alone had many towns, and a multitude of villages, the least of which contained above 15,000 souls. On the east side of the lake were Chorazin, Gadara, and Hippon; on the west, Capernaum, Tiberias, Bethsaida, and Tarrichea, with other places of inferior note. Wherefore, as it was agreeable to the end of Christ's coming that his doctrine should be spread extensively, and his miracles wrought publicly, no country could be a fitter scene for his ministry than this. Besides its numerous inhabitants, there were at all times many

17 ¶ ¹ From that time Jesus began
A. M. 4035. to preach, and to say, ² Repent: for
A. D. 31. the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

18 ¶ ¹ And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon ² called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

* St. Andrew's Day, gospel, verse 18 to verse 23.—¹ Mark i. 16–18; Luke v. 2.—² John i. 42.

strangers resorting to the trading towns on the lake, who, after hearing Jesus preach, could carry home with them the glad tidings of salvation which were the subjects of his sermons. Capernaum, chosen by Christ as the place of his residence, was a town of this kind, and much frequented. 2d, The countries round the lake were remote from Jerusalem, the seat of the scribes and Pharisees, who would not have borne with patience the presence of a teacher held in such estimation as Jesus deservedly was. We know this by what happened in the beginning of his ministry, when he made and baptized many disciples in Judea. They took such offence at it, that he was obliged to leave the country. Wherefore, as it was necessary that he should spend a considerable time in preaching and working miracles, both for the confirmation of his mission, and for the instruction of his disciples in the doctrines they were afterward to preach, these countries were, of all others, the most proper for him to reside in, or rather, they were the only places where he could be with safety for any time."

Verse 17. *From that time Jesus began to preach*—He had preached before, both to Jews and Samaritans, John iv. 41, 45, but from this time he began to preach publicly and steadily, and to insist on the same doctrine that John had done: and with good reason, for the repentance which John taught, still was, and ever will be, the necessary preparation for that inward *kingdom of heaven, or, of God, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. The phrase, however, is not only used with regard to individuals, in whom that kingdom is to be established, but also with regard to the Christian Church, the whole body of believers. In the former sense, it is opposed to repentance, by which it is preceded; in the latter, to the Mosaic dispensation. Our Lord now properly and fully entered upon his prophetic office; which consisted of three things: preaching, or making known the will of God; gathering disciples; and working miracles. The first of these he does here, and more largely chap. v., vi., vii., and in his many parables and other discourses. The second, verses 18–22. The third, as being necessary to confirm his doctrine, on all occasions, from time to time, till his departure hence.

Verse 18. *And Jesus, walking, &c., saw two brethren*—One of the two, at least, namely, Andrew, had been a disciple of the Baptist. And the Apostle John "informs us, chap. i. 40, 42, that they had both before been called to the knowledge of Christ, upon the banks of Jordan, and that the name of *Peter*

A. M. 4035. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow
A. D. 31. me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

¶ Luke v. 10, 11. — Mark x. 28; Luke xviii. 28.

had been given to *Simon*. And it is probable that, from their first acquaintance with him, they followed Jesus for some time, and went with him to Cana and Capernaum, John ii. 3, 12; and afterward to Jerusalem, John ii. 13, 17; and tarried with him while he continued in Judea, John iii. 22. But when the Pharisees grew jealous of the number of his followers, and Herod was offended at the popularity of John, we may suppose that Jesus, at his return to Galilee, might think it prudent to dismiss his disciples for a time, till he himself had gone about from place to place to preach the gospel, and had informed the people more particularly of the character of his person, and the nature of his doctrine: or, possibly, they might leave him at the time when the Samaritans prevailed upon him to go with them to their city, John iv. 40. Be this as it may, we read no more of his disciples being with him, till he now found them at the sea of Galilee. For they no sooner were gone home, but they returned again to their old employment, and continued in it till they were now taken off from any further regard to their worldly business, and were particularly called by Christ to a constant attendance upon him.²⁷ —Doddridge. *Casting a net into the sea.*—Namely, to wash it, for, according to Luke, chap. v. 2, they were washing their nets, when he called them. *For they were fishers*—He called such mean persons to show, 1st, the freedom of his grace, in choosing such weak instruments; 2d, his power, in that by such men he could subdue the world; 3d, the depth of his wisdom, in providing thus for his own honour, that the instruments might not carry away the glory of the work.

Verses 19, 20. *He saith unto them*—Namely, after some previous circumstances, an account of which is given, Luke v. 1–11. *Follow me*—That is, not only now and then, as you have hitherto done, since my baptism, John i. 37; but now leave your ordinary employments, and become my constant attendants; that by continually hearing my doctrine, and seeing my miracles, you may be fitted, in due time, to become my messengers to mankind. It is observable that, when God has called men to offices of dignity and usefulness among his people, or has particularly appeared in their favour, they have generally been engaged in some honest employment. Saul was seeking his father's asses, and David was keeping his father's sheep, when the Lord called them to the kingdom. The shepherds were feeding their flocks when they received information from the angel, accompanied by the heavenly host, of the birth of Christ. God called Amos from the flock, Gideon from the threshing floor, and the apostles here from

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21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and he called them.

¶ Mark i. 19, 20; Luke v. 10.

their fishing. God does not encourage idleness, nor despise persons in mean employments. *And I will make you fishers of men*—You shall gather men into the gospel net, and gain them over to the faith; and such abundant success will I give you, that the number of souls converted by you, shall be greater than that of the fishes you have been used to catch. See notes on Ezek. xxxvii. 6–10. Observe, reader! The work of ministers is here set forth. They are not to fish for a livelihood, much less for honour and applause to themselves, but to win souls to God, and are to bait their hooks and order their nets for this end: which, however, will never be answered if, either by mere general discourses, they make the meshes so wide that sinners will find an easy passage through them, or, by abstract reasonings, and fine-spun speculations, they make the threads so small that they can easily break them; or, if they neglect to close the net upon those they have enclosed, by a proper and pointed application of their subject. Nor will all our art or labour make us fishers of men, without the divine blessing. Without this, like the disciples of old, we may toil all day and all night, but we shall catch nothing, or nothing to purpose. And it is to be observed further, that the apostles were not immediately to enter upon the work of the ministry, but were first to follow Jesus. And the apostles, in the choice of one to succeed Judas, limited themselves in their election to those that had *companied with them all the time the Lord Jesus had gone in and out among them*, Acts i. 21. Those who do not observe this become fishers for something else rather than the souls of men. *They straightway left their nets and followed him*—Influenced by the power of his word, and struck with the wonderful miracle recorded Luke v. 6–9. It is not of indispensable necessity that those who are called to the ministry of the word should have nothing else to do. Paul's hand ministered to his necessities and those of his companions. But it is very desirable that they should be so supported as to be able to give themselves wholly up to the work of the Lord.

Verses 21, 22. *Going on from thence*—Mark says, *A little further thence, He saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother*—The reader will observe, there was another James, the son of Alpheus, or Cleophas, commonly called *James the Less*. *In a ship, with Zebedee their father*—By the sea-side, *mending their nets*—Which had been broken by the vast draught of fishes they had taken just before. *And he called them*—Not with his voice only, but by his Spirit affecting and drawing their hearts, so that they immediately left their

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A. M. 4035. 22 And they immediately left the ship,
A. D. 31. and their father, and followed him.

23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the "gospel of the kingdom, " and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria : and they brought unto him all sick people that

† Chap. ix. 35 ; Mark i. 21, 39 ; Luke iv. 15, 44. — " Chap.

ship and their father, and indeed their earthly all, and followed him.

Verse 23. *And Jesus went about all Galilee*—Accompanied, it seems, by the four disciples above named ; *teaching in their synagogues*—The word, *συναγωγή*, rendered, *synagogue*, may either signify the congregation, or the place in which they assembled. But it seems here, and generally, to mean the latter. Synagogues were in every city, from the time of the Babylonish captivity, and perhaps before that time. For, it is certain, the Jews neither did nor could assemble in the temple at Jerusalem for public worship every sabbath day, and therefore it is probable they had other places throughout the country to assemble in. This seems, indeed, to have been absolutely necessary, not only that the people might join in prayer together, but to bring them, in some degree, acquainted with the law of God. For, as copies of it were very scarce, the body of the people must, of necessity, have remained ignorant of it, unless it were read to them in public, and that in other places besides the temple, which the women in general could not visit at all, and the men but very seldom. Accordingly, in the lxxivth Psalm, which, by whomsoever it was composed, plainly speaks of the destruction of the temple, of Jerusalem, and of the Jews, by the Chaldeans, we read of all the synagogues of the land being burned up, which certainly implies that there were synagogues in the land before they were thus destroyed ; and therefore before the captivity of Babylon. After the restoration from Babylon, they became very frequent. Even in Jerusalem itself, where one would have imagined they were less necessary, on account of the temple being there, the Hebrew doctors and other ancient and learned writers inform us, that there were above four hundred. It was usual to have service in them thrice a day, on three days of the week, when public prayer was put up, and the Scriptures were read and expounded. And though it belonged chiefly to the priests, Levites, and scribes to teach, yet it was the custom for any

were taken with divers diseases and A. M. 4035 torments, and those which were pos- A. D. 31. sessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy ; and he healed them.

25 † And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.

xxiv. 14 ; Mark i. 14. — † Mark i. 34. — † Mark iii. 7.

one of ability to do it. *Preaching the gospel of the kingdom*—Namely, that doctrine whereby the kingdom of heaven, that is, of grace here and glory hereafter, is revealed and offered to men, and, by obedience to which, they come to partake of it. *Healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people*—Intending by these beneficent actions to confirm his doctrine, at the same time that he relieved the temporal distresses of mankind.

Verse 24. *His fame went through all Syria*—Of which the country of the Jews and Samaritans was but a small part. Pliny tells us, that Syria contained several provinces, Comagene to the north, Phœnicia to the west, Cœlosyria to the south, Palmyrene, and the province of Seleucia, in the middle part. If, by all Syria, the evangelist means all these different provinces of Syria, our Lord's fame must at this time have been exceedingly great. Nor is there any thing incredible in the evangelist's affirmation, taken in the largest sense. For considering the number and greatness of the miracles which he performed, it would not have been beyond belief, had the historian told us that the fame of them reached as far as the communication of the Jews with the rest of the world extended. *And they brought unto him those that were possessed with devils, and those lunatic, and those that had the palsy*—These are justly reckoned cases of as great misery, and of as little hope, as any to be found among men. The evangelist, therefore, properly instanced these. *And he healed them*, and thereby wonderfully displayed both his power and his love.

Verse 25. *And there followed him great multitudes*—Affected with the sight, or fame of his miracles, which was now very great, *from Galilee*—Its many and populous towns and villages. See note on verse 15. *From Decapolis*—A tract of land on the east side of the sea of Galilee, which had its name from *deka*, ten, and *πολις*, a city, because it contained only ten cities, which were situated near each other, and formed into a distinct district, the metropolis of which was Damascus.

CHAPTER V.

In this and the following chapters we have our Lord's much-famed sermon on the mount, consisting of three parts. In the first of these, contained in this chapter, we have, (1.) A description of, and a sweet invitation to true holiness and happiness, 3-12. (2.) The character and duty of Christ's disciples, who, being possessed themselves of his holy and happy religion, are exhorted to impart it to others, and obey his irrevocable law, 13-20. (3.) An exposition of the principal precepts of the moral law, and a vindication of them from the corrupt glosses of the scribes and Pharisees, particularly with respect to murder, 21-26 : uncleanness, 27-32 : swearing, 33-37 : retaliation, 38-42 : and love to mankind, 43-48.

A. M. 4035. **AND** seeing the multitudes, *he
A. D. 31. went up into a mountain: and
when he was set, his disciples came unto
him.*

2 And he opened his mouth, and A. M. 4035.
taught them, saying, A. D. 31.

3 ¶ ^b Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs
is the kingdom of heaven.

* Mark iii. 13, 20.—* All Saints' Day, gospel,
verse 1 to verse 13.

^b Luke vi. 20; Psa. li. 17; Prov. xvi. 19; xxix. 23;
Isa. lvii. 15; lxvi. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verses 1, 2. *And seeing the multitudes*—A vast concourse of people assembled from all parts to attend him, some with their sick to obtain cures, for he never rejected any who applied to him; some out of curiosity to see his miracles, and hear his extraordinary doctrine; some with a design to find fault and censure; and some, doubtless, to hear and be edified by his discourses, which seldom failed to make a deep impression on those who had any share of good sense or true piety:—the Son of God, beholding such a vast multitude of men, bewildered in the darkness of ignorance, and lost in sin and wretchedness, had compassion on them, and feeling in himself a strong desire to give them more particular instruction than he had yet done in the infinitely important matters of religion; that he might deliver what he had to say to them on this most momentous subject, with more convenience to himself and advantage to them, *he went up into a mountain*—Which afforded room for all, and where, addressing them from an eminence, he could be seen and heard by great numbers. *And when he was set*—After the manner of the Jewish doctors, who, to show their authority, were wont to sit when they taught; *his disciples came unto him*—To be instructed by him as a teacher come from God. By *his disciples* here, not only those strictly so called, viz., the twelve, who were afterward chosen to be his apostles, are intended, but as many of the multitude as were willing to learn of him. *And he opened his mouth*—A phrase which, in the Scriptures, generally denotes the solemnity of the speaker, and the importance of what he delivers, and here signifies that he uttered the following weighty truths with great seriousness and earnestness. *And taught them*—As the great prophet and lawgiver of his church, the one way to present and future happiness, at the same time that he corrected those false notions of the Messiah's kingdom which so generally prevailed, and which he foresaw would prove of destructive tendency to those who continued to be governed by them. Observe, reader! Christ thought it as lawful to preach on a mountain as in a synagogue; nor did his disciples doubt the lawfulness of hearing him wherever he thought fit to

speak. Our Lord, it must be observed, pursues the most exact method in this divine discourse; describing, 1st, viz., in this chapter, the nature, excellency, and necessity of inward holiness; 2d, chap. vi., that purity of intention which must direct and animate our outward actions to render them holy; 3d, cautioning us against the grand hinderances of religion, and pointing out the chief means of attaining it: chap. vii. 1-20; and, 4th, making an application of the whole, chap. vii. 21-28.

Verse 3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*—The word μακαριοι, here rendered *blessed*, properly means *happy*, and it may be better to translate it so, because our Lord seems to intimate by it, not only that the dispositions here recommended are the way to future blessedness, but that they immediately confer the truest and most noble felicity. As happiness was the great end to which the wisest philosophers undertook to conduct their hearers, and as it is our common aim, and an object to the pursuit of which we are continually urged by an innate instinct, our Lord, whose great business in coming into the world was, to make mankind happy by making them holy, wisely and graciously begins his divine institution, which is the complete art of happiness, by pointing out the necessary connexion it has with holiness, and inciting to the latter by motives drawn from the former. In doing this we cannot but observe his benevolent condescension. He seems, as it were, to lay aside his supreme authority as our legislator, that he may the better act the part of our friend and Saviour. Instead of using the lofty style in positive commands, he, in a more gentle and engaging way, insinuates his will and our duty by pronouncing those happy who comply with it. And, in order to render his hearers more attentive, he proposes his doctrine in certain paradoxical dogmas, which, at first sight, may seem false to such as judge by appearance, but which, when attentively considered, are found to be most true. Indeed, as an old writer remarks, "All the beatitudes are affixed to unlikely conditions, to show that the judgment of the *word* and of the *world* are contrary." By this expression, *the poor in spirit*, Grotius and Baxter understand those who bear a state of poverty and want with a disposition

A. M. 4035. 4 ° Blessed are they that mourn :
A. D. 31. for they shall be comforted.

5 ° Blessed are the meek : for ° they shall inherit the earth. A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

° Isa. lxi. 2, 3 ; Luke vi. 21 ; John xvi. 20 ; 2 Cor. i. 7 ;

Rev. xxi. 4.—° Psa. xxxvii. 11.—° Rom. iv. 13.

of quiet and cheerful submission to the divine will ; and Mr. Mede interprets it of those who are ready to part with their possessions for charitable uses. But it seems much more probable that the truly humble are intended, or those who are sensible of their spiritual poverty, of their ignorance and sinfulness, their guilt, depravity, and weakness, their frailty and mortality ; and who, therefore, whatever their outward situation in life may be, however affluent and exalted, think meanly of themselves, and neither desire the praise of men, nor covet high things in the world, but are content with the lot God assigns them, however low and poor. These are happy, because their humility renders them teachable, submissive, resigned, patient, contented, and cheerful in all estates ; and it enables them to receive prosperity or adversity, health or sickness, ease or pain, life or death, with an equal mind. Whatever is allotted them short of those everlasting burnings which they see they have merited, they consider as a grace or favour. They are happy, because *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*—The present, inward kingdom, *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, as well as the eternal kingdom, if they endure to the end. The knowledge which they have of themselves, and their humiliation of soul before God, prepare them for the reception of Christ, to dwell and reign in their hearts, and all the other blessings of the gospel ; the blessings both of grace and glory. *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place : with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* Isa. lvii. 15 ; lxvi. 2. And those in whom God dwells here shall dwell with him hereafter.

Verse 4. *Blessed [or happy] are they that mourn* Namely, for their own sins and those of other men, and are steadily and habitually serious, watchful, and circumspect ; for *they shall be comforted*—Even in this world, with the consolation that arises from a sense of the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, clear discoveries of his favour, and well-grounded, lively hopes of the heavenly inheritance, and with the full enjoyment of that inheritance itself in the world to come.

Verse 5. *Blessed [or happy] are the meek*—Persons of a mild, gentle, long-suffering, and forgiving disposition, who are slow to anger, and averse from wrath ; not easily provoked, and if at any time at all provoked, soon pacified ; who never resent an injury, nor return evil for evil ; but make it their care to overcome evil with good ; who by the sweetness, affability, courteousness, and kindness of their disposition, endeavour to reconcile such as may be offended, and to win them over to peace and love. *For they shall inherit the earth*—Whatever hap-

piness can be enjoyed here below shall be their portion. They may not indeed be advanced to honour or affluence ; nor can they expect to be without troubles in this fallen world, subjected as it is to vanity and misery for the sin of man ; but the calamities of life, and the various afflictions and trials which they meet with, being received with a quiet spirit, a resigned, patient, and contented mind, are hardly felt, while the blessings of Providence, through the gratitude they feel for them, are tasted and enjoyed in all their sweetness and comfort.

Verse 6. *Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness*—That, instead of desiring the possessions of others, and endeavouring to obtain them by violence or deceit ; and instead of coveting this world's goods, sincerely, earnestly, and perseveringly desire universal holiness of heart and life, or deliverance from all sinful dispositions and practices, and a complete restoration of their souls to the image of God in which they were created : a just and beautiful description this of that fervent, constant, increasing, restless, and active desire ; of that holy ardour and vehemence of soul in pursuit of the most eminent degrees of universal goodness, which will end in complete satisfaction : *For they shall be filled*—Shall obtain the righteousness which they hunger and thirst for, and be abundantly satisfied therewith.

Verse 7. *Blessed [or happy] are the merciful*—The tender-hearted, compassionate, kind, and beneficent, who, being inwardly affected with the infirmities, necessities, and miseries of their fellow-creatures, and feeling them as their own, with tender sympathy endeavour, as they have ability, to relieve them ; and who, not confining their efforts to the communicating of temporal relief to the needy and wretched, labour also to do spiritual good ; to enlighten the darkness of men's minds, heal the disorders of their souls, and reclaim them from vice and misery, from every unholy and unhappy temper, from every sinful word and work ; always manifesting a readiness to forgive the faults of others, as they themselves need and expect forgiveness from God. The merciful, says Erasmus, are those " who, through brotherly love, account another person's misery their own ; who weep over the calamities of others ; who, out of their own property, feed the hungry and clothe the naked ; who admonish those that are in error, inform the ignorant, pardon the offending ; and who, in short, use their utmost endeavours to relieve and comfort others." *They shall obtain mercy*—When they most need it. As they deal with their fellow-creatures, God will deal with them. He will incline men to show them mercy and deal kindly with them in this world, and he himself will grant them mercy and loving kindness in the day of final accounts. And since the best and happiest of mankind may

A. M. 4035. 6 Blessed are they which do hunger
A. D. 31. and thirst after righteousness: ^f for
they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful: ^g for they shall
obtain mercy.

8 ^h Blessed are the pure in heart: for ⁱ they
shall see God.

^f Isa. lv. 1; lxx. 13.—^g Psa. xli. 1; Chap. vi. 14; Mark xi. 25; 2 Tim. i. 16; Heb. vi. 10; James ii. 13.—^h Psa. 15. 2;

need even the former, and inasmuch as all will want the latter, this is surely a strong and powerful argument to persuade us to show mercy to men, in any and every way in our power, that both God and men may show mercy to us. Add to this, that, were there no other inducement, the comfort and satisfaction arising from a disposition that renders us so like our heavenly Father, might, one would suppose, be sufficient to prevail with us to endeavour, especially in this instance, to imitate Him who, being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, was daily employed in relieving them, and even took them upon himself, continually going about doing good, and at last giving up his life to ransom ours.

Verse 8. *The pure in heart*—Those whose hearts are purified by faith; who are not only sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus, but cleansed by the Spirit of God from vain thoughts, unprofitable reasonings, earthly and sensual desires, and corrupt passions; who are purified from pride, self-will, discontent, impatience, anger, malice, envy, covetousness, ambition; whose hearts are *circumcised to love the Lord their God with all their hearts*, and their neighbours as themselves, and who, therefore, are not only upright before him, but possess and maintain purity of intention and of affection in all their designs, works, and enjoyments; serving him continually with a single eye and an undivided heart. *They shall see God*—Namely, in the glass of his works, whether of creation, providence, or grace, here, and *face to face* hereafter: they shall have fellowship with him in his ordinances, and shall *endure as seeing him that is invisible*, while they *walk by faith* on earth, and shall be admitted to the most perfect vision and complete enjoyment of him in heaven.

Verse 9. *The peace-makers*—Those who are themselves of a peaceable temper, and endeavour to promote peace in others: who *study to be quiet*, and, as *much as in them lieth*, to live peaceably with all men: who are so far from sowing the seeds of discord between any of their fellow-creatures, that they both studiously avoid contention themselves, and labour to extinguish it wherever it prevails, laying themselves out to heal the differences of brethren and neighbours, to reconcile contending parties, and to restore peace wherever it is broken, as well as to preserve it where it is. *They shall be called the children of God*—That is, they are and shall be owned by God as his genuine children, by reason of their great likeness to him: for he is *the God of peace and love*, and is *in Christ reconciling the world to*

9 Blessed are the peace-makers: for A. M. 4035.
they shall be called the children of A. D. 31.
God.

10 ^k Blessed are they which are persecuted
for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the king-
dom of heaven.

11 ^l Blessed are ye when *men* shall revile

xiv. 4; Heb. xii. 14.—¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 John iii. 2, 3. ² 2 Cor. iv. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 12; 1 Pet. iii. 14.—³ Luke vi. 22.

himself, not imputing their trespasses to them. And, being his children, they are his heirs, *heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ*; and, as they *suffer with him*, so shall they be *glorified together*. They shall, in due time, be *children of the resurrection*, shall *receive the adoption*, the public declaration and manifestation of their adoption, and the glorious fruit of it, viz., the redemption of their bodies from death and corruption.

Verse 10. *For righteousness' sake*—Or for the sake of Christ and a good conscience; that is, 1st, for their steady belief and profession of, and adherence to any article of Christian faith; 2d, for their performance of any duty, which they owe to God, their neighbour, or themselves, or for their obedience to the commands of God; 3d, because they cannot be prevailed on to own that to be an article of the Christian faith, or any part of Christian duty, which God hath not declared to be such; for, since this cannot be done without making profession of a lie, or pretending to believe what we see no reason to believe, to suffer on this account is evidently to suffer because we will not play the hypocrite, and give the lie to our own consciences; and therefore this, in Peter's language, is to suffer from conscience toward God. Yea, since this cannot be done, but we must own another teacher, lawgiver, and author of our faith, besides the Lord Jesus, our sufferings for refusing to do this are truly sufferings for Christ's sake, and such as make us happy sufferers. *Theirs is the kingdom of heaven*—In a peculiar sense, as hell belongs especially to hypocrites, Matt. xxiv. 51. And they shall receive an eminently great reward there, on account of their sufferings, and in proportion to them, Luke vi. 23. And no wonder, for as their state on earth, under these persecutions, renders them conformable to their Head, and to the holy prophets and apostles, so shall they hereafter be conformed to them in glory.

Verses 11, 12. *Blessed are ye*—My true and faithful followers, *when men shall revile you*—Shall unjustly and injuriously reproach you; and *say all manner of evil against you falsely*—This both the Jews and heathen did with respect to the first Christians, and this the Papists have done with regard to the Protestants: *for my sake*—Because you believe in, love, obey, and follow me. *Rejoice, &c.*—Let not this load of infamy and oppression discourage and cast you down, but rather *rejoice and be exceeding glad*, or, *exult with triumph*, as the original word, *αγαλλιασθε*, may be properly rendered. *For*

A. M. 4035. you, and persecute *you*, and shall
A. D. 31. say all manner of ^mevil against you
¹falsely, for my sake.

12 ²Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great
ⁱis your reward in heaven: for ^oso persecuted
they the prophets which were before you.

13 ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: ^pbut if the
salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be

^m 1 Pet. iv. 14.—¹ Gr. *lying*.—² Luke vi. 23; Acts v. 41;
Rom. v. 3; James i. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 13.—^o Neh. ix. 26; 2 Chron.
xxxvi. 16; Ch. xxiii. 34, 37; Acts vii. 52; 1 Thess. ii. 15.—^p Mark

ix. 50; Luke xiv. 34, 35.—^q Prov. iv. 18; Phil. ii. 15.—^r Mark
iv. 21; Luke viii. 16; xi. 33.—² The word in the original signi-
fifieth a measure containing about a pint less than a peck.

trodden under foot of men.
14 ¶ Ye are the light of the world. A city
that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

15 ¶ Neither do men ¹light a candle, and put
it under ²a bushel, but on a candlestick; and
it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

great is your reward in heaven—Such a patient
and cheerful suffering of persecution for Christ in
this life, will certainly be rewarded with the glory
and blessedness of the life to come. The reward,
however, will not be of debt, but of grace; for *our
light and momentary afflictions are not worthy to
be compared with the eternal and exceeding weight
of glory. For so persecuted they the prophets, &c.*
—Who, long before your time, were the messen-
gers of God to this very people. Indeed, persecu-
tion has been the portion and the proof of the most
eminent saints in all ages.

Verse 13. *Ye*—Not the apostles, not ministers
only; but all who possess and manifest the graces
spoken of in the preceding verses, and are truly
holy and righteous; *are the salt of the earth*—Ap-
pointed to be the means of preventing or curing the
growth of that corruption which prevails in the
world, and of seasoning men's minds with wisdom
and grace. *But if the salt have lost its savour*—
Or, *be grown insipid*, and therefore want seasoning
itself, *wherewith shall it be salted*—By what means
can its lost virtue be restored? The word *μωρανθη*,
rendered *have lost its savour*, has peculiar strength
and beauty, and is literally, *be insatuated*, or, *grown
foolish*, “alluding,” says Dr. Doddridge, “to the
common figure, in which sense and spirit are ex-
pressed by salt.” *It is thenceforth good for nothing*
—It is wholly useless, and left to be thrown out of
doors, and trampled on by men as the common dirt
in the streets: “thus worthless and contemptible
will you, my disciples, be, even in the most eminent
stations, if you lose your character for real and vital
religion.” The following passage of Mr. Maundrell,
quoted by Dr. Macknight, illustrates our Lord's sup-
position of *salt's losing its savour*. In the valley
of Salt, near Gebul, and about four hours' journey
from Aleppo, there is a small precipice, occasioned
by the continual taking away of the salt. “In this,”
says he, “you may see how the veins of it lie; I
brake a piece off it, of which the part that was ex-
posed to the rain, sun, and air, though it had the
sparks and particles of salt, yet it had perfectly
lost its savour. The innermost part, which had
been connected to the rock, retained its savour, as
I found by proof.”

Verses 14, 15. *Ye are the light of the world*—The
effect of light being to make things manifest, Eph.
v. 13, and to direct us in the way in which we are

to walk; the import of this metaphor is, that Christ
had appointed his disciples in general, and his apos-
tles and the other ministers of his gospel in particu-
lar, to enlighten and reform the world, immersed in
ignorance, sin, and misery, by their doctrine and
example; and so to direct their feet into the way
leading to life and salvation. Christ, it must be
observed, is in the highest sense the light of the
world; the original light, the great light, who, like
the sun, hath light in and from himself; but the
ministers of his gospel are, in an inferior sense,
lights of the world also, for the angels of the
churches are said to be stars, Rev. i. 20; and holy
persons are *children of the light*, 1 Thess. v. 5. *A
city that is set on a hill cannot be hid*—As if he had
said, If you do not hide this light from mankind, but
cause it to shine forth in your doctrine and practice,
it will be so clear and resplendent as not possibly to
be hid, any more than a city set on a hill. The
Church of Christ is often called *the city of God*, and
it must be here observed, that his people are not
here merely compared to a *city*, but to *a city upon
a hill*; so that all our Saviour has in view in men-
tioning *a city here*, is the conspicuousness of one
so built. It is as much as if our Saviour had said,
You had need be wise and holy, for your conversa-
tion can no more be hid than a city that is built
upon a hill, and is obvious to every eye. *Neither
do men light a candle*—Or *lamp* rather, as *λυχνον*,
signifies. Indeed, candles were not used at that
time in Judea for lighting their houses; consequent-
ly, the word *λυχνια*, here and elsewhere in the New
Testament, translated *candlestick*, means a *lamp
stand*. The purport of this verse is, you, my apos-
tles and disciples, ought to consider for what end
I have communicated my light to you. It may be
illustrated by that which men have in view when
they light up a lamp in a room, which is, to give
light to all those who are in it; for as they do not
use to light it up that they may then hide it under
a vessel, so I have not communicated my truth or
my grace unto you merely for your own use, but
for that of others. The word *μοδιον*, should be here
rendered, not a *bushel*, but a *corn-measure*, for they
had no such measure as a *bushel*. Indeed, the mea-
sure mentioned by the evangelist is so far from
answering to our bushel, that it was as little as our
peck. It is true, indeed, that as nothing here de-
pends on the size of the measure, any measure of

A. M. 4035. 16 Let your light so shine before
A. D. 31. men, * that they may see your good
works, and † glorify your Father which is in
heaven.

17 ¶ † Think not that I am come to destroy

* 1 Pet. ii. 12.—† John xv. 8; 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

capacity might well enough suit the evangelist's observation; yet a translator, as Dr. Campbell observes, ought not, even indirectly, to misrepresent the customs of the people he speaks of, or alludes to. Observe, reader, what our Lord says of John, *He was a burning and shining light*, is applicable both to every true minister of Christ, and to every true Christian: every such a one is not only a *burning light*, a person burning with love to God, and zeal for his glory, and love to mankind, and zeal for their salvation; but also a *shining light*, communicating his light to others, both by instruction and a holy conversation.

Verse 16. *Let your light*—The light of that doctrine which you receive from me, and the light of your holy conversation, *so shine before men*—Be so evident and apparent unto men, *that they may see your good works, and glorify, &c.*—That is, that seeing your good works they may both praise God for sending such a religion into the world, and also, embracing your faith, may imitate your holy example, or may be moved to love and serve God as you do, and thereby to glorify him. Here then our Lord tells us, in plain words, what he intended by the comparison before mentioned.

Verse 17. *Think not that I am come to destroy*—*To abrogate, annul, or repeal*, (which seems to be the meaning of the word *καταλυσαι* here,) *the law or the prophets*—As your teachers do. It is manifest from the following discourse, that our Lord principally spake of the moral law, several of the precepts of which he afterward explains and vindicates from the corrupt glosses of the scribes and Pharisees. For, as to the ceremonial law, though he also came to fulfil it, as the great antitype in whom all the types of it had their accomplishment; yet he came to abrogate and repeal it, *blotting out and nailing to his cross the hand-writing of ordinances*, as the apostle speaks, Col. ii. 14. *I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil*—He fulfilled in himself all those predictions of the prophets which had been uttered concerning the Messiah, and he explained, illustrated, and established the moral law, in its highest meaning, both by his life and doctrine; and by his merits and Spirit he provided, and still provides, for its being effectually fulfilled in and by his followers. Our Lord has taught us, that all the law and the prophets are comprehended in these two precepts, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c., and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, Matt. xxii. 40. St. Paul also informs us, that he who loves his neighbour as himself, *hath fulfilled the law*, Rom. xiii. 8; and Gal. v. 14, that *all the law is fulfilled in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; this love of our neighbour

the law, or the prophets: I am not A. M. 4036.
come to destroy, but to fulfil. A. D. 31.

18 For verily I say unto you, † Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

* Rom. iii. 31; x. 4; Gal. iii. 24.—† Luke xvi. 17.

being only found in those who first love God, and being closely connected with, and indeed never separated from, the love of God. Now our Lord was manifested in the flesh, and made a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, that he might give us such a demonstration of his love, and the love of the Father to us and all mankind, as might produce in us those returns of love to God and man, which God should be pleased to accept as the fulfilling of the law. Therefore we read, Rom. viii. 4, *That God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.*

Verse 18. *For verily I say unto you*—This expression, whereby our Lord often prefaces what he is about to say, always imports the great importance, as well as certain truth of it. *Till heaven and earth pass away*—Till the whole visible frame of nature be disjointed and dissolved, *one jot or one tittle*—“The word *iota*, which we render *jot*, undoubtedly answers to the Hebrew letter *iod*, whence the English word here seems to be derived, and which, being the least letter of the alphabet, might properly be used proverbially on this occasion. *Κεραια*, which we render *tittle*, properly signifies one of those little ornamental curvatures or flourishes, which, when Hebrew is elegantly written, are generally used at the beginning and end of a letter, and sometimes at the corners too. I think it might well have been rendered, *not the least letter, or stroke, &c.*, and so much the rather, as *jot* and *tittle*, in English, signify the same.”—Doddridge. *Shall in no wise pass from the law*—Or, from the prophets, *till all be fulfilled*—Till all things which the law requires, or the prophets foretell, shall be effected. This seems to be the literal translation of the original words, *ως αν παντα γενηται*: for the law has its effect when its sanctions are executed, as well as when its precepts are obeyed. And the predictions of the prophets have their proper effect and confirmation, when they are accomplished. Some, however, understand the words as meaning, *till the end*, or, *consummation of all things shall come*, or, till the heavens and the earth shall pass away, or be destroyed. The meaning of our Lord's words, according to this interpretation, is, that there is nothing in the universe so stable as the truths contained in the moral law, and nothing so certain as the fulfilment of the predictions of the prophets: the heavens may fall, and the whole frame of nature be unhinged, nay, every part of it may be dissolved; but the rules of righteousness, and the declarations of the divine word, with their sanctions, shall remain immutable and eternal: for the word of the Lord endureth for ever, 1 Pet. i. 25. Our Lord

A. M. 4035. 19 *Whosoever therefore shall break
A. D. 31. one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

* James ii. 10.—* Sixth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 20 to verse 27.—† Rom. ix. 31; x. 3.

therefore proceeds, in the two next verses, to command his disciples, on the severest penalties, to enforce, both by their doctrine and example, the strict observation of all the moral precepts contained in the sacred writings, and that in their utmost extent.

Verse 19. *Whosoever therefore shall break*—Shall himself transgress in his practice, or pervert and weaken by his doctrine, *one of these least commandments, and teach men so*—Shall direct or encourage men to do the same, or shall teach them, either by word or example, that the obligation of these commands is dissolved; *he shall be called*—Or, *shall be accounted* one of the least, and unworthiest members in the kingdom of heaven—Or, Church of the Messiah, and shall soon be entirely cut off from it, as unfit for so holy a society, and shall have no part in the church triumphant. "There is in the text a figure, which the rhetoricians call *μειωσις*, diminution, often elegantly used to convey a strong idea. Thus, Gal. v. 21, *They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, that is, shall be severely punished."—Macknight. *But whosoever shall do and teach them, &c.*—Whosoever shall himself carefully practise these precepts of the law, and other parts of the divine word, and shall inculcate their universal obligation, shall be greatly rewarded.

Verse 20. *For, except your righteousness shall exceed*—Gr. *περισσεως*, shall abound more than the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees—Than that which is apparent in their lives, or even required in their precepts, as is described in the sequel of this discourse, as highly as they are generally esteemed; *ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*—That is, into the kingdom of glory after you die, or be owned by the Son of man as his subjects while you live. It is justly observed by Dr. Doddridge here, that this must have greatly surprised Christ's hearers, if the proverb, which has since prevailed, was in use then; namely, that "if but two men were to enter into the kingdom of heaven, one of them would be a Pharisee and the other a scribe." It appears from what follows, the Pharisees affirmed that only the outward action was commanded or forbidden in the law, and that they interpreted all its precepts accordingly. On this principle, they boasted of having performed every thing that was required of them. Nay, they were

21 ¶ Ye have heard that it was A. M. 4035.
said ³ by them of old time, *Thou A. D. 31.
shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That *whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, ⁴Raca,^b shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

³ Or, to them.—² Exod. xx. 13; Deut. v. 17.—¹ 1 John iii. 15.
⁴ That is, vain fellow, 2 Sam. vi. 20.—† James ii. 20.

so arrogant as to think they could do even more than was required. This pernicious morality, destructive of all virtue, Jesus loudly condemned, as was fit, in the beginning of his ministry.

Verses 21, 22. *Ye have heard*—Namely, from the scribes reciting the law, *that it was said by them of old time, or to the ancients*, as *εφηθη τος αρχαιους*, might be properly rendered. *Thou shalt not kill*—Words which they interpreted barely of the outward act of murder; and *whosoever shall kill*—Or be guilty of that act, *shall be in danger of, or, obnoxious to the judgment*—To understand this, it is necessary to observe, that the Jews had, in every city, a common court of twenty-three men, which, before the Roman government was established in Judea, had the power of life and death, so far as its jurisdiction extended, and could punish criminals with *strangling* or *beheading*. This was called *the judgment*, and the meaning of the clause is, that such a criminal should be capitally punished in the common courts of judicature. *But I say unto you*—Which of the prophets ever spake thus? Their language was, *Thus saith the Lord*. Who hath authority to use this language, but the one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy? *Whosoever is angry with his brother*—With any child of man, for we are all brethren; *without a cause*—Or further than that cause warrants; *shall be in danger of the judgment*—Shall be liable to a worse punishment from God than any that your common courts of judicature can inflict. It must be observed, that the word *εικη*, here rendered *without cause*, and which might properly be translated *rashly*, or *inconsiderately*, is wanting in some old versions and manuscripts, and, it seems, ought not to be inserted, being "utterly foreign to the whole scope and tenor of our Lord's discourse. For if he had only forbidden the being angry *without a cause*, there was no manner of need of that solemn declaration, *I say unto you*; for the scribes and Pharisees themselves said as much as this. Even they taught men ought not to be angry *without a cause*. So that this righteousness does not exceed theirs. But Christ teaches that we ought not, *for any cause*, to be so angry as to call any man *raca*, or *fool*. We ought not, for any cause, to be angry at the *person* of the sinner, but at his *sin* only. Happy world, were this plain and necessary distinction thoroughly understood, remembered,

A. M. 4035. 23 Therefore, ° if thou bring thy
A. D. 31. gift to the altar, and there remem-
berest that thy brother hath aught against thee ;
24 4 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and
go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother,
and then come and offer thy gift.

° Chapter viii. 4 ; xxiii. 19.—4 Job xlii. 8 ; Chapter xviii. 19 ;
1 Tim. ii. 8 ; 1 Peter iii. 7.

and practised.”—Wesley. *Raca*, means a *silly man*, or an *empty, worthless fellow*. *Keve*, *vain man*, used James ii. 20, seems to be a translation of it ; for, as Jerome observes, it is derived from the Hebrew, *rick*, which signifies *vain*, or *empty*. *Shall be in danger of the council*—In the Greek, *συνοδριον* ; “a word which the Jews adopted into their language, and giving it a Hebrew termination, *sanhedrim*, appropriated it to their supreme council, whose business was to judge in the most important affairs ; for instance, in all matters relative to religion, as when any person pretended to be a prophet, or attempted to make innovations in the established worship. This court could, while the republic lasted, inflict the heaviest punishments ; particularly stoning, or burning, with melted lead poured down the throat of the criminal, after he was half strangled.”—Macknight. *Whosoever shall say, Thou fool—Or, Thou graceless, wicked villain : so the word fool generally signifies in Scripture : for as religion is the highest wisdom, vice must be accounted the extremest folly : the meaning here is, Whosoever shall break out into open revilings and reproaches against any man, shall be in danger of hell fire*—*Ενοχος εσται εις γενναν το πυρος*, shall be obnoxious to a gehenna of fire, that is, by a common figure of speech, “obnoxious to the fire of the valley of Hinnom,” obnoxious to a degree of future punishment, which may fitly be represented by that fire. *Of the valley of Hinnom*, called also *Tophet*, see notes on Lev. xviii. 21 ; 2 Kings xxiii. 10 ; Isa. xxx. 33. It was the scene of the detestable worship of Moloch, that horrid idol of the Ammonites, to which the Israelites burned their children alive as sacrifices. “In later times, continual fires were kept in this valley for burning the unburied carcases and filth of the city, that, being thus polluted, it might be unfit for the like religious abominations. The Jews, from the perpetuity of these fires, and to express the utmost detestation of the sacrifices which were offered to Moloch in this valley, made use of its name to signify *hell*. Hence our translators have given *Tophet*, or *gehenna*, its metaphorical meaning in the present passage, whereas it ought rather to have had its literal signification. For our Lord, intending to show his hearers that the punishment of causeless anger, contemptuous speeches, and abusive names, shall, in the life to come, bear a proportion to the guilt that is in these sins ; and finding no name in the language of men by which those different degrees of punishment could properly be expressed, he illustrated them by the punishments which the Jews were acquainted with.”

25 ° Agree with thine adversary A. M. 4036.
A. D. 31. quickly, ‘whiles thou art in the way with him ; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

° Prov. xxv. 8 ; Luke xii. 58, 59.—f Psa. xxxii. 6 ;
Isa. lv. 6.

Verse 23. *Therefore, &c.*—“Because men are very apt to fall into rash anger, and to express their anger by contemptuous speeches and abusive names, fancying that there is no sin in these things, or but little, and that the compensation may easily be made for them by acts of devotion, Jesus declares that atonement is not to be made for these offences by any offerings, how costly soever, and therefore prescribes immediate repentance and reparation as the only remedies of them. He insisted particularly on reparation, assuring us that, unless it be made, God will not accept the worship of such offenders, being infinitely better pleased with repentance than with sacrifices, or external worship of any kind, how specious soever those duties may appear in the eye of vulgar understandings. Vain, therefore, is their presumption, who fancy they can make amends for yet more gross acts of injustice, by acts of devotion.”—Macknight. *If thou bring thy gift to the altar—However costly and free ; and there rememberest—What thou didst not recollect before ; that thy brother hath aught against thee*—On any of the preceding accounts, for any reproachful or unkind word, or injurious action : do not content thyself with a secret, and, it may be, a deceitful purpose that thou wilt hereafter accommodate the affair, but bring it to an immediate issue. *Leave there thy gift before the altar*—In the hands of those that are ministering there : for neither thy gift nor thy prayer will atone for thy want of love and injurious conduct, but these will make thy devotions and oblations an abomination before God. *Go thy way*—Do not lay aside thoughts of worshipping God, because thou art not in a proper state, but prepare thyself for his worship without delay. *Be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift*—Which thou mayest then cheerfully hope God will accept at thy hand. Philo, (*de Sacrif*, p. 844.) explaining the law of the trespass offering, tells us, “That when a man had injured his brother, and, repenting of his fault, voluntarily acknowledged it, (in which case, both restitution and sacrifice were required,) he was first to make restitution, and then to come into the temple, *presenting his sacrifice*, and asking pardon.” This greatly illustrates the text, especially considering that our Lord supposes, in this case, not a trespass-offering, but a voluntary gift, presented before the altar ; and yet declares that this will not be accepted while there is a consciousness of having wronged a brother, and not made him reparation.

Verse 25. *Agree, &c.*—Here our Lord enforces the preceding exhortation, from the consideration of

A. M. 4035. 26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery :

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

¶ Exodus xx. 14 ; Deut. v. 18.—^h Job xxxi. 1 ; Prov. vi. 25 ; Gen. xxxiv. 2 ; 2 Sam. xi. 2.

what is reckoned prudent in ordinary quarrel and law-suits. "In such cases, wise men always advise the party that has done wrong to make up matters with his adversary while it is in his power, lest the sentence of a judge, being interposed, fall heavy on him. For the same reason, we, who have offended our brother, ought to make it up with him, while an opportunity of repentance is allowed us; and that though our quarrel should have proceeded to the greatest lengths, lest the sentence of the Supreme Judge overtake us, and put reconciliation out of our power for ever." *With thine adversary quickly*—With any against whom thou hast thus offended; *whiles thou art in the way with him*—Going with him to a magistrate; or, instantly, on the spot; before you part. *Lest the adversary deliver thee to the judge*—To be tried before him; and the judge, deciding the cause against thee, *deliver thee to the officer* of the court, to keep thee in custody till satisfaction be made, and *thou be cast into prison*—Not being able to discharge an account enhanced with so many additional articles of expense. *Thou shalt by no means come out thence*—Be released out of prison; *till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing*—For thy antagonist, when he has got thee at such an advantage, will be more rigorous in his demands than before. And surely, if by impenitent wickedness thou makest thyself the prisoner of the divine justice, thy case will be yet more deplorable and hopeless. Understanding the words in a figurative sense, which is, partly at least, intended by Christ here, the prison is taken for *hell*, out of which the unrelenting sinner can never come, according to our Lord's declaration, because he can never be able to make that satisfaction. "Lord, we are all the debtors, and, in one sense, the prisoners of thy justice, and of ourselves were most incapable, not only of *paying the uttermost farthing*, but even of discharging the least part of the debt! We bless thee for that generous Surety who has taken and discharged it for us; and by the price of whose atoning blood we are delivered from the chains of darkness, and are translated into the glorious liberty of thy children."—Doddridge. What has hitherto been said refers to *meekness*; what follows, to *purity of heart*.

Verses 27, 28. *Ye have heard, &c.*—Jesus now proceeds in his sermon to the seventh commandment, the true interpretation of which he gives us. *Thou shalt not commit adultery*—This, as well as

29 ⁱ And if thy right eye ⁶ offend thee, ² pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish,

ⁱ Chap. xviii. 8, 9; Mark ix. 43-47.—⁶ Or, *do cause thee to offend.*
² Chap. xix. 12; Rom. viii. 13; 1 Cor. ix. 27; Col. iii. 5.

the sixth commandment, the scribes and Pharisees interpreted barely of the outward act. *But I say unto you, &c.*—The command extends not only to unchaste actions and words, but even to looks, and the very thoughts of the heart: for *whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her*—Whosoever cherishes or indulges unchaste imaginations, desires, and intentions, *hath committed adultery with her, &c.*—Hath been guilty of a violation of this commandment, which was intended to forbid the corrupt inclinations of the heart, and all irregular desires, as well as the pollution of the body.

Verses 29, 30. *If thy right eye offend thee*—If any person or thing, as pleasant and as dear to thee as thy right eye, should be a stumbling-block in thy way, and an occasion of thy falling, or should be a means of insinuating thee, and leading thee into sin, *pluck it out*—With inexorable resolution: that is, give up and part with the beloved object. *For it is profitable for thee*—It will be to thine advantage, *that one of thy members should perish*—To suffer an apparent temporary loss of pleasure or profit, rather than that thy whole soul and body should perish eternally, which yet would be the fatal consequence of thy indulging a favourite lust. *And if thy right hand offend, or insnare thee*—Though it be so useful and necessary a part, do not spare it, but immediately *cut it off and cast it from thee*—"The greatest part of Christ's auditors were poor people, who lived by their daily labour; and to these the loss of a right hand would be a much greater calamity than that of a right eye: so that there is a gradation and force in this passage beyond what has generally been observed."—Doddridge. There is an allusion, in both instances, to the practice of surgeons, who, when any member of the body happens to be mortified, cut it off, to prevent the sound part from being tainted. And the meaning of the passage, stripped of the metaphor, is this: By the force of a strong resolution, founded on the grace of God, deny thyself the use of thy senses, though ever so delightful, in all cases where the use of them insnares thy soul. Turn away thine eye, and keep back thy hand from the alluring object. This, says Chrysostom, is a most mild and easy precept. It would have been much more hard, had he given commandment to converse with and look curiously on women, and then abstain from further commission of uncleanness with them. Upon the whole, we learn from these two

A. M. 4036 and not *that* thy whole body should
A. D. 31. be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, ¹Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement :

32 But I say unto you, That ²whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery : and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that ³it hath been said by them of old time, ⁴Thou shalt not for-

swear thyself, but ⁵shalt perform unto **A. M. 4036.**
the Lord thine oaths : **A. D. 31.**

34 But I say unto you, ⁶Swear not at all ; neither by heaven ; for it is ⁷God's throne :

35 Nor by the earth ; for it is his footstool : neither by Jerusalem ; for it is ⁸the city of the great King :

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 ⁹But let your communication be, *yea,*

¹ Deut. xxiv. 1 ; Jer. iii. 1 ; Chapter xix. 3, &c. ; Mark x. 2, &c.—² Chap. xix. 9 ; Luke xvi. 18 ; Rom. vii. 3 ; 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.—³ Ch. xxiii. 16.

⁴ Ex. xx. 7 ; Lev. xix. 12 ; Nu. xxx. 2 ; Deut. v. 11.—⁵ Deut. xxiii. 23.—⁶ Ch. xxiii. 16, 18, 22 ; Jam. v. 12.—⁷ Isa. lxvii. 1. ⁸ Psa. xlvi. 2 ; lxxxvii. 3.—⁹ Col. iv. 6 ; James v. 12.

verses, that the salvation of our immortal souls is to be preferred beyond all things, be they never so dear and precious to us ; and that, if men's ordinary discretion teaches them, for the preservation of their bodies, to cut off a particular member, which would necessarily endanger the whole body, it much more teaches them to part with any thing which would prevent the salvation of their souls.

Verses 31, 32. *Let him give her a writing of divorcement*—“The doctors of the school of Sammai affirmed, that, in the law concerning divorce, Deut. xxiv. 1, the words *some uncleanness*, were to be understood of adultery only ; whereas, they of the school of Hillel interpreted them of any matter of dislike whatever. Hence the Pharisees asked Jesus, Matt. xix. 3, if it was *lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* The opinion of Hillel was generally espoused by the Jews, as appears from both their practice and their writings. Thus, Mal. ii. 16, the clause which in our translation runs, *The Lord says, He hateth putting away*, that is, divorces on frivolous pretences, is, by the Chaldee paraphrast and the LXX., turned thus, (*εαν μισος εξαποσειλης*,) *if thou hatest thou shouldest put her away*. Also, the son of Sirach says, xxv. 26 : *If she go not as thou wouldest have her, cut her off from thy flesh*. And Josephus, *Ant. lib. iv. cap. 8*, ‘He that would be disjoined from his wife, for any cause whatever, as many such causes there may be among men, let him give her a bill of divorce.’ Nay, one of their doctors, R. Akiba by name, delivered it as his opinion, ‘that a man may put his wife away, if he likes any other woman better.’” As, therefore, they had perverted the law of divorce that they might give full scope to their lusts, Jesus thought fit to reduce it to its primitive meaning, assuring them, “that he who divorces his wife for any of the causes allowed by the doctors, *whoredom* excepted, lays her under a strong temptation to commit adultery ; unjust divorce being no divorce in the sight of God ; and that since such marriages still subsisted, he who married the woman unjustly divorced, committed adultery also.” *Saving for the cause of fornication, &c.*—Fornication here, as

elsewhere, is often used for adultery : in general it denotes the exercise of all the different species of unlawful lusts. Although in these words only one just cause of divorce is acknowledged, namely, *adultery* ; “yet the apostle, 1 Cor. vii. 15, plainly allows another, viz., malicious and obstinate desertion in either of the parties ; and that because it is wholly inconsistent with the purposes of marriage. We must therefore suppose, that our Lord here speaks of the causes of divorce commonly said to be comprehended under the term *uncleanness*, in the law ; and declares, that none of them will justify a man's divorcing his wife, except fornication.” *Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery*—Here we learn, “that if the cause of a divorce be just, the innocent party is freed from the bond of marriage, so as to be at liberty to marry again.” But if the divorce be made without a just cause, the marriage still subsists, and consequently both parties, the innocent as well as the guilty, thus divorced, commit adultery if they marry, as do the persons likewise whom they marry.”—Macknight.

Verses 33-37. *Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time*—Or rather, *was said to the ancients, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, &c.*—See the margin. The Jewish doctors affirmed, that oaths were obligatory according to the nature of the things by which a man swears : chap. xxiii. 10. Hence they allowed the use of such oaths in common conversation as they said were not obligatory ; pretending that there was no harm in them, because the law, which forbade them to forswear themselves, and enjoined them to perform their vows, meant such solemn oaths only as were of a binding nature. It is this detestable morality which Jesus condemns in the following words. *But I say unto you, Swear not at all*—In your common discourse one with another, but barely *affirm* or *deny*. Swear not by any thing, on the supposition that the oath will not bind you. “For all oaths whatever, those by the lowest of the creatures not excepted, are obligatory ;” because, if they “have any meaning at all, they are an appeal to the great Creator ; conse-

A. M. 4035. yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is
A. D. 31. more than these cometh of evil.

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said,
"An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

39 But I say unto you, "That ye resist not
evil: ' but whosoever shall smite thee on thy
right cheek, turn to him the other also.

"Exodus xxi. 24; Lev. xxiv. 20; Deut. xix. 21.—' Prov. xx. 22; xxiv. 29; Luke vi. 29; Rom. xii. 17, 19; 1 Cor. vi. 7;

quently they are oaths by him, implying a solemn invocation of his wrath on such of the creatures sworn by as are capable of God's wrath; and for the other, the oath implies a solemn imprecation, in case of your swearing falsely, that you may be for ever deprived of all the comfort or advantage you have in, or hope from those creatures. *Swear not, therefore, neither by heaven, &c.*—By comparing ch. xxiii. 16, it appears that our Lord is here giving a catalogue of oaths, which, in the opinion of the doctors, were not obligatory. His meaning therefore is, Swear not at all, unless you have a mind to perform; because every oath being really obligatory, he who, from an opinion that some are not, swears voluntarily by heaven, or by the earth, or by Jerusalem, or by his own head, is without all doubt guilty of perjury. Much more is he guilty, who, when called thereto by lawful authority, swears with an intention to falsify. But by no means does Jesus condemn swearing truly before a magistrate, or upon grave and solemn occasions, because that would have been to prohibit both the best method of ending controversies, Heb. vi. 16; and a high act of religious worship, Deut. vi. 3; Isa. lxxv. 16; an oath being not only a solemn appeal to the Divine Omniscience, from which nothing can be hid, but a direct acknowledgment of God, as the great patron and protector of right, and the avenger of falsehood." *But let your communication be yea, yea*—Avoid the use of all such oaths, as of those in which the name of God is directly expressed, and maintain such sincerity and truth in all your words as will merit the belief of your acquaintance; so that, in common conversation, to gain yourselves credit, you need do no more than barely assert or deny any matter, without invoking the name of God at all. *For whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil*—*Ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ*, *Of the evil one*: in common discourse, whatever is more than affirmation or negation, ariseth from the temptation of the devil, who tempts men to curse and to swear, that he may lessen in them, and in all who hear them, a due reverence of the Divine Majesty, and by this means lead them, at length, to perjury, even in the most solemn instances; considerations which show the evil nature of this sin in the strongest light. The Apostle James expresses this sentiment thus, ch. v. 12, *Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay*. The first yea and nay, therefore, signify the promise or assertion; the second the fulfilment. Accordingly we find the word *yea* used as a promise, Rev. i. 7, where it is explained by *amen*; likewise,

40 And if any man will sue thee at A. M. 4035.
the law, and take away thy coat, let A. D. 31.
him have *thy* cloak also.

41 And whosoever " shall compel thee to go a
mile, go with him twain.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and " from him
that would borrow of thee, turn thou not away.

1 Thess. v. 15; 1 Pet. iii. 9.—' Isa. i. 6; Lam. iii. 30.—" Chap. xxvii. 32; Mark xv. 21.—" Deut. xv. 8, 10; Luke vi. 30, 35.

as the fulfilment of a promise, 2 Cor. i. 10, where we are told that the promises of God are all in Christ, *yea* and *amen*. On the other hand, concerning those whose actions do not correspond to their promises, it is said, 2 Cor. i. 18, 19, that their word is *yea* and *nay*, *Our word toward you was not yea and nay*.—Macknight.

Verses 38–42. *Ye have heard, &c.*—Our Lord proceeds to enforce such meekness and love toward their enemies, on those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, as were utterly unknown to the scribes and Pharisees. And this subject he pursues to the end of the chapter. *It hath been said, viz., in the law, Deut. xix. 21, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*—Though this statute was only intended as a direction to judges, with regard to the penalties to be inflicted in case of violent and barbarous assaults; yet it was interpreted among the Jews as encouraging a rigorous and severe revenge of every injury a man might receive. *But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil*—Or, rather, *the evil man*, as τῷ πονηρῷ ought to be rendered. Dr. Doddridge reads the clause, *That you do not set yourselves against the injurious person, viz., in a posture of hostile opposition, as the word ἀντισηναί implies, and with a resolution to return evil for evil. But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, &c.*—Where the damage is not great, choose rather to pass it by, though possibly it might, on that account, be repeated, than to enter into a rigorous prosecution of the offender. *And if any man will sue thee, &c., and take away thy coat*—By the word χιτῶν, here rendered *coat*, it seems we are to understand an inner garment; and by the word, ἡμῶν, rendered *cloak*, an outer garment. Dr. Doddridge renders the former, *vest*, and the latter, *mantle*. They are parts of dress, under different names, still used in Barbary, Egypt, and the Levant. See Shaw's *Travels*, pp. 289, 292. Our Lord, it is to be observed, is not here speaking of a robber attacking a person on the highway, to whom it would be natural to take the outer garment first, but of a person suing another at law, as our translators seem properly to have rendered κριθναί. The meaning of the whole passage evidently is, rather than return *evil for evil*, when the wrong is purely personal, submit to one bodily injury after another, give up one part of your goods after another, submit to one instance of compulsion after another. That the words, *Turn to him the other cheek also*, (and consequently those in the next clause,) are not to be taken literally, appears from

A. M. 4035. 43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath
A. D. 31. been said, ^bThou shalt love thy
neighbour, ^cand hate thine enemy :

44 But I say unto you, ^dLove your enemies,
bless them that curse you, do good to them that
hate you, and pray ^efor them which despite-
fully use you, and persecute you ;

45 That ye may be the children of your Fa-
ther which is in heaven : for ^fhe maketh his
sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and

^b Lev. xix. 18.—^c Dent. xxiii. 6; Psa. xli. 10.—^d Luke vi.
27, 35; Rom. xii. 14, 20.—^e Luke xxiii. 34; Acts vii. 60;
1 Cor. iv. 12, 13; 1 Peter ii. 23; iii. 9.—^f Job xxv. 3.

the behaviour of our Lord himself, John xviii. 22,
23. *Give to him that asketh thee, &c.*—Give and
lend to any that are in want, so far, (but no farther,
for God never contradicts himself,) as is consistent
with thy engagements to thy creditors, thy family,
and the household of faith.

Upon the whole of this passage, from verse 38,
we may observe, that it seems to have been prima-
rily intended to counteract and correct that abuse
of the law of retaliation above mentioned, which
was common among the Jews, who carried their
resentments to the utmost lengths; and, by so doing,
maintained infinite quarrels, to the great detriment
of social life. For this purpose, our Lord “puts five
cases wherein Christian meekness must especially
show itself. 1st, When any one assaults our person,
in resentment of some affront he imagines we have
put upon him. 2d, When any one sues us at the law,
in order to take our goods from us. 3d, When he
attacks our natural liberty. 4th, When one who is
poor asks charity. 5th, When a neighbour begs the
loan of something from us. In all these cases our
Lord forbids us to resist. Yet, from the examples
which he mentions, it is plain that this forbearance
and compliance are required only when we are
slightly attacked, but by no means when the assault
is of a capital kind. For it would be unbecoming
the wisdom which Jesus showed in other points, to
suppose that he forbids us to defend ourselves
against murderers, robbers, and oppressors, who
would unjustly take away our life, our estate, or
our liberty. Neither can it be thought that he com-
mands us to give every idle fellow all he may think
fit to ask, whether in charity or in loan. We are
only to give what we can spare, and to such persons
as out of real necessity ask relief from us. Nay,
our Lord’s own behaviour toward the man that
smote him on the cheek, shows he did not mean
that in all cases his disciples should be passive un-
der the very injuries which he here speaks of. In
some circumstances, *smiting on the cheek, taking
away one’s coat, and the compelling one to go a
mile*, may be great injuries, and therefore are to be
resisted. The first instance was judged so by Jesus
himself in the case mentioned. For had he for-
borne to reprove the man who did it, his silence
might have been interpreted as proceeding from a

a

sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

46 ¶ For if ye love them which love you,
what reward have ye? do not even the publi-
cans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what
do ye more *than others*? do not even the pub-
licans so?

48 ¶ ^hBe ye therefore perfect, even ⁱas your
Father which is in heaven is perfect.

^g Luke vi. 32.—^h Gen. xviii. 1; Lev. xi. 44; xix. 2; Luke
vi. 36; Col. i. 28; iv. 12; James i. 4; 1 Peter i. 15, 16.
ⁱ Eph. v. 1.

conviction of his having done evil, in giving the
high priest the answer for which he was smitten.”
But, admitting that this rule has for its object small
injuries, and that our Lord orders his disciples to
be passive under them rather than to repel them, it
is liable to no objection: for he who “bears a slight
affront, consults his honour and interest much bet-
ter than he who resists or resents it; because he
shows a greatness of mind worthy of a man, and
uses the best means of avoiding quarrels, which oft-
times are attended with the most fatal consequences.
In like manner, he who yields a little of his right,
rather than he will go to law, is much wiser than
the man who has recourse to public justice in every
instance; because, in the progress of a law-suit,
such animosities may arise as are inconsistent with
charity. To conclude, *benevolence*, which is the
glory of the divine nature, and the perfection of the
human, rejoices in doing good. Hence the man
that is possessed of this god-like quality cheerfully
embraces every occasion in his power of relieving
the poor and distressed, whether by gift or loan.
Some are of opinion, that the precept concerning
alms-giving, and gratuitous lending, is subjoined to
the instances of injuries which our Lord commands
us to bear, to teach us that, if the persons who have
injured us fall into want, we are not to withhold
any act of charity from them on account of the evil
they have formerly done us. Taken in this light,
the precept is generous and divine. Moreover, as
liberality is a virtue nearly allied to the forgiveness
of injuries, our Lord joined the two together, to
show that they should always go hand in hand.
The reason is, *revenge* will blast the greatest *liber-
ality*, and a *covetous heart* will show the *most perfect
patience* to be a *sordid meanness of spirit*, proceed-
ing from selfishness.”—Macknight.

Verse 43. *Ye have heard that it hath been said*—
In this, as is in the former instances, our Lord, in-
tending to comprehend not only the law itself, but
the explications of it given by the Jewish doctors,
and said to be derived by tradition from the mouth
of Moses, does not say, *Ye know*, but, *Ye have heard,
that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neigh-
bour and hate thine enemy*—God enjoined the
former part of this precept, Lev. xix. 18, and the
scribes added the latter, abusing, it seems, the com-

mands for destroying the Canaanites, to countenance such an addition, though this was in direct contradiction to many other scriptures. See Exod. xxiv. 4, 5; Lev. xix. 17; Prov. xxv. 21. *But I say unto you, Love your enemies*—To the narrow charity of the Jews, confined to their own brethren and men of their own religion, Christ here opposes his admirable precept, enjoining us, if we would be his genuine disciples, to love even our enemies; and that, by showing a sincere affection and good will to them who bear enmity or ill will to us; by manifesting our beneficence to them who, by their actions, show their hatred to us; by doing good to them for evil; by blessing them who with their mouths curse us; and by praying for God's blessing upon them who revile and persecute us, as his followers. And this love he recommends, 1st, from the manifest absurdity of the Jewish doctrine, which made them no better, in this respect, than those sinners, publicans, and heathen, whom they allowed themselves to hate, &c.; 2d, that they, who boasted of it as their peculiar glory that they were the sons of God, might show that they really were so by their imitating His goodness who is kind to the unthankful and evil; 3d, because this would render his followers complete in the great duty of love and mercy to others, as he adds in the last clause.

The following paraphrase on the different clauses of the passage may, perhaps, give the reader a clearer and fuller view of its meaning. Explaining what he intends, when he says, *Love your enemies*, he adds, *Bless them that curse you*—Give them kind and friendly language who rail, act, or speak evil of you; say all the good you can to, and of them. *Do good to them that hate you*—Repay love in thought, word, and deed, to those who really bear ill will to you, and show it both in their words and actions; and embrace every opportunity of promoting their welfare, both temporal and spiritual. *And pray for those which despitefully use you, &c.*—Besides doing all in your own power to advance their happiness, endeavour, by your prayers, to engage God also to befriend and bless them. The expression *ἐπιβλασφημιῶν ὑμᾶς*, is by some rendered, *who falsely accuse, or traduce you*; but more properly by Dr. Doddridge, *who insult over you*. The word is plainly used by St. Peter, (1 Peter iii. 16, the only other place in Scripture where it occurs,) to express abusive language. Both it and the other terms here used express the highest degree of enmity, for what can be worse than cursing, and calumny, and insults, and persecutions; yet we are commanded to love, and bless, and do good to those who express their enmity to us even by these things; and this doctrine Christ enforces from the noblest of all considerations, that it renders men like God; for he adds, *that ye may be the children of your Father*—As if he had said, Being thus benevolent toward all the bad as well as the good, ye shall be like God, and so prove yourselves to be his genuine offspring; for he maketh his sun common to them who worship and them who contemn him; and lets his rain be useful both to the just and to the unjust; alluring the bad to repent-

ance, and exciting the good to thankfulness, by this universal and indiscriminate benignity of his providence. *For if ye love them which love you, &c., and salute your brethren only, &c.*—These are common things, practised by people of the worst character; which therefore do not distinguish you from others, nor prove you to be of a truly pious and virtuous disposition, but as being only indued with the essential principles of human nature, so that no peculiar reward can await you for doing them. The phrase *τι περισσὸν ποιεῖτε*, rendered in our translation, *What do ye more than others?* but which Dr. Campbell renders, *Wherein do you excel?* is thought by him to refer to what our Lord had declared, verse 20, concerning the necessity of *our righteousness excelling, or abounding more than that of the scribes and Pharisees*. Thus, he thinks, our Lord's expostulation is rendered more energetic by the contrast; as if he had said, I told you your righteousness must excel that of the scribes and Pharisees, but if you do good to your friends only, it will not excel even that of the publicans and pagans. Perhaps, in the phrase, *If ye salute your brethren only*, our Lord might glance at those prejudices which different sects had against each other, and might intimate that he would not have his followers imbibe that narrow spirit. And "would to God," says a pious divine, "that the hint had been more attended to, among the unhappy subdivisions into which his church has been crumbled; and that we might at least advance so far as cordially to embrace our brethren in Christ, of whatever party or denomination they are! *Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father, &c.*—Imitate especially the divine goodness, as it is promiscuous, and extends to the evil as well as the good. This seems to be chiefly what is here intended; the love to friends, brethren, and countrymen implying only a very imperfect imitation of God; we are to labour after a more complete resemblance to him, in *loving enemies*. Our Lord, therefore, afterward expressed himself in a parallel discourse on the same subject in a rather different manner, saying, *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful*, Luke vi. 36. But, it is probable, he used a greater latitude of expression here, to remind us of our obligations to imitate the blessed God in all his moral perfections. The exhortation undoubtedly refers to all that holiness which is described in the foregoing verses, which our Lord, in the beginning of the chapter, recommends as happiness, and in the close of it as perfection. And it must be observed, that the words in the original, *εσσεθε ὡς ὑμεῖς τέλειοι*, express a *promise*, rather than a *precept*: *Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*. And how wise and gracious is this, to sum up, and, as it were, to seal all his commandments with a promise! even the proper promise of the gospel, that he will put those laws in our minds and write them in our hearts! He well knew how ready our unbelief would be to suggest, This is impossible! And therefore stakes upon it all the power, truth, and faithfulness of Him to whom all things are possible.

CHAPTER VI.

In the foregoing chapter our Lord particularly described the nature of inward holiness. In this he describes that purity of intention, without which none of our outward actions are holy. This chapter contains four parts: (1.) The right intention and manner in giving alms, 1-4. (2.) The right intention, manner, form, and prerequisites of prayer, 5-15. (3.) The right intention and manner of fasting, 16-18. (4.) The necessity of a pure intention in all things, unmixed either with the desire of riches, or worldly care and fear of want, 19-34.

A. M. 4035. TAKE heed that ye do not your
A. D. 31. ¹alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward ²of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Therefore, ^awhen thou doest *thine* alms, ²do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, They have their reward.

¹Or, righteousness, Deut. xxiv. 13; Psa. cxii. 9; Dan. iv. 27; 2 Cor. ix. 9, 10.—²Or, with.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verse 1. *Take heed that ye do not your alms, &c.*—As some copies and very ancient versions read *δικαιοσύνην*, righteousness, instead of *ελεημοσύνην*, alms-deeds, and several of the fathers quote the passage so, "I choose, with Beza," says Dr. Doddridge, "to follow that reading; because it prevents the appearance of a tautology in the following words, and makes this verse a general and very proper introduction to the remaining part of the section, in which the caution is branched out into the particular heads of *alms*, *prayer*, and *fasting*." The doctor therefore reads, *Take heed that ye practise not your righteousness*, in which interpretation of the clause, and for similar reasons, he is followed by Dr. Campbell. The verse is a general caution against vain glory in any of our good works, all which are here summed up together in the comprehensive word, *righteousness*. This general caution our Lord applies, in the sequel, to the three principal branches of it, relating to our neighbour, verses 2-4; to God, verses 5, 6; and to ourselves, verses 16-18. *Before men to be seen of them*—Barely the being seen, while we are doing any of the things hereafter mentioned, is a circumstance purely indifferent; but the doing them with a view to be seen and admired, this is what our Lord condemns.

Verses 2-4. *Therefore, &c.*—The caution is so important, that our Lord illustrates it in various particulars. *When thou doest thine alms*—Exercise thy charity by performing works of mercy; *do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do*—From this it would appear that, in our Lord's time, persons who affected the reputation of being extremely charitable, sometimes sounded a trumpet when they distributed their alms, on pretence, no doubt, of calling together the poor to receive them, while their real intention was to proclaim their own good works, and receive glory of men. Wherefore, as his disciples were to do no

3 But when thou doest alms, let ^{A. M. 4035.} not thy left hand know what thy ^{A. D. 31.} right hand doeth;

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself ^bshall reward thee openly.

5 ¶ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.

^aRom. xii. 8.—³Or, cause not a trumpet to be sounded. ^bLuke xiv. 14.

work of charity from the motive of vanity, he absolutely forbade this custom of the hypocrites. *Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward*—All they will have; for they shall have none from God. *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth*—A proverbial expression for doing a thing secretly. Do it as secretly as is consistent, 1st, with the doing it at all; 2d, with the doing it in the most effectual manner. And never speak of it afterward, unless there be good reasons for making it known. *That thine alms may be in secret*—May be known to none but God, whose glory thou must have in view in all thy works, whether of piety, justice, or charity, and whose will it must be thy intention to obey in all things. *And thy Father, which seeth in secret*—Who knows every circumstance of men's most retired and private actions; *himself shall reward thee openly*—Viz., before men and angels, at the day of final judgment. For, though it be true, as Grotius here observes, that God often visibly rewards the charitable actions of pious persons, performed from true love to him, with temporal blessings in this life; yet will he chiefly do it in the sight of men and angels in the world to come. See Matt. xxv. 34; Luke xiv. 14.

Verses 5, 6. *When thou prayest*—Which, if thou art my disciple indeed, thou wilt often do, *thou shalt not be as the hypocrites*—Praying out of vain ostentation. *For they love to pray standing in the synagogues*—In the sight of numbers of people. *Of the synagogues* see note on ch. iv. 23. *And in the corners of the streets*—Where several ways meet, *that they may be seen of men*—May be beheld by many, and admired as persons of singular piety. *Verily, they have their reward*—This admiration of those that observe them, is all the reward they ever shall have. *But thou, when thou prayest*—And dost not intend to use a social, but a private means of grace, *enter into thy closet*—Or any other retired apartment; *and when thou hast shut thy door*—To prevent interruption, and to exclude spectators, *pray*

A. M. 4035. Verily, I say unto you, they have
A. D. 31. their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, °enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not ^d vain repeti-

° 2 Kings iv. 33.—^d Eccles. v. 2.

to thy Father which is in secret—Perform the duty without noise or show, by which it will appear that thou art influenced by a principle of true piety, by the fear or love of God, and a regard to his will and glory. It must be observed, that Christ does not here condemn all prayer made in places of public worship, seeing both he and his disciples often prayed with the Jews in the synagogues, Luke iv. 16; nor any public devotions in the house of God; but, speaking only here of private prayer, he would have that performed agreeably to the nature of it, and so in secret; and condemns them only who affected to do that duty in public places, that others might take notice of them, and regard them as devout religious persons for so doing.

Verses 7, 8. *When ye pray, use not vain repetitions*—A multiplicity of words without meaning, or uttered without seriousness, reverence for God, sincerity, or faith. The original word, βαρρολογησατε, is derived from βαρρος, a stutler, or foolish talker, and λογος, speech. The former word was the name of a certain prince of the Cyrenæans, who was a stammerer, and also of a babbling foolish poet, who frequently repeated the same things, and whose rhapsodies were full of tautologies. Our interpretation of the words, *Use not vain repetitions*, Dr. Campbell thinks is too confined, and does not include all that is meant to be signified by our Lord's expression, which, he says, comprehends "every thing, in words, that may justly be called vain, idle, or foolish." The word πολυλογία, much speaking, applied to the same fault in the latter part of the verse, is a further elucidation of its meaning. *As the heathen do*—When invoking their false gods: *for they think they shall be heard*—In the prayers which they address to them; *for their much speaking*—Thus we find the priests of Baal crying from morning till noon, *O Baal, hear us*. Hence it appears, partly at least, what the repetitions were which Christ forbade his disciples to use in their prayers, namely, such as proceeded from an opinion that they should be heard for their much speaking, after the manner of the heathen. This opinion, implying a denial of the power, or the knowledge, or the goodness of God, is highly injurious to him; and therefore repetitions in prayer, flowing from it, are highly culpable, as also is the repeating of any words without meaning them, or the expressing in words any petitions or thanksgivings which do not proceed from the heart. Therefore, we should be extremely careful, in all our prayers, to mean what we

tions, as the heathen do: ° for they think that they shall be heard for their
A. M. 4035. A. D. 31. much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: 'Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

° 1 Kings xviii. 26, 29.—' Luke xi. 2, &c.

say, and to desire what we ask, from the very bottom of our hearts. The vain and heathenish repetitions which we are here warned against, are very common, and a principal cause why so many who profess religion are a disgrace to it. Indeed, all the words in the world, however well chosen and uttered in prayer, are not equivalent to one holy desire; and the very best prayers are but vain repetitions, if they are not the language of the heart. But let it be observed, on the other hand, that repetitions proceeding from a deep sense of our wants, and a vehement desire of divine grace, and the spiritual blessings flowing therefrom, or connected therewith, are by no means prohibited here by the Lord Jesus, otherwise indeed he would condemn his own practice, ch. xxvi. 39-44. *For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before you ask him*—We do not pray to inform God of our wants. Omniscient as he is, he cannot be informed of any thing which he knew not before: and he is always willing to relieve them. The chief thing wanting is, a fit disposition on our part to receive his grace and blessing. Consequently, one great office of prayer is to produce such a disposition in us; to exercise our dependance on God; to increase our desire of the things we ask for; to make us so sensible of our wants, that we may never cease wrestling till we have prevailed for the blessing.

Verse 9. *After this manner pray ye*—He who best knew what we ought to pray for, and how we ought to pray; what matter of desire, what manner of address would most please himself, would best become us, has here dictated to us a most perfect and universal form of prayer, comprehending all our real wants, expressing all our lawful desires; a complete directory, and full exercise of our devotions. By the expression οὕτως, thus, or *after this manner*, our Lord could not mean that his disciples were to use the words of this prayer in all their addresses to God, for in the Acts and Epistles we find the apostles praying in terms different from this form; but his meaning is, that we must frame our prayers according to this model, and that in respect both of matter and manner; that we must pray for the things here mentioned, and often in these very words.

This prayer, it must be observed, consists of three parts; the preface, the petitions, and the conclusion. The preface, *Our Father, who art in heaven*, lays a general foundation for prayer, comprising what we must first know of God, before we can pray in confidence of being heard. It likewise points out

A. M. 4035. 10 Thy kingdom come. ^c Thy will
A. D. 31. be done in earth, ^h as it is in heaven.

^c Chap. xxvi. 39, 42; Acts xxi. 14.

to us that faith, humility, and love of God and man, with which we are to approach God in prayer.

Our Father which art in heaven—Almighty God has a peculiar right to the title of *Father*, as from every creature, so particularly from mankind, being the father of their spirits, Heb. xii. 9, the maker of their bodies, and the continual preserver of both: and he is in a yet higher sense the father of his believing and obedient people, whom he adopts into his family, regenerates by his grace, and restores to his image: so that, partaking of his nature, they become his genuine *children*, and can with holy boldness call him their *father*. Being, in this sense, made his children, we are here directed to call him *our father*, in the *plural number*, and that even in secret prayer, to put us in mind that we are all *brethren*, and that we ought to love one another with pure hearts fervently, praying not for ourselves only, but for others, and especially for our brethren in Christ, that God may give them likewise the blessings requested in this divine prayer. The words, *which art in heaven*, do not confine God's presence to heaven, for he exists everywhere; but they contain a comprehensive, though short description of his divine glory, of his majesty, dominion, and power; and distinguish him from those whom we call *fathers* on earth, and from false gods, who are not in heaven, the region of bliss and happiness; where God, who is essentially present through all the universe, gives more especial manifestations of his presence to such of his creatures as he has exalted to share with him in his eternal felicity. *Hallowed be thy name*—The name of God is a Hebraism for God himself, his attributes, and his works. To sanctify a thing is to entertain the highest veneration for it, as *true*, and *great*, and *good*, and to manifest that veneration by our dispositions, words, and actions. Thus it is used 1 Peter iii. 15; Isaiah viii. 13. The meaning of this first petition, therefore, is, *May thy existence be universally believed; thy perfections revered, loved, and imitated; thy works admired; thy supremacy over all things acknowledged; thy providence revered and confided in. May we, and all men, so think of thy divine majesty, of thy attributes, words, and works, and may we and they so express our veneration of thee, and subjection to thee, that thy glory may be manifested everywhere, to the utter destruction of all idolatry, sin, and misery.* "The phraseology of this and other prayers recorded by the inspired writers, wherein the worshippers addressed God in the singular number, saying, *thou*, and *thy*, is retained by all Christians among us, with the highest propriety, as it intimates their firm belief that there is but one God, and that there is nothing in the universe equal or second to him, and that no being whatever can share in the worship which they pay him."—Macknight.

Verse 10. *Thy kingdom come*—This cannot with

11 Give us this day our ⁱ daily A. M. 4035.
bread. A. D. 31.

^h Psa. ciii. 20, 21.—ⁱ Job xxiii. 12; Prov. xxx. 8.

propriety be understood of that general kingdom, by which God ruleth over all the world, that being always come, and not capable of any amplification. But the kingdom of God under the Messiah, to be set up, enlarged, and perfected by the preaching of the gospel, and the exercise of Christ's kingly power, is evidently here intended; even that kingdom which the Jews thought *would immediately appear*, Luke xix. 11; which the pious among them *expected and waited for*, Luke ii. 38; Mark xv. 43; which both the Baptist and our Lord announced *as at hand*, chap. iii. 2; Mark i. 15; and which Christ, in this chapter, verse 33, directs his followers *to seek*, in preference to all other things; and here to pray for. This kingdom of God is twofold, namely, his kingdom of grace and his kingdom of glory; the coming of both which we may be well understood to mean, when we put up this petition; desiring, 1st, that *we and all men may receive the kingdom of divine grace into our hearts, and that God may reign in and over us in such a manner, that we may be his willing and loyal subjects*; 2d, that, in order thereto, it would please him to give success to his gospel in all parts of the earth; that he would enlarge the borders of his Church, and bring all nations within the pale of it; and, where it is already established, that he would proceed by his grace more and more to destroy the power of sin, and the dominion of Satan; and to implant his fear and love in the hearts of all his professing people; that thus, 3d, his eternal and glorious kingdom may also be enlarged, the number of his saints be accomplished, and the blessed time come when we shall all be translated into his heavenly kingdom, when, all other powers and dominions being done away, God alone shall be exalted, and rule for ever and ever.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven—It is justly observed by Dr. Whitby, that we do not pray in this petition that *God may do his own will*, nor that the will of his providence may be done upon and respecting us, but that, in consequence of the coming of his kingdom of grace, in the sense above explained, we, and all men, with as much readiness, alacrity, and perfection, as the imperfection of human nature will admit of, may yield obedience to his wise, holy, and good will, however made known to us, whether by revelation, natural conscience, or the dispensations of providence; and may imitate the blessed angels in a sincere, ready, constant, persevering compliance with it: and that, in order to this end, he would vouchsafe us those aids of his Spirit whereby our understanding may be enlightened, rightly to discern what is his good and acceptable will, and our wills and affections powerfully inclined, and all our executive faculties so strengthened, that we may sincerely, readily, and cheerfully perform such obedience.

Verse 11. *Give us this day our daily bread*—As

A. M. 4035. 12 And ^k forgive us our debts, as
A. D. 31. we forgive our debtors.

13 ^l And lead us not into temptation, but

^k Chap. xviii. 21, &c.—^l Chap. xxvi. 41; Luke xxii. 40, 46;
1 Cor. x. 13; 2 Peter ii. 9; Rev. iii. 10.

the original word, *ἐπιβίον*, here rendered *daily*, is not found anywhere else; neither in the LXX. nor in any Greek author, nor in any other part of the New Testament, save in the parallel passage in Luke, commentators differ in their interpretation of it. That given by Theophylact, one of the most approved of the Greek fathers, seems the best: "Bread sufficient for our sustenance or support:" which is the sense in which the word is understood by Chrysostom, and in *Etymol. Magna*, where it is explained thus: ο ἐπι τη βία ημων αρμοζων, "that which is sufficient to our life;" or what will strengthen us from day to day for serving God with cheerfulness and vigour. Thus, also, Mr. Mede interprets the expression. The Latin version, in Jerome's time, had *panem quotidianum, daily bread*, which our translators have copied, because in the parallel passage, Luke xi. 3, το καθ ημεραν, *day by day*, is joined with *ἐπιβίον*. *Daily bread*, it must be observed, according to the Hebrew idiom, signifies the whole provision of the table, see Gen. xviii. 5; and here it includes raiment also, and every thing necessary to life. "Since, therefore, we are not allowed to ask provision to gratify a luxurious appetite, but only the necessaries of life, and that not for many years, but from day to day, the petition forbids anxious cares about futurity, and teaches us how moderate our desires of worldly things ought to be. And whereas, not the poor only, whose industry all acknowledge must be favoured by the concurrence of Providence to render it successful, but the rich are enjoined to pray for their *bread, day by day*, it is on account of the great instability of human affairs, which renders the possession of wealth absolutely precarious; and because, without the divine blessing, even the abundance of the rich is not of itself sufficient so much as to keep them alive, far less to make them happy." Indeed, the petition teaches all men to exercise an humble dependence on Divine Providence for the most necessary supplies, be their possessions or abilities ever so great. It may be observed further here, that Erasmus, Heylin, and many others, following the fathers, understand it in a spiritual sense also. *Bread*, says Heylin, here signifies, "all things needful for our maintenance; the maintenance of the whole man, both body and soul; for each of these have their proper sustenance; to one belongs the *natural bread*, to the other the *spiritual*, and both are included in this petition."

Verse 12. *And forgive us our debts, &c.*—The suffering of punishment for transgressing God's laws is a debt which sinners owe to the divine justice; and "when we ask God, in prayer, to *forgive our debts*, we beg that he would be mercifully pleased to remit the punishment of our sins, particularly the

^m deliver us from evil. ⁿ For thine is A. M. 4035.
the kingdom, and the power, and the A. D. 31.
glory, for ever. Amen.*

^m John xvii. 15.—ⁿ 1 Chron. xxix. 11.—* Ash Wednesday,
gospel, ver. 16 to ver. 22.

pains of hell; and that, laying aside his displeasure, he would graciously receive us into favour, and bless us with eternal life. In this petition, therefore, we confess our sins, and express the sense we have of their demerit, namely, that they deserve condemnation and wrath from God, than which nothing can be more proper in our addresses to him. The condition on which we are to ask forgiveness is remarkable. *Forgive us, as we forgive*. We must forgive others in order to our being forgiven ourselves, and are allowed to crave from God only such forgiveness as we grant to others; so that if we do not pardon our enemies, we, in this fifth petition, seriously and solemnly beg God to damn us eternally!"—Macknight.

Verse 13. *And lead us not into temptation*—Or, *into trial*, as the word *πειρασμος*, here used, signifies: see note on ch. iv. 1: that is, into such trial or temptation, as will be too hard for our weakness to endure. *But deliver us from evil*—Απο τη πορευη, *from the evil one, viz., the devil*; enabling us to resist and overcome him in all his assaults, of whatever kind they may be. Or, perhaps, the clause may be translated, *Lead us not into temptation, but so as to deliver us from the evil, viz., either by removing the temptation, when it is too strong for us to withstand; or by mitigating its force, or by increasing our strength to resist it, as God shall see most for his glory*. This correction of the translation, suggested by Macknight, is proposed on this ground; that to pray for an absolute freedom from temptation is to seek deliverance from the common lot of humanity, which is absurd; because temptations are wisely appointed by God for the exercise and improvement of piety and virtue in good men, and that others may be encouraged by the constancy and patience which they show in trials. Hence, instead of praying to be absolutely delivered from them, we are taught to rejoice when, by the divine appointment, we fall into them. See James i. 2, 3. This petition teaches us to preserve a sense of our own inability to repel and overcome temptation, and of the necessity of assistance from above, to enable us to *stand in the evil day*. *For thine is the kingdom, &c., for ever*—The government of the universe is thine for ever, and thou alone possessest the power of creating and upholding all things; also the glory of infinite perfections remains eternally with thee, therefore all men ought to hallow thy name, submit themselves to thy government, and perform thy will; also, in an humble sense of their dependance, should seek from thee the supply of their wants, the pardon of their sins, and the kind protection of thy providence.

After the preceding exposition of the different clauses of this divine prayer, the reader will not be

A. M. 4035. 14 ¶ ° For if ye forgive men their
A. D. 31. trespasses, your heavenly Father will
also forgive you :

15 But ° if ye forgive not men their trespasses,
neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 ¶ Moreover, ° when ye fast, be not as the
hypocrites, of a sad countenance : for they dis-
figure their faces, that they may appear unto

° Mark xi. 25, 26 ; Eph. iv. 32 ; Col. iii. 13. — ° Chap. xviii. 35 ;
James ii. 13 — ° Isaiah lviii. 5.

displeased to see a summary of the whole, in the following concise, clear, and instructive paraphrase, taken from the short notes of Mr. Wesley. I. *Our Father*—Who art good and gracious to all, our Creator, our Preserver : the Father of our Lord, and of us in him, thy children by adoption and grace : not *my* Father only, who now cry unto thee, but the Father of the universe, of angels and men : *who art in heaven*—Beholding all things, both in heaven and earth ; knowing every creature, and all the works of every creature, and every possible event from everlasting to everlasting : the Almighty Lord and Ruler of all, superintending and disposing all things : *In heaven*—Eminently there, but not there alone, seeing thou fillest heaven and earth.

II. 1st, *Hallowed be thy name*—Mayest thou, O Father, be truly known by all intelligent beings, and with affections suitable to that knowledge : mayest thou be duly honoured, loved, feared, by all in heaven and in earth, by all angels and all men. 2d, *Thy kingdom come*—May thy kingdom of grace come quickly, and swallow up all the kingdoms of the earth : may all mankind, receiving thee, O Christ, for their king, truly believing in thy name, be filled with righteousness, and peace, and joy ; with holiness and happiness ; till they are removed hence into thy kingdom of glory, to reign with thee for ever and ever. 3d, *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*—May all the inhabitants of the earth do thy will as willingly as the holy angels : may these do it continually even as they, without any interruption of their willing service ; yea, and perfectly as they ; mayest thou, O Spirit of grace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make them perfect in every good work to do thy will, and work in them all that is well pleasing in thy sight. 4th, *Give us*—O Father, (for we claim nothing of right, but only of thy free mercy,) *this day*—(for we take no thought for the morrow,) *our daily bread*—All things needful for our souls and bodies ; not only *the meat that perisheth*, but the sacramental bread, and thy grace, the food *which endureth to everlasting life*. 5th, *And forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors*—Give us, O Lord, redemption in thy blood, even the forgiveness of sins : as thou enablest us freely and fully to forgive every man, so do thou forgive all our trespasses. 6th, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*—Whenever we are tempted, O thou that helpest our infirmities, suffer us not to enter into temptation ;

a

men to fast. Verily I say unto you, A. M. 4035.
they have their reward.* A. D. 31.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, ° anoint thy
head, and wash thy face ;

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast,
but unto thy Father which is in secret : and
thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward
thee openly.

* *Ash Wednesday*, gospel, verse 16 to verse 22.
° Ruth iii. 3 ; Dan. x. 3.

to be overcome or suffer loss thereby ; but make a way for us to escape, so that we may be more than conquerors through thy love, over sin and all the consequences of it. Now the principal desire of a Christian's heart being the glory of God, (verses 9, 10,) and all he wants for himself or his brethren, being the daily bread of soul and body, (or the support of life, animal and spiritual,) pardon of sin, and deliverance from the power of it and of the devil ; (verses 11, 12, 13 ;) there is nothing besides that a Christian can wish for ; therefore this prayer comprehends all his desires. Eternal life is the certain consequence, or rather completion, of holiness.

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

Verse 14. *If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you*—We are not to infer from this, that the forgiving of injuries alone will entitle us to pardon. Surely not. Repentance toward God, and fruits worthy of repentance, as also faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, working by love, overcoming the world, and purifying the heart, are absolutely necessary, as is frequently stated elsewhere in the discourses of our Lord, and in the writings of the apostles and evangelists.

Verses 16–18. *When ye fast*—Our Lord does not enjoin either fasting, alms-deeds, or prayer, all these being duties which were before fully established in the Church of God. *Be not as the hypocrites, &c.*—Do not follow the example of the hypocrites, who, in order to show that they fast, assume a *sad countenance* ; a dejected, austere, and mortified look, such as false devotees affect, who make piety to consist in outward show, rather than in true goodness. *For they disfigure their faces*—Viz., by dust and ashes put upon their heads, as was usual in times of mourning and solemn humiliation. *Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward*—I assure you,

A. M. 4035. 19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves
A. D. 31.

treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

* Proverbs xxiii. 4; 1 Timothy vi. 17; Hebrews xiii. 5; James v. 1, &c.

persons of this character shall have no other reward but the esteem of those whom they deceive by such appearances. *But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, &c.*—Come abroad in thine ordinary dress. The Jews often anointed their heads. *That thou appear not, &c.*—That, desiring the approbation of God, and not the applause of men, thou mayest chiefly be solicitous to appear before God as one that fasts; and God, who is ever with thee, and knows thy most secret thoughts, shall openly bestow on thee the blessings which belong to a true penitent, “whose mortification, contrition, and humility he can discern without the help of looks, or dress, or outward expressions of any kind. But it must be remembered, that our Lord is speaking here of *private fasting*, to which alone his directions are to be applied; for, when public sins or calamities are to be mourned over, the duty of fasting ought to be performed in the most public manner.”

Verses 19–21. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth*—Our Lord here makes a transition from religious to common actions, and warns us of another snare, the love of money and earthly things, as inconsistent with purity of intention as the love of praise: *where moth and rust doth corrupt, &c.*—Where all things are perishable and transient. “In the eastern countries, where the fashion of clothes did not alter as with us, the treasures of the rich consisted not only of gold and silver, but of costly habits, and finely-wrought vessels of brass, and tin, and copper, liable to be destroyed in the manner here mentioned.” *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven*—Build your happiness on a more noble and certain foundation, where none of these accidents can happen; but the arms of everlasting power and love shall secure you from every calamity and invasion. “Nothing can be conceived more powerful to damp that keenness with which men pursue the things of this life, than the consideration of their emptiness and uncertainty; or to kindle in them an ambition of obtaining the treasures in heaven, than the consideration of their being substantial, satisfying, durable, and subject to no accident whatever. These considerations, therefore, were fitly proposed by our Lord on this occasion.”—Macknight. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*—A most undoubted truth, and a most weighty reason why we should not make any thing on earth our treasure: for whatever we make our treasure gains possession of our hearts; we set our affections upon it, and of consequence, accord-

21 For where your treasure is, there
A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

will your heart be also.
22 ¶ The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

† Chap. xix. 21; Luke xii. 33, 34; xviii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 19; 1 Pet. i. 4.—^a Luke xi. 34, 36.

ing to St. John, (1 Epist. ii. 15,) *the love of the Father is not in us*, and we are not his children.

Verse 22. *The light—Or lamp* rather, as ο λυχνος should be translated, *of the body, is the eye*—That is, it is by the eye that a person has light to direct him in his bodily motions, and in the use of his bodily members. *If therefore thine eye be single—Απλος, simple*, not mixed with noxious humours, but *clear and sound*; so both Chrysostom and Theophylact understand the expression, considering it as synonymous with *υγιης, whole*; thy *whole body shall be full of light*—Every member of thy body shall be enlightened by the light of thine eye, and directed to perform its proper office. *But if thine eye be evil—Gr. πονηρος, rendered νοσωδης, morbid*, by Theophylact, and *distempered*, by Dr. Campbell, who observes, “that there is no reference to the primitive meaning of *απλος, single*, is evident from its being contrasted to *πονηρος, evil, bad, or disordered*, and not to *διπλος, double*. Our Lord’s argument,” adds he, “stands thus: The eye is the lamp of the body: from it all the other members derive their light. Now if that which is the light of the body be darkened, how miserable will be the state of the body! how great will be the darkness of those members which have no light of their own, but depend entirely on the eye!” Thus “if the conscience, that mental light which God has given to man for regulating his moral conduct, be itself vitiated, what will be the state of his appetites and passions, which are naturally blind and precipitate?” To the same purpose speaks Macknight, only using the term *reason*, instead of *conscience*. “As the body must be well enlightened if its eye is sound and good, or greatly darkened if it is spoiled with noxious humours; so the mind must be full of life, if reason, its eye, is in a proper state; or full of darkness, if it is perverted by covetousness, and other worldly passions; but with this difference, that the darkness of the mind is infinitely worse than the darkness of the body, and attended with worse consequences, inasmuch as the actions of the mind are of far greater importance to happiness than those of the body.” Baxter and Dr. Doddridge understand the words in nearly the same sense, interpreting the word *eye* of the *practical judgment*. “If thy judgment be sound,” says the former, “and thou knowest the difference between laying up treasure in heaven and on earth, it will rightly guide all the actions of thy heart and life: but if thy judgment be blinded in this great affair, it will misguide thy love, thy choice, and all

A. M. 4035. 24 ¶ * No man can serve two mas-
A. D. 31. ters: for either he will hate the one,
and love the other; or else he will hold to the
one, and despise the other. † Ye cannot serve
God and mammon.*

25 Therefore I say unto you, * Take no
thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what
ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye

* Luke xvi. 13.—† Gal. i. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 17; James iv. 4;
1 John ii. 15.—* Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse

the tenor of thy life: if thy judgment then be blind,
which must guide thee, what a miserable erroneous
wretch wilt thou be! and how dismal will that error
prove!" Or, as the doctor expresses it, "If the
maxims you lay down to yourselves are wrong, how
very erroneous must your conduct be!"

Verse 24. *No man can serve two masters*—Whose
interests and commands are directly contrary to
each other; for either he will hate the one and love
the other—And therefore, while he employs him-
self in the service of the one, will, of course, neglect
the interest of the other: or else he will hold to the
one, and despise the other—That is, will adhere en-
tirely to the love and service of the one, and quite
abandon the other. Do not therefore impose upon
yourselves so far as to imagine that your hearts can
be equally divided between heaven and earth. *Ye
cannot serve God and mammon*, that unworthy idol,
to which many devote their hearts and their lives.
"Mammon is a Syriac word for riches, which our
Lord here beautifully represents as a person whom
the folly of men had deified. It is well known that
the Greeks had a fictitious god of wealth; but I
cannot find," says Dr. Doddridge, "that he was ever
directly worshipped in Syria under the name of
Mammon." According to some, the term is derived
from $\mu\alpha\mu\mu\alpha$, amen, and signifies whatever one is apt
to confide in. And, because men put their trust
generally in external advantages, such as riches,
authority, honour, power, &c., the word *mammon* is
used to denote every thing of that kind, and par-
ticularly riches, by way of eminence. The word
hate, in this verse, signifies, to have a less value for,
and to love, is to have a greater regard for, as ap-
pears from the remaining part of the verse, and
from ch. x. 37, compared with Luke xii. 16. See
Bishop Newton's *Notes on Paradise Lost*, i. 620.

Verses 25–27. *Therefore I say, Take no thought,
&c.*—Our Lord here proceeds to caution his disci-
ples against worldly cares, these being as incon-
sistent with the true service of God as worldly
desires. But the expression used by our transla-
tors, *Take no thought*, is too strong, and not war-
ranted by the original, $\mu\eta\ \mu\epsilon\mu\iota\upsilon\alpha\tau\epsilon$, which properly
signifies, *Be not anxious*, or, *anxiously careful*, as
is evident from Luke x. 41; xii. 11; xxi. 34; Phil.
iv. 6; and almost every other place, where $\mu\epsilon\mu\iota\upsilon\alpha\omega$
occurs. For we are not to suppose that our Lord
here commands us absolutely to take no thought for
our life, food, and raiment; because, in other parts

shall put on. Is not the life more than
meat, and the body than raiment? A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

26 * Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow
not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns;
yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are
ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you, by taking thought, can add
one cubit unto his stature?

24 to the end.—* Psa. lv. 22; Luke xii. 22, 23; Phil. iv. 6;
1 Pet. v. 7.—† Job xxxviii. 41; Psa. cxlvii. 9; Luke xii. 24.

of Scripture, diligence in business is inculcated, and
men are commanded to labour with their hands,
that they may provide for the supply of their own
wants, and also those of others, Rom. xii. 11; Eph.
iv. 28; and that, instead of being useless loads on
the earth, they may, at all times, have it in their
power to discharge the several duties of life with
decency, Tit. iii. 14. What Christ therefore here
forbids is, not that thought, foresight, and care which
prudent men use in providing sustenance and need-
ful support for themselves, and those dependant
upon them; but it is such an *anxious care*, as arises
from want of faith in the being, perfections, and
providence of God, and in the declarations and prom-
ises of his word, and therefore such an anxious so-
licitude as engrosses the thoughts and desires of
the soul, so as either utterly to exclude or greatly damp
and hinder spiritual affections, pursuits, and labours;
or which prevents our receiving or our retaining
and increasing in the love of God, and the true re-
ligion connected therewith. *Is not the life more
than the meat*, needful to support it? *And the body
than the raiment*, necessary to clothe it? and will
not he, who has given the greater blessings, give the
less also? *Behold the fowls of the air*—Learn a
lesson from the birds that now fly round you. *For
they sow not, neither do they reap, &c.*—Without
foreseeing their own wants, or making provision for
them, they are preserved and nourished by the un-
wearied benignity of the divine providence. *Are
ye not much better than they?*—Are ye not beings
of a nobler order, and destined for a higher end
than they, and therefore more the objects of the
divine care? Moreover, *which of you, by taking
thought*—Gr. $\mu\epsilon\mu\iota\upsilon\omega\omega$, by being anxiously careful,
can add one cubit unto his stature? Can add one
moment to the length of your lives; that is, which
of you could profit yourselves at all by anxious
thoughts and cares, if you should indulge them? It
is evident, as several learned writers have observed,
that the word $\eta\lambda\iota\kappa\iota\alpha$, here rendered *stature*, ought
to have been translated *age*, because the caution is
against anxious care about the preservation of life,
and about food, the means of prolonging it; not to
mention that Jesus 'is speaking here to full-grown
men, who probably had no solicitude about their
stature. Besides, the measure of a cubit agrees
much better to a man's age than to his stature, the
smallest addition to which would have been better
expressed by a hair's breadth, or the like, than by

A. M. 4035. 28 And why take ye thought for
A. D. 31. raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of

a *cubit*, which is more than the fourth part of the whole height of most men. This interpretation of the word is confirmed by Luke in the parallel passage, chap. xii. 25, 26, where he calls the adding of a cubit, *that which is least*—That is, the thing in which the interposition of the divine providence least appears, as it really is, if understood of the addition of a single moment to the length of one's life.

Verses 28–30. *And why take ye thought*—Why are you anxious about raiment? Consider the lilies of the field—Observe not only the animal, but, what is yet much lower, the vegetable part of the creation, and mark how the flowers of the meadows grow; they toil not—To prepare the materials of their covering; nor do they spin—Or weave them into garments. “The expression *ε κοπια*, here rendered, they toil not, denotes rural labour, 2 Tim. ii. 6; and therefore is beautifully used in a discourse of clothing, the materials of which are produced by agriculture.”—Macknight. *Even Solomon in all his glory*—In his royal magnificence, and when sitting on his throne of ivory and gold, 1 Kings x. 18; was not arrayed like one of these—Namely, in garments of so pure a white, and of such curious workmanship, as one of these lilies presents to your view. The eastern princes were often clothed in white robes, (and they were generally accounted a magnificent apparel; see Esther viii. 15, Daniel vii. 9;) and therefore Calmet and Doddridge properly refer this dress of Solomon to the *whiteness of the lilies*, rather than to *tulips of various colours, or a purple kind of lily*, supposed by Ray (*On the Creation*, page 107,) to be here intended by *κρiva*, the word we render lilies. *Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, &c.*—If an inanimate thing, so trifling in its nature, and uncertain in its duration, is thus beautifully adorned, will not God take care to clothe you, who are more valuable, as ye are men endowed with reason, but especially as ye are my servants and friends? *The grass of the field*, is a general expression, including both herbs and flowers. Dr. Campbell renders the original expression, *τον χοτρον*, the herbage, and observes, that it is evident from the *lily* being included under the term, that more is meant by it than is signified with us by the word *grass*; and he quotes Grotius as remarking that the Hebrews ranked the whole vegetable system under two classes, *גז*; *gnets*, and *עש*; *gnesheb*, the former including all sorts of shrubs, as well as trees, and the latter every kind of plant, which has not, like trees and shrubs, a perennial stalk. *Which to-day is*—Namely, in the field; and to-morrow is cast into the oven—The word

the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles

κλιβανον, here rendered *the oven*, is interpreted by some a still, for distilling herbs; but “there is no reason,” says Macknight, “to alter the translation, since it appears from Matt. xiii. 10, that they used some kind of vegetable substances for fuel, particularly *tares*, which, if they were annuals, might be sufficiently dry for immediate use by the time they were cut down, as the *herb of the field* is here said to be; or to-morrow, in the text may mean, not the day immediately after the herbs are cut down, but any time soon after, the expression being proverbial, and easily admitting of this signification.” Dr. Campbell is of the same mind, observing that he had not seen a vestige of evidence in any ancient author, that the art of distillation was then known, or any authority, sacred or profane, for translating the word *κλιβανος*, a still. He thinks the scarcity of fuel in those parts, both formerly and at present, fully accounts for their having recourse to withered herbs for heating their ovens. It accounts also, he supposes, for the frequent recourse of the sacred penmen to those similitudes, whereby things found unfit for any nobler purpose, are represented as reserved for the fire. Add to this, Shaw (*Trav.*, page 25,) and Harmer (chap. iv. obs. 6,) inform us, that myrtle, rosemary, and other plants, are made use of in Barbary to heat their ovens. Our Lord, to check every kind of distrust of the divine providence, and to encourage confidence therein, adds, *O ye of little faith*—Or, *O ye distrustful*, as Campbell renders the word *ολιγοπιστοι*, observing, that “it is quite in the genius of the Greek language to express, by such compound words, what in other languages is expressed by a more simple term.” It is hardly necessary to observe here, that “it does not follow from our Lord's application of the expression, *O ye of little faith*, that it is an exercise of faith to sit with our arms folded, expecting support from the divine providence, without any action of our own; but after having done what prudence directs for providing the necessaries of life, we ought to trust in God, believing that he will make our labours effectual by his blessing.” It is remarked here by Dr. Doddridge, that the word *αμεινναιον*, rendered *clothe* the grass of the field, properly implies the putting on a complete dress, that surrounds the body on all sides; and beautifully expresses that external membrane, which (like the skin in a human body) at once adorns the tender fabric of the vegetable, and guards it from the injuries of the weather. Every microscope in which a flower is viewed, gives a lively comment on this text.

Verses 31. 32. *Therefore take no thought*—Be no

A. M. 4035. seek;) for your heavenly Father
A. D. 31. knoweth that ye have need of all
these things.

33 ¶ But ^b seek ye first the kingdom of
God, and his righteousness, and all these

^b 1 Kings iii. 13; Psa. xxxvii. 25; Mark x. 30;

more distracted and torn in pieces, as it were, with anxious and unbelieving thoughts, *Saying, What shall we eat, &c.*—How shall we be provided for during the remainder of our lives? *For after all these things do the Gentiles seek*—Who are strangers to the promises of God's covenant, and to the hopes of his glory. "It was the general character of the heathen, that they prayed to their gods, and laboured themselves, for no blessings but the temporal ones here mentioned, as is plain from the tenth Sat. of Juvenal; and that because they were in a great measure ignorant of God's goodness, had erred fundamentally in their notions of religion, and had no certain hope of a future state." See Eph. ii. 12. *For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things*—Your heavenly Father is far better acquainted with all your wants than you yourselves are, and does not disregard them. There is a noble antithesis in this passage. Christ sets God's knowledge of our wants in opposition to the anxiety of the heathen about having theirs supplied, to intimate that the one is much more effectual for that purpose than the other.

Verse 33. *But*—You my disciples have more important business to employ your minds about, and have higher hopes to encourage you. Therefore *seek ye first*—That is, in the *first* place, and with the greatest earnestness and concern, as being the principal things, *the kingdom of God*—As described Rom. xiv. 17, namely, that God, reigning in your heart, may fill it with the holiness above described, and the happiness consequent thereon; *and*, in order thereto, *his righteousness*—Not your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is *through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God by faith*. Compare Rom. x. 3; Phil. iii. 9. For it seems most natural to interpret the expression of that way of becoming righteous which the gospel proposes, and by which alone we can be put in possession of the kingdom of God on earth, or in heaven. *And all these things shall be added unto you*—*For if you seek, as now directed, the kingdom of*

things shall be added unto you. A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

34 Take therefore no thought for
the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought
for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day
is the evil thereof.

Luke xii. 31; 1 Tim. iv. 8.

God, *first* and *principally*, all things pertaining to this life shall, in the course of the divine providence, be bestowed on you as far as they can contribute to your real welfare, and more you would not desire.

Verse 34. *Take therefore no thought for the morrow*—That is, for futurity, according to the Hebrew idiom, as the word is used, Gen. xxx. 33. Since the extent and efficacy of the divine providence is so great, and since you are the objects of its peculiar care, you need not vex yourselves about futurity. *For the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself*—That is, be careful for the morrow when it comes. *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*—Speaking after the manner of men. Every time has abundant necessary troubles of its own; so that it is foolish to increase present distresses by anticipating those that are to come, especially as by that anticipation it is not in your power to prevent any future evil. All trouble, however, is upon the whole a real good. It is good physic which God dispenses daily to his children, according to the need and strength of each. Here we may reasonably reflect, with the pious Dr. Doddridge, How kind are these precepts! The substance of which is only this, Do thyself no harm! Let us not be so ungrateful to him, nor so injurious to ourselves, as to harass and oppress our minds with that burden of anxiety, which he has so graciously taken off. Every verse speaks at once to the understanding, and to the heart. We will not therefore indulge these unnecessary, these useless, these mischievous cares. We will not borrow the anxieties and distresses of the morrow, to aggravate those of the present day. Rather we will cheerfully repose ourselves on that heavenly Father, who knows we have need of these things; who has given us the life, which is more than meat, and the body, which is more than raiment. And thus instructed in the philosophy of our heavenly Master, we will learn a lesson of faith and cheerfulness from every bird of the air, and every flower of the field.

CHAPTER VII.

In this chapter we have the latter part of our Lord's discourse, in which, (1.) He cautions his disciples against rash judgment and uncharitable censures and reproofs, 1-5. (2.) Shows that holy things must not be profaned, 6. (3.) Gives great encouragement to pray for whatever we need, 7-11. (4.) Inculcates strict honesty and impartiality in all our dealings with others, 12. (5.) Exhorts to enter in at the strait gate, and take heed of being deceived by false prophets, who may be known by their fruits, 13-20. (6.) Cautions against trusting in a mere profession of Christianity, and shows the necessity of universal obedience to the will of God, as declared in this discourse, if we would not build on a false foundation, 21-27. (7.) The impression which this doctrine made on Christ's hearers, 28, 29.

A. M. 4035. **JUDGE** ^a not, that ye be not judged.
A. D. 31.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: ^b and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 ^c And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let

^a Luke vi. 37; Rom. ii. 1; xiv. 3, 4, 10, 13; 1 Cor. iv. 3, 5; James iv. 11, 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verses 1, 2. *Judge not*—Our Lord now proceeds to warn us against the chief hinderances of holiness. And how wisely does he begin with *judging!* Wherein all young converts are so apt to spend that zeal which is given them for better purposes. He must be understood as forbidding all rash and unfavourable judgments, whether of the characters of others in general, or of their actions in particular, glancing, probably, in these as also in some other expressions in this chapter, on the character of the Pharisees, who were very culpable on this head, as appears from divers passages in the gospels, such as Luke xviii. 9-14; xvi. 14, 15; John vii. 47-49, (compare also Isa. lxx. 5,) and their unjust censures of Christ. Our Lord's words imply, Judge not those about you in a rigorous and severe manner; nor pass unnecessary or uncharitable censures upon them, as many of your countrymen are in the habit of doing: nay, judge not any man, without full, clear, and certain knowledge of the blameableness of his conduct, nor without absolute necessity, and a spirit of tender love. *That ye be not judged*—Yourselves with the like severity. *For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged*—Of God and man. "If you judge charitably, making proper allowances for the frailties of your brethren, and are ready to pity and pardon their faults, God and man will deal with you in the same kind manner; but if you always put the worst construction on every thing that it will bear, and are not touched with the feeling of your brother's infirmities, and show no mercy in the opinions you form of his character and actions, no mercy will be shown to you from any quarter; God will treat you as you deserve, in the just judgment he shall pass upon your actions, and the world will be sure to retaliate the injury."—Mac-knight. *And with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again*—Awful words! So we may, as it were, choose for ourselves, whether God shall be severe or merciful to us. God and man will favour the candid and benevolent: but they must expect *judgment without mercy, who have showed no mercy.*

Verses 3-5. *And why beholdest thou the mote, &c.*—In particular, why do you open your eyes to any fault of your brother, while you yourself are guilty of a much greater?—The word *καρφος*, here rendered

me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 ¶ ^d Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine,

^b Mark iv. 24; Luke vi. 38.—^c Luke vi. 41, 42.—^d Prov. ix. 7, 8; xxiii. 9; Acts xiii. 45, 46.

mote, according to Hesychius, may signify a little splinter of wood. This, and the *beam*, its opposite, were proverbially used by the Jews to denote, the one, small infirmities, the other, gross, palpable faults. *And how wilt thou say, &c.*—With what face can you undertake to reprove others for smaller faults, while you are guilty of much greater yourself, and are neither sensible of them, nor have the integrity to amend them? *Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam, &c.*—It is mere hypocrisy to pretend zeal for the amendment of others, while we have none for our own. Correct, therefore, the errors of thy judgment, and the enormities of thy life. *And then*—When that which obstructed thy sight is removed, *thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye*—And mayest attempt it with more decency, and a greater probability of success. We may lay it down as a fixed and certain truth, that the more we advance in genuine piety and virtue ourselves, we shall be the better able to form a correct judgment of the conduct of others, and the better qualified, both in point of skill and authority, to reprove and reform any thing that we may see amiss in their dispositions or behaviour. Our judgment of their character and actions will be the more charitable, and for that reason so much the more just: our rebukes will be the more mild, prudent, and winning; and our authority to press a reformation upon them so much the more weighty. "How happy would the world be, if all who teach the Christian religion would conscientiously observe the precept given them here by their Master."

Verse 6. *Give not, &c.*—Even when the beam is cast out of thine own eye. *Give not that which is holy unto dogs*—That is, talk not of the *deep things of God* to those whom *you know* to be wallowing in sin; neither declare the *great things* God hath done for your soul, to the profane, furious, persecuting wretches. Talk not of high degrees of holiness, for instance, to the former; nor of your own experience to the latter. But our Lord does in no wise forbid us to reprove, as occasion is, both the one and the other. There is a transposition in the latter clauses of this verse, where, of the two things proposed, the latter is first treated of. The sense is, *Give not—to dogs—lest, turning, they rend you. Cast not—to swine, lest they trample them under their feet.*

A. M. 4035. lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. A. D. 31.

7 ¶ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

* Ch. xxi. 22; Mark xi. 24; Luke xi. 9, 10, xviii. 1; John xiv. 13; xv. 7; xvi. 23, 24; James i. 5, 6; 1 John iii. 22; v. 14, 15.—† Prov. viii. 17; Jer. xxix. 12, 13.

Verses 7–11. *Ask, &c.*—The exhortation contained in these verses may be considered as connected with the caution given in those immediately preceding, and then the sense of it will be, If you be at a loss to know who are and who are not proper subjects of reproof or admonition; or to whom you may with propriety speak of the higher truths of Christianity, even of those of experimental religion, and therefore want wisdom to guide you in these difficulties, *ask, and it shall be given you, &c.* Or the passage may refer to the whole preceding discourse, and Christ might intend thereby to prevent his disciples from being discouraged by the holiness of the doctrine, and the strictness of the precepts he had been inculcating, and therefore thus directs them to apply to God for supernatural aid; and assures them, if they did so with fervency, importunity, and perseverance, they should not apply in vain. But, independent of their connection with what precedes or follows in this most admirable sermon, these verses contain a most important direction and encouraging exhortation to the people of God to seek help of him in all difficulties whatsoever, and all those aids of his Spirit, and other blessings necessary to their salvation. *Seek, and ye shall find*—Add to your asking your own diligent endeavours in the use of all other appointed means; and *knock*—Persevere importunately in that diligence, and your efforts shall not be in vain. What you ask shall be given you, provided you ask what is agreeable to God's will: the spiritual blessings which you seek, in this way, *you shall find*: and the door of mercy and salvation, at which you knock, shall certainly be opened to you. *For every one that thus asketh, receiveth, &c.*—Such is the goodness and faithfulness of God to his children.

Our Lord next, to give his followers greater assurance of obtaining from God the blessings which they should ask and seek aright, illustrates the divine goodness by reminding them of the imperfect goodness and bounty of men to their offspring. *What man is there of you, or, among you; τις εστιν ες υμων ανθρωπος.* The words are very emphatical, and give great strength to our Lord's argument. As if he had said, I appeal to yourselves, is there a man among you, in all this numerous assembly, who, if his son ask bread of him, will give him a stone? or if he ask a

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

‡ Luke xi. 11–13.—^b Gen. vi. 5; viii. 21.—¹ Luke vi. 31. ^k Lev. xix. 18; Chap. xxii. 40; Rom. xiii. 8–10; Gal. v. 14; 1 Tim. i. 5.

fish, &c.—Can you imagine any father could be so unnatural as to deny necessary supplies to his hungry child; and instead thereof give him what would be useless or hurtful, would starve or poison him? Consider, “if the wickedest wretches among yourselves, the most peevish, weak, and ill-natured of you all, will readily give good gifts to their children when they cry for them, how much rather will the great God, infinite in goodness, bestow blessings on his children who endeavour to resemble him in his perfections, and for that end ask his grace and other spiritual and heavenly blessings?” *If ye then, being evil*—If you, imperfect and evil as you are, and some of you tenacious, froward, and unkind, yet know, being taught by natural affection, to give good gifts to your children—If you find your hearts disposed and ready to communicate the best of what you have for their relief and sustenance, how much more will your almighty and most beneficent Father in heaven, who has a perfect knowledge of all your wants, and can with perfect ease supply them, and who himself has wrought in your hearts these benevolent dispositions, be ready to exceed you in so expressing his kindness, as freely to give all needful good things to them that by fervent prayer ask them of him.

Verse 12. *Therefore all things, &c.*—As if he had said, But it is only on this condition that he will give, and continue to give them, viz., that ye follow the example of his equity and benevolence, that you imitate the God of love; that, being “animated by his goodness, you study to express your gratitude for it by your integrity and kindness to your fellow-creatures, treating them, in every instance, as you would think it reasonable to be treated by them, if you were in their circumstances and they in yours: for this is, in effect, a summary and abstract of all the human and social virtues recommended in the moral precepts of the law and the prophets, and it was one of the greatest ends of both to bring men to this equitable and amiable temper. I say, one of the greatest, that this may be reconciled with our Lord's declaring the love of God to be the first and great commandment, Matt. xxii. 38. And, indeed, it is a most absurd and fatal error to imagine, that the regulation of social life is the only end of religion.”—Doddridge. Thus far proceeds the doctrinal part of this

A. M. 4035. 13 ¶¹ Enter ye in at the strait gate ;
A. D. 31. for wide is the gate, and broad is the
way, that leadeth to destruction, and many
there be which go in thereat :

14 ¹ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is
the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there
be that find it.

15 ¶^m Beware of false prophets, ⁿ which come
to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they
are ^o ravening wolves.*

16 ^p Ye shall know them by their fruits :

¹ Luke xiii. 24.—¹ Or, *Hov.*—^m Deut. xiii. 3; Jer. xxiii. 16; Chap. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, 24; Mark xiii. 22; Rom. xvi. 17, 18; Eph. v. 6; Col. ii. 8; 2 Pet. ii. 1-3; 1 John iv. 1.—ⁿ Mic. iii. 5; 2 Tim. iii. 5.—^o Acts xx. 29, 30.

^q Do men gather grapes of thorns, A. M. 4035.
or figs of thistles? A. D. 31.

17 Even so ^r every good tree bringeth forth
good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth
evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit,
neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 ^s Every tree that bringeth not forth good
fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know
them.

* Eighth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 15 to verse 22.
^p Verse 20; Chap. xii. 33.—^q Luke vi. 43, 44.—^r Jer. xi. 19; Chap. xii. 33.—^s Chap. iii. 10; Luke iii. 9; John xv. 2, 6.

sermon. In the next verse begins the exhortation to practise it.

Verse 13. *Enter ye in at the strait gate*—The gate of true conversion, of self-denial, mortification, and universal holiness; the gate in at which few, comparatively speaking, are inclined to enter. "How strait," says Erasmus, in his paraphrase on the place, "is the gate, how narrow the way that leadeth to life! In the way, nothing is to be found that flatters the flesh, but many things opposite to it, poverty, fasting, watching, injuries, chastity, sobriety. And as for the gate, it receives none that are swollen with the glory of this life; none that are elated and lengthened out with pride; none that are distended with luxury; it does not admit those that are laden with the fardels of riches, nor those that drag along with them the other implements of the world. None can pass through it but naked men, who are stripped of all worldly lusts, and who, having, as it were, put off their bodies, are emaciated into spirits, which is the reason that it is sought after by so few." *For wide is the gate*—The gate of impenitence and unbelief, of carnal affections and fleshly lusts. This gate is obvious to all, and there is no need to seek it: men come to it of course; and *broad*, εὐρυχωρος, spacious, is the way—Of vanity and sin, of evil dispositions, words, and actions; and *many there be which go in thereat*—Many, yea, the greater part of mankind, evidently appear to enter in at that gate, and to walk in that way. *Because strait is the gate*—Here our Lord assigns the reason why so many enter in at the wide gate, and walk in the broad way: it is because the other gate is strait, and the way narrow, therefore they do not love either the one or the other; they prefer a wider gate, and a broader way; a gate which is entered without difficulty, and a way in which men may walk without either self-denial or taking up the cross, and in which they find abundance of company.

Verses 15, 16. *Beware of false prophets*—Who in their preaching describe a broad way to heaven: it is their *prophesying*, their *teaching* the broad way, rather than *walking* in it themselves, that is here chiefly spoken of. All those are *false prophets* who teach any other way than that which our Lord hath

here marked out. *Who come to you in sheep's clothing*—With a form of godliness and fair professions of love; but *inwardly they are ravening wolves*—Not feeding but destroying souls; feeding themselves by the destruction of the flock. "A wolf in sheep's clothing," says Doddridge, is "grown into a proverb for a wicked man that makes a great profession of religion, yet cannot dissemble so well as not to be discovered by attentive observation; which was just the character of the Pharisees in our Saviour's days." *Ye shall know them by their fruits*—"A short, plain, easy rule," says Mr. Wesley, "whereby to know true from false prophets: and one that may be applied by people of the meanest capacity, who are not accustomed to deep reasoning. True prophets convert sinners to God; or at least confirm and strengthen those that are converted. False prophets do not. They also are false prophets who, though they may declare the very truth, and that clearly and fully, yet do not adorn, but bring a reproach upon it by their unholy conduct; and therefore are not sent of God by his Spirit, but come in their own name to declare God's word: hence, which is their grand mark, they do not turn men from the power of Satan unto God. Do men gather grapes of thorns, &c.—Can it be expected by you, in a common way, that you should reap spiritual advantage, or should obtain religious improvement, from the teaching of wicked men, or of men whom God has not called to that work?

Verses 17-20. *Even so*—As grapes are not reaped from thorns, or figs from thistles, but the fruit will always be agreeable in its nature and kind to the tree that produces it; so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit—Scriptural doctrine, declared by holy men called of God to the work of the ministry, will certainly be more or less instrumental in turning men from the evil of their ways; and every minister of Christ, or even private Christian, who is renewed in the spirit of his mind, and made a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, will bring forth the fruits of righteousness, to the praise and glory of God. For, in this respect, the fruits that men produce will certainly be answerable to the actual state and disposition of their hearts. Nor can it

A. M. 4035. 21 ¶ Not every one that saith unto
A. D. 31. me, 'Lord, Lord, shall enter into the
kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the
will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say unto me in that day, Lord,
Lord, have we "not prophesied in thy name?
and in thy name have cast out devils? and in
thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And "then will I profess unto them, I
never knew you: 'depart from me, ye that
work iniquity.

24 ¶ Therefore, "whosoever heareth these

¹ Hos. viii. 2; Chap. xxv. 11, 12; Luke vi. 46; xiii. 25; Acts
ix. 13; Rom. ii. 13; James i. 22.—² Num. xxiv. 4; John xi. 51;

indeed be otherwise in the nature of things. *For a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit*—To do so would be to act contrary to its nature. *Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit*—To bring which forth there is no aptitude or tendency in its vicious nature. *Every tree that*—After a fair and competent time of trial; *bringeth not forth good fruit*—But either produces none, or none but what is pernicious or useless; *is hewn down*—How fair and flourishing soever it may seem to be; *and cast into the fire*—To its utter destruction. Such will be the end of hypocritical professors, and all ungodly men, especially ungodly ministers: they shall assuredly be overtaken by the righteous judgment of God.

Verse 21. *Not every one, &c.*—The Lord Jesus, having declared the whole counsel of God, with regard to the way of salvation, and observed the chief hinderances of those who desire to walk therein, now closes the whole with these and the following weighty words; thereby, as it were, setting his seal to his prophecy, and impressing his whole authority on what he had delivered, that it might stand firm to all generations: *that saith, Lord, Lord*—That is, that makes a mere profession of my religion, that gives me the title of Lord and Master, or claims an interest in me as his Lord; that calls upon me and pretends to learn of me as a Teacher, to rely on me as a Saviour, to obey me as a Lawgiver, be subject to me as a King and Governor; *shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*—Shall be acknowledged as a true member of the church militant, or be admitted into the church triumphant. Some that say unto Christ, *Lord, Lord*, shall be saved, being his true disciples; but every one that does so shall not: None, indeed, shall, as Christ here declares, but such as endeavour to fulfil the whole will of God in faith and holiness, viz., that will which is described in this sermon. They that make it their care to understand the doctrine here declared, to experience the graces here delineated, to perform the duties here enjoined, to shun the hinderances here guarded against, and to embrace the helps here recommended,—they that thus comply with this holy, acceptable, and perfect will of God, shall be acknowledged loyal subjects of Christ's kingdom here, and shall undoubtedly be admitted to reign with him hereafter.

sayings of mine, and doeth them, I A. M. 4035.
will liken him unto a wise man, A. D. 31.
which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods
came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that
house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon
a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings
of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened
unto a foolish man, which built his house upon
the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods

¹ Cor. xiii. 2.—² Chap. xxv. 12; Luke xiii. 25, 27; 2 Tim.
ii. 19.—³ Psa. v. 5; vi. 8; Chap. xxv. 41.—⁴ Luke vi. 47.

Verses 22, 23. *Many will say to me in that day*—Many, both preachers and hearers, both ministers and people, *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?*—Have we not declared the mysteries of thy kingdom; preached excellent sermons; written edifying books; explained and enforced the doctrines of thy word, even the prophecies thereof, and shown their fulfilment; nay, have we not ourselves foretold future events, and in thy name *have cast out devils*—From those possessed by them, *and done many wonderful works*—Even miracles of mercy as well as of judgment? *Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you*—Though I called you to be my servants, and you professed yourselves such, I never knew you to be such, nor approved of you. So that even the working of the greatest miracles, and the uttering the most undoubted prophecies, is not a sufficient proof that a man possesses saving faith, nor will any thing of that kind avail to prove that we are now accepted of God, or are in the way to meet with acceptance of him at the day of final accounts, without the faith productive of true and universal holiness. *Depart from me, ye that work iniquity*—For none can enter heaven but those that are saved from their sins on earth. If we *die in our sins*, where Jesus is *we cannot come*.

Verses 24-27. *Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, &c.*—In these words our Lord attests, in the most solemn manner, the certain truth and infinite importance of all he had delivered in the foregoing sermon, and applies it to the consciences of his hearers. *Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them*—Whosoever he be that hears, considers, understands, believes, and obeys the doctrine which I have now taught you; *I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock*—Whatever his former conduct may have been, being now brought to repentance and amendment of life, and becoming a new creature, he lays a solid foundation for present comfort and everlasting security and joy. Observe well, reader, although *other foundation* for confidence toward God, and a hope of eternal life, *can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. iii. 11; yet we pretend in vain to build on him, if we do not obey his doctrine, and make it the rule of

A. M. 4035. came, and the winds blew, and beat
A. D. 31. upon that house; and it fell: and
great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had end-

^a Chap. xiii. 54; Mark i. 22; vi. 2;

our whole conduct. Therefore there is no inconsistency between the doctrine here advanced by our Lord, and that of the apostle in the passage just quoted; nor between the same apostle's declaring, 1 Cor. vii. 19, *Circumcision is nothing, &c., but the keeping of the commandments of God*; and his asserting to the Galatians, chap. v. 6, *That nothing availeth but faith which worketh by love*. For the faith he speaks of is always followed by obedience to the commandments of God, of which it is the root and principle. *And the rain descended, and the floods came, and beat upon that house*—These words of our Lord imply that every man's religion, with the confidence and hope which he builds thereon, must, sooner or later, be severely tried; and *it fell not, for it was founded on a rock*—Thus the religion of the true, practical Christian, with all his present comforts and future hopes, remains firm and unshaken, how severely and violently soever it may be assaulted. *And every one that heareth these sayings, and doeth them not*—Who is a mere hearer of the word, and not a doer of it, how constantly soever he may attend to hear it, and whatever zeal he may profess for the doctrine he hears; *shall be likened unto a foolish man, &c.*—A man possessed of neither foresight nor consideration; *who built his house upon the sand*—Without taking any care to find or lay a firm foundation for it, as if he were

ed these sayings, ^a the people were A. M. 4035.
astonished at his doctrine. A. D. 31.

29 ^b For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

Luke iv. 32.—^b John vii. 46.

sure that no wintry storm or tempest would ever assail it. *And the rain descended, &c. and beat upon that house, and it fell*—For the foundation being bad, neither the height of the structure, nor its wide dimensions, could be any security to it: *and great was the fall of it*—Even as great as the building had been. "A lively emblem," says Doddridge, "of the ruin which will another day overwhelm the unhappy man who trusts to an outward profession and form of godliness, when he does not sincerely and practically regard it."

Verses 28, 29. *And the people were astonished at his doctrine*—Struck with wonder, having never heard such doctrine before, nor any doctrine on religious subjects, delivered with such solemnity and sweetness, or with such force and energy. Christ's words, it appears, made a wonderful impression on their minds. *For he taught them as one having authority*—With a dignity and majesty peculiar to himself, as the great lawgiver, and with the demonstration and power of the Spirit; *and not as the scribes*—Their established teachers, "whose lectures, for the most part, were absolutely trifling; being drawn from tradition, or from the comments of other doctors, which these ignorant and corrupt teachers substituted in the place of Scripture, reason, and truth."—Macknight.

CHAPTER VIII.

The evangelist, having given us a general idea of our Lord's procedure after his entrance on his public work, by informing us, chap. iv. 23, that he went about preaching the gospel, and healing all manner of sickness; having shown that the doctrine he preached was both confirmed and recommended by the cures he wrought, and having, in the three last chapters, given us a specimen of his preaching, he comes now to give some instances of the miracles he wrought, which proved him to be a teacher come from God, and the great healer, or restorer, of a fallen and disordered world. Here we have, (1.) His cleansing of a leper, 1-4. (2.) His healing a centurion's servant afflicted with a palsy, 5-13. (3.) His healing Peter's mother-in-law of a fever, and many others, 14-18. (4.) His conversing with two persons who were inclined to follow him, and showing them how he ought to be followed, 19-22. (5.) He stills a terrible storm by a word's speaking, 23-27. (6.) He cures two demoniacs, permitting the demons which had possessed them to enter into a herd of swine, which, rushing violently into the sea, are drowned, 28-32. (7.) The inhabitants of the country, informed of this, desire him to go out of their coasts, 33, 34.

A. M. 4035. **W**HEN he was come down from
A. D. 31. the mountain, great multitudes
followed him.*

* Second Sunday, Epiphany, gospel, verse 1 to verse 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. *When he was come down from the mountain*—Where he had delivered the divine discourse contained in the preceding chapters; *great multi-*

2 ^a And, behold, there came a leper A. M. 4035.
and worshipped him, saying, Lord, A. D. 31.
if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

* Mark i. 40, &c.; Luke v. 12, &c.

tudes followed him—To the town toward which he went, desirous, probably, of receiving further instruction from him, or of witnessing the performance of some of his miraculous acts. *And, behold, there*

(6*)

A. M. 4035. 3 And Jesus put forth *his* hand, A. D. 31. and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

^b Chap. ix. 30; Mark v. 43.

came a leper—Leprosies, in those countries, were seldom curable by natural means, any more than p^oisies or lunacy. It is likely, though this leper might not mix with the people, he had heard our Lord at a distance. *And worshipped him*—That is, kneeled, or fell down before him; saying, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*—Doubtless, he had seen or been informed of some of the miraculous cures which Christ had wrought. *Jesus put forth his hand and touched him*—Though leprosy was the most nauseous of all the distempers incident to the human body, and the most infectious, insomuch that the bare sight of a leper could not fail to raise a loathing in all who looked on him; nevertheless, Jesus, with great benignity, drew near and touched this man, and, instead of being polluted by touching him, cleansed the leper with his touch, and sent him away very joyful by reason of his cure, which rendered him agreeable to himself, and gave him access again to the society of men. *Immediately his leprosy was cleansed*—Immediately on Christ's touching him, and saying, *I will, be thou clean*—How wonderful the power thus displayed! and how irresistible, one would suppose, must be the evidence, arising from such a fact, of the divine mission and authority of the person who performed such a cure; who restored, in a moment, to perfect soundness, the body of a man covered all over with the most loathsome disease imaginable! Observe, reader, the instruction which this miracle gives us. Our souls are by nature entirely overspread with the leprosy of sin, and where can we apply for help but to the healing power and recovering grace of this Divine Saviour? And be the malady ever so deep, spreading, or inveterate, we may surely adopt the words of this leper, and say, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*. And we have every reason to hope, if we so apply, that his compassion will be moved in our favour, and his power exerted for our cure.

Verse 4. *Jesus saith, See thou tell no man*—Although our Lord was now followed by a great multitude of people, yet it seems not many of them were witnesses of this miracle, Jesus, probably, taking the person aside from the people before he wrought it, otherwise, as Doddridge observes, it does not appear that there could have been room for this charge of secrecy; the meaning of which undoubtedly was, Tell no man that thou wast healed by me; that is, as some suppose, till thou hast offered thy gift to the priest; and he, by receiving it, hath owned thee to be clean from thy leprosy; lest they, hearing that thou wast cleansed by me, should, out of envy to me, refuse to acknowledge thy being cleansed. It must be observed, however, that he commanded many others absolutely to tell none of

a

4 And Jesus saith unto him, ^b See thou A. M. 4035 tell no man; but go thy way, show thy- A. D. 31 self to the priest, and offer the gift that ^c Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

^c Lev. xiv. 3, 4, 10; Luke v. 14.

the miracles he had wrought upon them. And this he seems to have done, chiefly for one or more of these reasons: 1st, to prevent the multitudes from thronging him, in the manner related Mark i. 45; 2d, to fulfil the prophecy, (Isa. xlii. 1, &c.) that he would not be vain or ostentatious: this reason St. Matthew assigns, chap. xii. 17, &c.; 3d, to avoid being taken by force and made a king, John vi. 15; and, 4th, that he might not enrage the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, who were the most bitter against him, any more than was unavoidable, Matt. xvi. 20, 21. *But show thyself to the priest*—That is, to any one of the priests to whom the rest have committed the office of examining cases of leprosy. Here it is well observed by Dr. Lightfoot, that, though the priesthood was much degenerated from its primitive institution, and many human inventions were added to God's law, touching the priest's examination of the lepers who pretended to be cleansed; yet Christ sends this leper to submit to all these human inventions, as knowing that, though they indeed corrupted, yet they did not destroy the divine institution, and annihilate the office. *For a testimony to them*—That is, offer thy gift for a testimony that thou art cleansed from thy leprosy. Dr. Campbell, by the *them* here mentioned, understands, *the people*, and therefore translates the clause, *Make the oblation prescribed by Moses for notifying [the cure] to the people*. The *them* here, says he, "could not be the *priests*, for it was only one priest, (namely, *the priest* then intrusted with that business,) to whom he [the man cleansed] was commanded to go. Besides, the oblation could not serve as an evidence to the priest. On the contrary, it was necessary that he should have ocular evidence, by an accurate inspection in private, before the man was admitted into the temple, and allowed to make the oblation; but his obtaining this permission, and the solemn ceremony consequent upon it, was the public testimony of the priest, the only legal judge, to the people, that the man's uncleanness was removed. This was a matter of the utmost consequence to the man, and of some consequence to them. Till such testimony was given, he lived in a most uncomfortable seclusion from society. No man durst, under pain of being also secluded, admit him into his house, eat with him, or so much as touch him. The antecedent, therefore, to the pronoun *them*, though not expressed, is easily supplied by the sense. To me it is equally clear, that the only thing meant to be attested by the oblation was, the cure. The suppositions of some commentators on this subject are quite extravagant. Nothing can be more evident, than that the person now cleansed was not permitted to give any testimony to the priest, or to any other, concerning the manner of his cure, or the

62

A. M. 4035. 5 ¶^d And when Jesus was entered
A. D. 31. into Capernaum, there came unto
him a centurion, beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home
sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and
heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, °I
am not worthy that thou shouldest come under
my roof: but †speak the word only, and my
servant shall be healed.

9 For I am a man under authority, having

^d Luke vii. 1, &c.—° Luke xv. 19, 21.—† Psa. cvii. 20.
Gen. xii. 3; Isa. ii. 2, 3; xi. 10; Mal. i. 11; Luke xiii. 29; Acts
x. 45; xi. 18; xiv. 27; Rom. xv. 9, &c.; Eph. iii. 6.

person by whom it had been performed. Ὁρα μη-
δενι ειπερς, See thou tell nobody. The prohibition is
expressed by the Evangelist Mark in still stronger
terms. Prohibitions of this kind were often trans-
gressed by those who received them; but that is not
a good reason for representing our Lord as giving
contradicting orders.”

Verse 5. *There came unto him a centurion*—A
captain of a hundred Roman soldiers, in Herod’s
pay; saying, *My servant lieth sick of the palsy,
grievously tormented*—Or, *afflicted*, as the word
βαρυνόμενος often signifies. *Palsies* are not at-
tended with *torment*. *Jesus saith, I will come and
heal him*—Thus showing both his kindness, and
how acceptable to him the humanity of this cen-
turion to his servant was. *The centurion answered,
Lord, I am not worthy, &c.*—That is, he signified
that he did not mean Christ should take the trouble
of going to his house, he being a Gentile, but only
that he would be so good as to command his ser-
vant’s cure, though at a distance; for he knew his
power was equal to that effect, diseases and devils
of all kinds being subject to his command, as his
[the centurion’s] soldiers were to him. *For I am
a man under authority, &c.*—As if he had said,
If I, who am but an inferior officer, can make the
soldiers under my command, and the servants in
my house, go whither I please, and do what I please,
merely by speaking to them; much more canst thou
make diseases go or come at thy word, seeing they
are all absolutely subject to thee. *When Jesus
heard it, he marvelled*—Our Lord’s *marvelling* on
this occasion, by no means implies that he was ig-
norant either of the centurion’s faith, or of the
grounds on which it was built. He knew all this
fully before the man spake one word. But as he
possessed a real human, as well as a real divine na-
ture, and is elsewhere represented as susceptible of
the human affections of *desire, aversion, joy, and
sorrow*, so he is here represented as influenced by
that of *admiration*, a passion excited by the great-
ness and beauty of an object, as well as by its novel-
ty and unexpectedness. And he expressed his ad-
miration of the centurion’s faith, in the praise which

soldiers under me: and I say to this A. M. 4035.
man, Go, and he goeth; and to an- A. D. 31.
other, Come, and he cometh; and to my ser-
vant, Do this, and he doeth it.

10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and
said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you,
I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, That many shall
come from the east and west, and shall sit down
with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the
kingdom of heaven:

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be

^b Chap. xxi. 43.—† Chap. xiii. 42, 50; xxii. 13; xxiv. 51;
xxv. 30; Luke xiii. 28; 2 Pet. ii. 17; Jude 13.

he bestowed on it, with a view to make it the more
conspicuous, declaring he had not found such *great
faith*, namely, in the divine power resident in Jesus,
(who, by outward appearance, was only a man,)
no, not in Israel. Thus he taught those around
him what to admire; not worldly pomp, or glory,
or valour, but the beauty of holiness, and the orna-
ments which are in the sight of God of great price.
Observe, reader, the wonders of grace should affect
us more than the wonders of nature or providence,
and spiritual attainments more than any achieve-
ments in this world.

Verses 11, 12. From this exalted pitch of faith,
found in a heathen, Jesus took occasion to declare
the merciful purpose which God entertained toward
all the Gentiles, namely, that he would accept their
faith as readily as the faith of the Jews, and admit
them, with the founders of the Jewish nation, to the
privileges and blessings of his kingdom. *Many,*
says he, *shall come from the east and west, &c.*—
Many, from the farthest parts of the earth, shall
embrace the terms, and enjoy the rewards, of the
gospel covenant established with Abraham. But the
Jews, who have the first title to them, shall be
shut out from the feast; from grace here, and glory
hereafter. The words, *ανακειθουσιν μετα Αβρααμ,
&c.*, properly signify, *shall sit down at table with
Abraham, &c.*, a phraseology often used in Scrip-
ture, which represents the present privileges and
future rewards of the righteous, and especially the
latter, under the idea of a sumptuous entertainment.
See Luke xiv. 15; Matt. xxii. 1; Rev. xix. 9. And,
though the joys of heaven be all of a spiritual kind,
this metaphor needs not be thought strange, since,
as Le Clerc observes, “we can neither speak our-
selves, nor understand others speaking of our state
in the life to come, unless phrases taken from the
affairs of this life be made use of.” *But the children
of the kingdom*—So he terms the Jews, even the
unbelieving Jews, because they had been born and
brought up within the pale of the visible Church,
and enjoyed all the advantages which it afforded
its members: *shall be cast out into outer darkness*—
Our Lord here alludes to the custom which the an-

A. M. 4035. cast out into outer darkness: there shall
A. D. 31. be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

14 ¶ ^k And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw ^l his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 ¶ ^m When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed

^k Mark i. 29-31; Luke iv. 38, 39.—^l 1 Cor. ix. 5.—^m Mark i. 32, &c.; Luke iv. 40, 41.

cients had of making their great entertainments, for the most part, in the evening, with candlelight. And the *outer darkness*, or darkness without the house, signifies, 1st, the state of heathenish darkness, or of ignorance and error, in which those are who are without the pale of the Church of God, and into which, it is here foretold, the Jews should be cast for their rejection of Christ; and, 2d, the state of future misery, into which, as many of them as continued till death in impenitence and unbelief, should finally be cast, with all hypocrites and unbelievers. *And Jesus said, Go thy way, &c.*—Having spoken, as observed above, he dismissed the centurion with an assurance that his servant was well; and at the same time intimated that the miracle had been wrought in consequence of, and according to, his *faith*, which, though not the meritorious cause of the cure, had been the means through which the Lord Jesus had been pleased to effect it. *And his servant was healed in the self-same hour*—Or, rather, *in that instant*, as *εν τη ωρα εκεινη*, here evidently means.

Verses 14, 15. *And when Jesus was come into Peter's house*—As is related Mark i. 29, &c.; *he saw his wife's mother laid*—Peter was then young, as were all the apostles; *sick of a fever*—Fever is ordinary distempers, and often cured by ordinary means, but this was a *great fever*, Luke iv. 38; and it is probable such means, though used, had proved ineffectual. *And he touched her hand, and the fever left her*—Namely, immediately. The cure was wrought in an instant, and not slowly, like cures produced in the course of nature, or by medicine. For though the length and violence of her distemper had brought her into a weak and languid state, her full strength returned all at once, insomuch that, rising up immediately, she prepared a supper for them, and served them while at meat, showing hereby that she was perfectly restored.

Verses 16, 17. *When even was come, they brought unto him many, &c.*—The news of this miracle being spread through the town, those who had sick relations or friends resolved to apply to Jesus for

with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick: A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, ⁿ Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

18 ¶ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19 ° And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes

ⁿ Isa. liii. 4; 1 Pet. ii. 24.—° Luke ix. 57, 58.

a cure. Only, because it was the sabbath, they did not come immediately to him. They waited till the holy rest was ended, which, according to the Jewish form of the day, was at *sunsetting*, at which time, according to Mark i. 32, and Luke iv. 40, they brought the sick in great numbers to him: and he took pity on them and healed them all, *casting out the devils* from the demoniacs *with his word*—His authoritative and powerful word, the same by which he made the world, and all things therein. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias*—That is, whereby was fulfilled, namely, in a lower sense than that primarily intended by the prophets; *saying, Himself took our infirmities, &c.*—Isaiah spoke it in a more exalted sense. The evangelist here only alludes to those words as being capable of this lower meaning also. Such instances are frequent in the sacred writings, and are elegances rather than imperfections. He fulfilled these words in the highest sense, by *bearing our sins in his own body on the tree*: in a lower sense, by sympathizing with us in our sorrows, and healing us of the diseases which were the fruit of sin.

Verses 18-20. *Now when Jesus saw great multitudes*—When Jesus did the things before mentioned he was in Capernaum, verse 5, but the multitude pressing him, he gave orders to pass over the sea of Galilee, otherwise called the sea of Tiberias, that both himself and the people might have a little rest. *And a certain scribe came*—Namely, as they went in the way from the house, out of which he came, to the shore where he proposed to embark. See Luke ix. 57. *And said unto him*, with all the appearance of profound respect, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*—Being determined to devote myself entirely to the service of thy kingdom. This scribe seems to have concluded, from the zeal with which the people flocked about our Lord, that he would soon declare himself to be the Messiah, and become a mighty prince; *Jesus*, therefore, knowing his motives to be of a worldly and ambitious nature, *saith unto him, The foxes have holes, &c.* As if he had said, Do not flatter yourself

A. M. 4035. have holes, and the birds of the air
A. D. 31. *have nests*; but the Son of man hath
not where to lay *his* head.

21 [¶] And another of his disciples said unto him,
Lord, [¶] suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and
let the dead bury their dead.

23 [¶] And when he was entered into a ship,
his disciples followed him.*

24 [¶] And behold, there arose a great tempest

[¶] Luke ix. 59, 60.—[¶] 1 Kings xix. 20.—* Fourth Sunday,
Epiphany, gospel, verse 23 to the end.

with the expectation of any temporal advantages from attending me, for I plainly tell you, that whereas (not to speak of domestic animals which are under the care of man) even the very foxes have holes, &c., for themselves and their young, *but the Son of man*, successful as his kingdom must at length be, now appears in such low circumstances, that he has not so much as a place where he may lay his head; and his followers must expect no better condition. Therefore do not follow me from any view of temporal advantage. The phrase *Son of man*, is borrowed from Daniel vii. 13, where the prophet describes the universal dominion to which the Messiah, in quality of the *Son of man*, was to be raised. This name, therefore, when applied to our Lord, at the same time that it denotes his human nature, brings into view the glorious kingdom over which, in his human nature, he was to preside. Nevertheless, on several occasions it is used in a sense which implies deep humiliation, being the name given to the ancient prophets on account of the low estimation in which they were sometimes held by their countrymen. It is the appellation which Christ commonly gives himself, and that, as it seems, out of humility, as having a relation to his mean appearance in this world.

Verses 21, 22. *And another said, Lord, &c.*—Luke informs us, chap. ix. 59, that Christ had said to this man, *Follow me*, to which command he replied, as is here stated, *Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father*—His meaning seems to be, Suffer me to continue at home with my father, who is far advanced in years, till I have performed the last filial office to him, in committing his body to the dust: for it does not appear that his father was already dead. *But Jesus said, Follow me*—Namely, immediately; *and let the dead bury their dead*—Let such as are dead in sin, spiritually dead, being insensible to the concerns of their souls and eternity, employ themselves in interring their deceased relatives and friends: or, leave the business of the world to those that are alive to it, and dead to God and things divine.

Verses 23–27. *When he was entered into the ship*—Being, as is said above, about to cross the lake; *his disciples followed him*—Even as many as were desirous of learning of him, and could get a pas-

in the sea, insomuch that the ship was ^{A. M. 4035.}
covered with the waves: but he was ^{A. D. 31.}
asleep.

25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke
him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye
fearful, O ye of little faith? Then [¶] he arose,
and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there
was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What

[¶] Mark iv. 37, &c.; Luke viii. 23, &c.—[¶] Psa. lxxv. 7;
lxxxix. 9; cvii. 29.

sage, either in that vessel or any others that were near. *And there arose a great tempest in the sea*—*Σεισμος μεγας*, a great commotion, or, agitation of the waters, namely, in consequence of a sudden change of the weather, and storm coming on: an emblem this of the storms of persecution which should afterward assault his church. *Insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves*—Which threatened to sink it and all that were in it to the bottom. So the time of man's extremity is God's opportunity: *but he was asleep*—Being fatigued, it seems, with the labours of the day. *And his disciples awoke him*—Being terribly afraid, while they beheld the sky lowering, heard the winds roaring, and observed the sea and the clouds to be driven with the fury of the tempest; *saying, Lord, save us, we perish*—Thus manifesting both their faith in his power, and their weakness in not considering who was with them in the ship. *And he saith, Why are ye fearful*—Can ye imagine that God would suffer me to be lost in a tempest? or that I would consult my own safety in the neglect of yours? The disciples, having seen their Master perform many miracles, had abundant reason to rely on his power and goodness, even in a greater danger than this. For, though their vessel had sunk, he who gave sight to the blind, cleansed the lepers, drove away palsies and fevers with speaking a word, could easily have saved them all, by making them walk firmly on the water, as he enabled one of them to do afterward. Their timidity, therefore, was altogether culpable, and the reproof he gave them just; *O ye of little faith?*—As if he had said, You undertook this voyage at my command, and are you afraid that you should perish in it? *Then he arose, and rebuked the winds*—As a master might do a company of turbulent servants. First he composed the spirits of his disciples, then the sea. *And there was a great calm*—Namely, instantly, as soon as he had uttered the words, *Peace, be still*, Mark iv. 39. *But the men marvelled*—Luke says, *Being afraid, they wondered*, chap. viii. 25: and Mark, *They feared exceedingly; saying, What manner of man is this?*—Surely he is more than man, who can thus command winds and seas! This reflection of theirs, as well as their fear in the time of danger, may seem to some unaccountable, considering to

A. M. 4035. manner of man is this, that even the
A. D. 31. winds and the sea obey him!

28 ¶ And when he was come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29 And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

Mark v. 1, &c. ;

how many and great miracles of his they had been witnesses. But it must be observed that hitherto his miracles were generally upon diseased persons, and that, till now, he had given no proof of his dominion over the elements of wind and water, which, it seems, were thought less subject to human power than distempers of the body.

Verse 28. *And when he was come to the other side, &c.*—This history is related by Mark, chap. v. 1-4, &c.; and by Luke, chap. viii. 26, 27, more at large than here by Matthew: and they report it to be done in the country of the Gadarenes, who, it is evident, were the same people with those called here Gergesenes; Gadara and Gergesa being towns near each other, and the country between them taking its name indifferently from either place. *There met him two possessed with devils*—St. Mark and St. Luke mention only one, who was probably the fiercer of the two, and the person who spoke to our Lord first. But this is no way inconsistent with the account which St. Matthew gives. *The tombs*—Doubtless those malevolent spirits love such tokens of death and destruction. Tombs were usually in those days in desert places, at a distance from towns, and were often made in the sides of caves, in the rocks and mountains. *No one could pass*—Safely. *And behold, they cried out*—Namely, the devils, using the man's tongue, *What have we to do with thee*—Why dost thou concern thyself about us?—It is a Hebrew phrase, made use of when men wish not to be troubled with the company or importunity of others. *Jesus, thou Son of God*—The devils knew him to be the Son of God, though the Jews would not believe that he was. *Art thou come to torment us before the time*—Before the great day of judgment?

Verses 30-32. *And there was a good way off from them*—That is, at a considerable distance, although, it seems, within their view; *a herd of many swine*—Which it was not lawful for the Jews to keep, much less to eat: yet great numbers of them were bred up in that extreme part of the country, out of regard to the gain of such merchandise, for they sold them to the Roman soldiers, and other Gentiles, who were very numerous in these parts. *So the devils besought him*—For they were entirely in his power, and under his control; *saying, if thou castest us*

30 And there was a good way off from them a herd of many swine feeding.

31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

Luke viii. 26, &c.

out—Which they suspected he would do; *suffer us to go into the herd of swine*—By making this request the devils acknowledged that it was not in the power even of a legion of them to do any mischief to so contemptible a creature as a swine without Christ's permission, far less could they destroy the man in whom they lodged. Indeed the whole of this history teaches us to rely on the providence of God, and not to live in fear of evil spirits. They are under the strictest restraint, and cannot hurt us without the divine permission. Mark says that they first besought him much, that he would not send them out of the country; and Luke, that he would not command them to go into the deep, *εἰς ἀβύσσον*, into the abyss, meaning, doubtless, the place where wicked spirits are punished. By requesting to be permitted to enter into the swine, "they doubtless proposed to prevent any good effect which the miracle of delivering the men from their power might have had on the Gadarenes, and to render Christ odious to that wicked people." Their design could not be hid from Jesus, nevertheless he granted their request, "not only because he knew it would render the miracle more public, but because it would prove the reality of the possession, and make men understand both how great the power of evil spirits is, and how terrible the effects of their malice would be, if they were not restrained. For no sooner was the permission granted, than the keepers, who were with the swine, and the disciples, who were at a distance, beheld, to their great astonishment, the whole herd running furiously down the mountains, and leaping from the tops of the rocks into the sea, where they were drowned, to the number of two thousand; while the possessed furious madmen became all of a sudden meek and composed, having recovered the entire use of their reason, the first exercise of which doubtless would lead them to a high admiration of his goodness, who had delivered them from the oppression of the devil. Jesus might permit the devils thus to fall on the herd as a punishment also to the Gadarenes for keeping swine, which were a snare to the Jews, and to make trial of their disposition, whether they would be more affected with the loss of their cattle, than with the recovery of the men, and the doctrine of the kingdom. Whatever were the reasons, it is certain that,

A. M. 4035. 33 And they that kept them fled, A. D. 31. and went their ways into the city, and told every thing; and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And behold, the whole city came A. M. 4035. out to meet Jesus: and when they A. D. 31. saw him, ^a they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.

^a Deut. v. 25; 1 Kings xvii. 18;

Luke v. 8; Acts xvi. 39.

though he might rightfully have used all men's properties as he pleased, yet this, and the withering of the barren fig-tree, are the only instances wherein man suffered the least damage by any thing our Lord ever did. However, neither the owners of the herd nor of the fig-tree could justly complain of their loss, since the good of mankind, not in that period and corner only, but in every succeeding age, through all countries, has been so highly promoted at such a trifling expense to them." "No miracles are more suspicious than pretended dispossessions, as there is so much room for collusion in them; but it was self-evident that a herd of swine could not be confederates in any fraud: their death, therefore, in this instructive and convincing circumstance, was ten thousand times a greater blessing to mankind than if they had been slain for food, as was intended."—See Macknight and Doddridge.

Verses 33, 34. *They that kept them—went into the city, and told every thing*—And also in the country, Luke viii. 34. They circumstantially related what had happened to the two demoniacs, and how the demons had been ejected from them. *And the whole city came out to meet Jesus*—Their curiosity was excited, and they went out in crowds to see what was done, and to satisfy themselves, on the testimony of their own senses, as to the truth of so unparalleled a fact. *And when they saw him*—And

observed the demoniacs sitting at his feet, *clothed, and in their right minds*: (the disciples having, it seems, charitably supplied them with such upper garments as they could spare,) they perceived how great Christ's power was, and were exceedingly afraid, having trespassed in the matter of the swine, which was an unclean food; or, if the herd belonged to the Syrian inhabitants of the town, they might know the law, and consequently, taking the destruction of their cattle as a rebuke, they could not but dread further punishment from this prophet of the Jews, who was come to vindicate the neglected institutions of Moses; and therefore *besought him that he would depart out of their coasts*—For they loved their swine better than their souls! And are not many of the same mind? And Jesus, who never forced his company on those who were so insensible of its value as not to desire it, nor wrought miracles of healing without being asked, *went into the ship and returned back again*, Luke viii. 37. Thus the destruction of the swine had the effect which the devils proposed. The men, however, who had been possessed by the demons, but were now delivered, and in their right minds, and, no doubt, full of the praises of Jesus, remained in the country, by his direction, to be living witnesses of his power and goodness, and of the stupidity and ingratitude of these Gadarenes. Mark v. 19.

CHAPTER IX.

Christ, on his return to Capernaum, (1.) cures a paralytic, who was let down through the roof of the house, 1-8. (2.) He calls Matthew, eats and converses freely with publicans and sinners, and vindicates his conduct in so doing, 9-13. (3.) Reasons in defence of his disciples, who were blamed for not fasting, after the example of the Pharisees, 14-17. (4.) Heals a diseased woman, and restores to life a ruler's daughter, 18-26. (5.) He gives sight to two blind men, 27-31. (6.) Dispossesses a demoniac, 32-34. (7.) Goes through the cities and villages, teaching and working miracles; and, being greatly affected with the state of darkness and sin in which the Jewish people now were, directs his disciples to pray for instructors to be raised up and sent to them, 35-38.

A. M. 4035. AND he entered into a ship,* and A. D. 31. passed over, ^a and came into his own city.

2 ^b And behold, they brought to A. M. 4035. him a man sick of the palsy, lying A. D. 31. on a bed: ^c and Jesus, seeing their faith, said

* Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 1 to verse 9.

^a Chap. iv. 13.—^b Mark ii. 3; Luke v. 18.—^c Chap. viii. 10.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1. *He came into his own city*—Namely, Capernaum. *And they brought him a man sick of the palsy*—The history of this miracle is related Mark ii. 1-13, and Luke v. 18-26, with more circumstances than are here mentioned by Matthew, which passages the reader is therefore desired to consult,

for the further elucidation of what is here recorded. *And Jesus, seeing their faith*—Both that of the paralytic, and of them that brought him, viz., their inward persuasion of his divine power, and their confidence in his goodness; *said to the sick of the palsy, Son*—A title of tenderness and condescension, *be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee*—By this

A. M. 4035. unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be
A. D. 31. of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

3 And behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, *This man blasphemeth.*

4 And Jesus, ^d knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith

he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take A. M. 4035.
up thy bed, and go unto thy house. A. D. 31.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitude saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

9 ¶ * And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom; and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.*

10 ¶ † And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at

* Ps. cxxxix. 2; Chap. xii. 25; Mark xii. 15; Luke v. 22; vi. 8; ix. 47; xi. 17.

* Mark ii. 14; Luke v. 27.—* St. Matthew's Day, gospel, verse 9 to verse 14.—† Mark ii. 15, &c.; Luke v. 29, &c.

Jesus intimated, both to the paralytic and to those who brought him, 1st, that sin is the source of all our evils; 2dly, that, sin being forgiven, bodily distempers can do us no real or lasting harm; 3dly, that the primary end of his coming into the world was to save his people from their sins; 4thly, that remission of sins is the never-failing consequence of faith in Christ. Perhaps, however, Christ might speak thus, partly with a view to give the scribes and Pharisees occasion of some discourse.

Verses 3-8. *Behold, certain of the scribes, (Luke adds, and Pharisees,) said within themselves—That is, in their hearts, This man blasphemeth—*Attributing to himself a power (that of forgiving sins) which belongs to God only. *And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, which, it appears, they did not openly declare, (for Mark says, chap. ii. 8, He perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves,) said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts—*Namely, concerning me, on account of these words which I have spoken? *For whether is easier, &c.—*Do not both of them argue a divine power? Therefore, if I can heal his disease, I can forgive his sins, especially as his disease is the consequence of his sins, therefore these must be taken away, if that is. *But that ye may know—*May have evident proof, *that the Son of man hath power on earth—*Even in his state of humiliation, *to forgive sins; then (turning from them) he saith to the sick of the palsy, Arise, &c., and he arose—*Thus Jesus gave the Pharisees a twofold demonstration of his divinity: 1st, by showing that he knew their thoughts; for to search the hearts and know the thoughts of mankind is not in the power either of men or angels, but is the prerogative of God only; 2dly, by assuming to himself, and manifesting undeniably, that he possessed power to forgive sins. *But when the multitude saw it, they marvelled—*They were all amazed, says Mark, *and glorified God, &c.—*So, what was to the scribes an occasion of blaspheming, was to the people an incitement to praise God.

Verse 9. *And as Jesus passed from thence—*That is, from the house in which the paralytic had been cured, *he saw a man named Matthew—*Modestly so called by himself: the other evangelists call him by his more honourable name, *Levi; setting at the*

*receipt of custom—*In the very height of his business. The expression *επι το τελωνιον*, here rendered *the receipt of custom*, seems properly to mean the place where custom was received. Some late translators render it, *the custom-house*; "but have we any reason," says Campbell, "to say it was a house?" The Syriac name is no evidence that it was; for, like the Hebrew, they use the word *beth* [*house*] with great latitude of signification. Most probably it was a temporary stall which could easily be erected in any place where occasion required. The word *office*, (signifying a place where any particular business is transacted, whether within doors or without,) seems an unexceptionable name for the place. *And he saith unto him, Follow me—*A word which was immediately attended with a secret power, *so that he arose and followed him—*He immediately obeyed the call, consigning, doubtless, his books and cash to some more careful hand. "Porphyry and Julian, two noted ancient enemies of Christianity, have blamed Matthew for thus rashly, as they are pleased to call it, following one of whom he had so little knowledge. But as it is evident that this publican lived in Capernaum, or near it, he must have often heard our Lord preach, (for it was the town where he ordinarily resided,) and may probably have been witness to a number of his miracles. Wherefore, the opposers of our religion must forgive us, if we affirm that there was neither rashness nor imprudence in the readiness which Matthew showed to follow Jesus when called. He may have been his disciple long before this, and only waited for permission to attend him."—Macknight.

Verses 10-13. *As Jesus sat at meal in the house—*Namely, of Matthew, (see Mark ii. 15,) who, being desirous at once to show his respects to Christ, and to give his former companions and acquaintance an opportunity of enjoying his instructive conversation, made a great entertainment for him, Luke v. 29. *And many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him—*Being invited by Matthew. The *publicans*, or collectors of taxes which the Jews paid the Romans, were infamous for their illegal exactions. With these were now present several other open, notorious sinners. *When the*

A. M. 4035. meat in the house, behold, many pub-
A. D. 31. licans and sinners came and sat
down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said
unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master
with ^s publicans and ^h sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto
them, They that be whole need not a phy-
sician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth,
ⁱ I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am
not come to call the righteous, ^k but sinners to
repentance.

14 ¶ Then came to him the disciples of John,

[†] Chap. xi. 19; Luke v. 30; xv. 2.—^b Gal. ii. 15.—ⁱ Hos.
vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6-8; Chap. xii. 7.—^k 1 Tim. i. 15.—^l Mark

Pharisees saw it—When they observed that Jesus ate and openly conversed with these men, being of-
fended, *they said, Why eateth your Master, &c.*—
Thus they commonly ask our Lord, Why do thy
disciples do this? and his disciples, Why doth your
Master? The Pharisees pretended to greater strict-
ness than Christ in keeping at a distance from sin-
ners, but they were far from being strict in reform-
ing themselves, or in zeal for love and doing good
to their fellow-creatures. *When Jesus heard that*
—The Pharisees, it seems, though they had not
directed their discourse to Jesus, yet had spoken so
loud as to let all the guests hear their censure.
Hence it was necessary that Christ should show
them the unreasonableness of it, and therefore *he*
said, They that be whole need not a physician, but
they that are sick—Implying that, since the Phari-
sees thought themselves righteous persons, they
had no need of his company and instructions, whereas
the publicans, whom they called sinners, being sick,
had the best right to it: and that as nobody ever
blamed a physician for going into the company of the
patients whose case he had undertaken; so, they could
not blame him for conversing with sinners, since he
did it not as their companion but as their physician,
and therefore with a view to reclaim them. *But go ye
and learn what that meaneth*—Ye that take upon
you to teach others; *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*
—That is, I will have mercy rather than sacrifice: I
love acts of mercy better than sacrifice itself. See this
explained at large in the note on Hosea vi. 6; as if
he had said, In bringing sinners to repentance, which
is the highest exercise of benevolence, I do what is
more acceptable to God than offering sacrifices,
however many or costly, or observing the most im-
portant ceremonial institutions, so unreasonably
magnified by the men of your sect, who observe
them on many occasions at the expense of charity.

Verses 14, 15. *Then*—While he was at table,
came to him the disciples of John, with those of the
Pharisees, Mark ii. 18; *saying, Why do we and the*

saying, ¹ Why do we and the Phari- A. M. 4035.
sees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? A. D. 31.

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can ^m the chil-
dren of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as
the bridegroom is with them? but the days will
come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from
them, and ⁿ then shall they fast.

16 No man putteth a piece of ¹ new cloth unto
an old garment: for that which is put in to fill
it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is
made worse.

17 Neither do men put new wine into old
bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine
runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they

ii. 18, &c.; Luke v. 33, &c.; xviii. 12.—^m John iii. 29.—ⁿ Acts
xiii. 2, 3; xiv. 23; 1 Cor. vii. 5.—^o Or, raw, or, unworked cloth.

Pharisees fast often—Have frequently our days of
solemn devotion, in which we fast, and offer up to
God many prayers and supplications? *but thy disci-
ples fast not*—Not at all, or very seldom, but on
the contrary eat and drink freely. “In the law, we
find only one fast-day enjoined, namely, the tenth
of the seventh month, on which the national atone-
ment was made. But the Jews, of their own ac-
cord, observed many other days of fasting; (see
Isa. lviii. 3;) and in our Lord’s time, days of this
kind were more frequent than ever, especially
among the Pharisees, who, it seems, generally fasted
twice a week; Luke xviii. 12; and therefore as Je-
sus did not pretend to teach his disciples a more
lax kind of doctrine than that of John and the
Pharisees, the disciples of the latter were surprised
to find them overlooking so essential a duty.” *Jesus*
said, Can the children of the bridechamber—The
companions of the bridegroom, *mourn*—Mourning
and fasting usually go together, *as long as the bride-
groom is with them?*—As if he had said, While I
am with them, it is a festival time, a season of re-
joicing, not mourning: or, as others paraphrase the
words, As it would be improper for the guests at
a wedding to fast and weep while the marriage
solemnity continues; so it would be equally im-
proper for my disciples to fast and mourn at the time
when I am personally present with them to give
them joy. *But the days will come*—And are at
no great distance, *when the bridegroom shall be*
taken from them, then shall they fast—After I am
gone, all my disciples likewise shall be *in fastings*
often—“Christ did not mean, as the Montanists
affirm, that the Pharisical fasts should be intro-
duced into his Church when he was gone, but that
his disciples should fast and mourn on account of
the various calamities befalling them after his de-
parture, and that they should repeat these fasts as
often as the circumstances of distress and danger
in which they were placed required it.”—Mack-
night.

Verses 16, 17. *No man putteth a piece of new*

A. M. 4035. put new wine into new bottles, and
A. D. 31. both are preserved.

18 ¶ While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.*

* Mark v. 22, &c.; Luke vii. 41. — * Twenty-fourth Sunday after

cloth, &c.—Our Lord, having assigned one reason why he did not enjoin his disciples to fast, namely, because it was not a proper time for it, now proceeds to give another. They were not ripe, or prepared for it, nor could have borne such severe injunctions. As if he had said, Nor do I now think it fit to lay such rigorous commands upon them, but rather to accommodate their trials to their strength; even as when a man is repairing clothes, he will not sew a piece of new cloth on an old garment, but rather chooses what is a little worn, for otherwise it will be found that the new, which is put in, being stronger than the other, taketh from the garment, and the rent is increased. The original words, *ρακος απαρον*, properly signify, "cloth that has not passed through the fuller's hands, and which is consequently much harsher than what has been washed and worn; and therefore, yielding less than that, will tear away the edges to which it is sewed."

Neither do men put new wine into old bottles—Namely, bottles made of leather, then commonly used, as they are still in some countries. *Else the bottles break*—Such bottles, chiefly made of goats' skins, when old, were not easily distended, and consequently would burst by the fermentation of new wine. *But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved*—Thus our Lord would suit the doctrine he inculcated on his disciples, and the duties which he enjoined them, to their circumstances, and kindly proportion their work to their strength, with a tender regard to their weakness, till, by degrees, they should be fitted for more difficult and humbling services. "And from his example," says Dr. Doddridge, "and the whole genius of his gospel, let us learn to make all proper allowances to those about us, that we may teach them, and train them up as they are able to bear it; not crushing them under any unnecessary load, nor denying them any indulgence which true friendship will permit us to grant them; lest the good ways of God should be misrepresented, disgraced, and abandoned, through our imprudent, though well-meaning severity: a caution to be peculiarly observed in our conduct toward young persons."

Verses 18, 19. *While he spake these things*—Namely, in Matthew's house, *behold, there came a certain ruler*—The rulers, in general, were Christ's bitterest enemies; yet there were some of them of a different character, John xii. 42. In particular, this ruler must have had a very favourable opinion of Jesus, and indeed great faith in his power, else he

19 And Jesus arose, and followed A. M. 4035.
him, and so did his disciples. A. D. 31.

20 ¶ (P And behold, a woman which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment.

21 For she said within herself, If I may

Trinity, gospel, ver. 18–26.—P Mark v. 25; Luke viii. 43.

would not have applied to him for help in the present extremity, nor have done him so much honour as to worship or fall down before him: *saying, My daughter is even now dead*—Or, *at the point of death*: see Mark v. 23. *But come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live*—This his faith was probably built on the miracles which he knew Jesus had performed, for our Lord had by this time resided in Capernaum several months. *And Jesus arose, &c.*—No sooner had this ruler made his supplication, than Christ, ever ready to assist the afflicted, rose from table and went along with him, *and so did his disciples*. We learn from Mark and Luke, that much people also *followed him*, doubtless in hopes of seeing the miracle, and *thronged him*; that is, pressed upon him in such a manner that he could not walk without much difficulty.

Verses 20–22. *And, behold, a woman which was diseased*—According to the circumstances of her disease, as mentioned by Mark and Luke, it was incurable by any human power, and she herself knew it to be so, having been afflicted with it for twelve years, and tried the skill of many physicians, probably of all that were of note in the country; and having *spent all that she had upon them*, and yet *could not be healed by any*, nay, nor relieved in any measure; for, after all their endeavours to remove her complaint, she was *nothing bettered*, but rather *grew worse*. But having heard of Jesus, and the wonderful cures which he had wrought, she believed that his power was sufficient to heal her also. Being ashamed, however, publicly to mention her case, and learning that many had before been healed by touching him, she, out of bashfulness and humility, *came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment*—The woman's distemper being of such a nature as to render those unclean whom she touched, perhaps she durst not lay her hand on the person of so great a prophet, nor touch any part of his garment but its hem; to touch which, however, she believed was sufficient to effect the cure. *For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole*—Thus showing, as well the strength of her faith, as the greatness of her humility; *and straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up*, namely, by the invisible power which Christ secretly exerted, for he well knew both what was passing in her mind, and what she did. *And Jesus turned him about, &c.*—It was necessary that the ministry of the Son of God should be rendered illustrious by all kinds of miracles, and that the whole people of the country where he lived should

A. M. 4035. but touch his garment, I shall be whole.
A. D. 31.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.)

¶ Luke vii. 50; viii. 48; xvii. 19; xviii. 42.—† Mark v. 38;

have the highest idea and the firmest persuasion of his power. And it was for advancing these great ends, that the success of this woman's attempt equalled the faith by which she was influenced. And for the same reasons, Jesus would by no means allow her faith to remain unnoticed and unapplauded. Therefore, immediately turning about in the crowd, he asked, says St. Mark, *Who touched my clothes?* This he did, that the woman might be brought to make a confession of the whole matter; that the power of her faith, and the greatness of the cure, might be made manifest, to the glory of God and for the instruction of others; and he might have an occasion given him of encouraging and comforting her, that she might persevere in the exercise of similar humility and faith, during the rest of her life. *And when he saw her*—When, in consequence of his making this inquiry, she came forward toward him, and confessed what she had done, *he said*, in a most gentle and condescending manner, *Daughter, be of good comfort*—Gr. *θάρσει, take courage: thy faith hath made thee whole*—Thou hast received a cure through thy faith in my power and goodness: hold fast that faith therefore unto the end. Doubtless she was struck with fear when Jesus turned and looked upon her, lest she should have offended him by touching his garment privately; and the more so because she was unclean according to the law. Lev. xv. 25. Hence Mark says that she came forward *fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, and fell down before him. And the woman was made whole from that hour*—“This incidental miracle appears very grand, when the relation it bears to the principal one is considered. Jesus is going to give a specimen of that almighty power, by which the resurrection of all men to immortality shall be effected at the last day; and behold, virtue, little inferior to that which is capable of raising the dead to life, issues from him through his garment, and heals a very obstinate disease, which, having baffled the powers of medicine for twelve years, had remained absolutely incurable, till the presence of Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, chased it away. The cure, though complete, was performed in an instant, and the woman knew it by the immediate ease which she felt, by the return of her strength, by the cheerfulness of her spirits, and by all the other agreeable sensations which accompany sudden changes from painful diseases to perfect health. This Mark expresses shortly and elegantly, (Εγενω τω σωματι,) *She felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.*”

23 ¶ And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

Luke viii. 51.—2 Chron. xxxv. 25.—† Acts xx. 10.

Verse 23. *When Jesus came into the ruler's house*—It appears from the parallel places in Mark and Luke, that while Jesus spake the last-mentioned words to the woman healed by touching his garment, a messenger came from the ruler's house to inform him that his daughter, whom he had left at the point of death, was now actually dead, and that therefore he did not need to trouble our Lord any further, her case being now determined and hopeless. This affecting news no doubt moved her father greatly: but Jesus, pitying his grief, bid him not fear, but only believe, *and she should be made whole*—He did not say she should be raised from the dead, but expressed himself as if she had not been dead, but only sick; for, as he was infinitely above praise, so he never courted it. On the contrary, he generally refused those honours which, as it were, obtruded themselves upon him. Thus, when he came to the ruler's house, though a great many friends and others accompanied him, he suffered none of them to go in with him except the three disciples whom he treated with the greatest familiarity, namely, Peter, James, and John, with the father and mother of the maiden. And even these he admitted for no other reason but that the miracle might have proper witnesses, who should publish it in due time for the benefit of mankind. With these attendants, having entered the house, *he saw the minstrels and the people making a noise*—Or, as Mark expresses it, he saw the *tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly*.—By minstrels, musicians are meant. The original word means flute-players. Musical instruments were used by the Jews, as well as the heathens, in their lamentations for the dead, to soothe the melancholy of surviving friends by soft and solemn notes. And there were persons who made it their business to perform this, while others sung to their music. Flutes were used especially on the death of children; louder instruments on the death of grown persons. Chardin says, that even now, in the East, the concourse of people where persons lie dead is incredible. Every body runs thither, the poor and the rich: and the former more especially make a strange noise.

Verse 24. *He said unto them, Give place*—Mark, whose narrative is more particular, says, *When he was come in, namely, into the house, he said unto them, Why make ye this ado and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth*.—As the company at the ruler's house, when Jesus entered it, were employed in making such lamentation for the damsel as they used to make for the dead, it is evident that they all

A. M. 4035. 25 But when the people were put
A. D. 31. forth, he went in, and took her by
the hand, and the maid arose.

¹ 2 Kings iv. 33, &c.

believed she was actually and finally departed: and when Jesus told them she *was not dead*, he did not mean that her soul was not separated from her body, but that it was not to continue in a state of separation from it; which was the idea the mourners affixed to the word *death*. His words, it must be observed, were spoken to those who were preparing for her interment, and performing the funeral rites belonging to it, and therefore only intimate that she was not so dead that they needed to make these preparations. He therefore expresses her state by saying that *she slept*, using the word in a sense somewhat analogous to that which the Jews put upon it when, in speaking of a person's *death*, they call it *sleep*, to intimate their belief in his existence and happiness in the other world, together with their hope of his future resurrection to a new life. On this occasion, the phrase was made use of with singular propriety to insinuate that, notwithstanding the maid was really dead, she should not long continue so. Jesus was going to raise her from the dead, and would do it with as much ease as they awaked one that was asleep. *And they laughed him to scorn*—Luke adds, *knowing that she was dead*; for they had seen all the marks and proofs of death about her. And yet, if they had given themselves time to consider, they might have understood that he spake in this manner to intimate that he was going to raise her from the dead; and the rather, as he had been sent for by her parents to heal her miraculously. But his words were ambiguous, and the mourners naturally took them in the wrong sense. Thus, while Jesus predicted the miracle, to show that it did not happen by accident, he, at the same time, delivered himself in such terms as modestly to avoid the reputation that might have accrued to him from so stupendous a work.

Verses 25, 26. *When the people were put forth*—Namely, the mourners, who, having expressed the dispositions mentioned above, were not worthy to behold the miracle; *he went in*—Namely, into the chamber where the corpse was lying, accompanied by none but the three disciples above mentioned, and the father and mother of the damsel, they being of all persons the most proper witnesses of the miracle, which in reality suffered nothing by the absence of the rest. For, as they were all sensible that the child was dead, they could not but be certain of the miracle when they saw her alive again, though they might not know to whom the honour of her resurrection was due. *And took her by the hand*—As if he had been going to awake her out of sleep: and, with a gentle voice, but such as the persons in the chamber could easily hear, he said, *Talitha cumi*, which is, *Damsel, arise*. See Mark. *And the maid arose*—In an instant she revived and

26 And ² the fame hereof went A. M. 4035.
abroad into all that land. A. D. 31.

27 ¶ And when Jesus departed thence, two

² Or, *this fame*.

sat up, just like a person who, being called, awakes out of a soft sleep. Luke says, *Her spirit came again*; an expression which implies that she was really dead, and that the soul exists separately after the body dies; a truth very necessary to be asserted in those days, when it was denied by many. Withal, her flesh, her colour, and her strength returning in the twinkling of an eye, she was not in the weak, languishing condition of one who, being worn out with a disease, had given up the ghost; for *she arose and walked*, Mark v. 42, being of the age of *twelve years*. She was not even in the languishing condition of those who come to life after having fainted away, but was in a state of confirmed good health: for it appears she was hungry, and therefore Jesus *commanded to give her meat*, Luke viii. 55. And her parents, seeing her flesh, and colour, and strength, and appetite returned thus suddenly with her life, were unmeasurably *astonished at the miracle*, verse 56, as well they might. He charged them, however, that they should *tell no man what was done*, an injunction which could not mean that her parents were to keep the miracle a secret, which was impossible to be done; for as the whole family, their friends, and all the people collected together to mourn, were witnesses of her death, so her restoration to life could not be hid from them, nor from any that had communication with them. But he meant, that they should not officiously blaze it abroad, nor even indulge the inclination which they might feel to speak of a matter so astonishing. The reason was, the miracle spake sufficiently for itself. Accordingly Matthew here tells us, *The fame of it went abroad into all that land*—Words which imply not only that the report of it was spread throughout that country, and that it was much spoken of, which, all circumstances considered, it could not fail to be, but that the truth of it was inquired into by many, and that upon inquiry the reality of the miracle was universally acknowledged; and, as this is the proper meaning of the observation concerning this or any other of our Lord's miracles, (namely, that *the fame of them went abroad*,) so the evangelists, by thus openly and frequently appealing to the notoriety of the facts, have given us all the assurance possible of the reality of the miracles which they have recorded. See Macknight. It may not be improper to observe here that Christ raised three dead persons to life: this child, the widow's son, and Lazarus; one newly departed, another on the bier, the third smelling in the grave: to show us that no degree of death is so desperate as to be past his help.

Verses 27-30. *And when Jesus departed thence*—Namely, from the ruler's house; *two blind men*, who probably had heard of his being there, and

A. M. 4035. blind men followed him, crying, and
A. D. 31. saying, "Thou son of David, have
mercy on us.

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus

* Chap. xv. 22; xx. 30, 31; Mark x. 47, 48; Luke xviii. 38, 39.
* Chap. viii. 4; xii. 16; xvii. 9; Luke v. 14.

waited for his coming out; *followed him*—As he went through the streets, *crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us*—The title which they here give him, shows that they believed him to be the Messiah; for, at that time, it was not only universally understood that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but *son of David* was one of the names then ascribed to him by the Jews; see chap. xii. 23; and xxii. 42–45. As these men were blind, they could have no evidence of Christ's miracles from their senses. They believed them, therefore, on the testimony of others who had seen them. Viewed in this light, their persuasion of Christ's power to cure them was an exercise of faith highly commendable in them, and which reflected great honour upon Jesus, as on the one hand it showed their sincerity and freedom from the prejudices which blinded the minds of the generality of the Jews; and, on the other, the truth and notoriety of his miracles. It was, therefore, for the glory of God and for the edification of others, that the strength of their faith should be discovered. This was done by their persevering to importune him to have mercy upon them, notwithstanding he seemed at the first to refuse them, and by the answer which they returned to his question concerning their faith. *Then*—When their faith was thus sufficiently manifested, *he touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you*—And immediately on his speaking these words, *their eyes were opened*. Such is the mighty power of the prayer of faith, and such is the honour wherewith Christ often crowns it! *And Jesus straitly charged them, &c.*—"The word *επιτιμησατο*, thus translated, is rendered by Phavorinus, *to charge, to command, to appoint with authority*: by Hesychius, *to command, or charge with a threat*. It signifies a rational, not a passionate earnestness and vehemence."—Hammond. Christ's command of silence, says Baxter, (namely, concerning the miracle,) "was partly to give us an example of avoiding ostentation and hypocrisy, and to be content with the approbation of God alone." Of other reasons why he forbade his miracles to be divulged, see note on chap. viii. 4. These men, however, were so overjoyed on account of the miracle which Christ had wrought for them, and so full of gratitude to him for the restoration of their

straitly charged them, saying, * See A. M. 4035.
that no man know it. A. D. 31.

31 * But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 * As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, * He casteth out

* Mark vii. 36.—* Chap. xii. 22; Luke xi. 14.—* Chap. xii. 24; Mark iii. 22; Luke xi. 15.

sight, that they could not forbear speaking of it wherever they came; by which means his fame was spread abroad in all that country. It had been expressly foretold by the prophet, that the Messiah should open the eyes of the blind; (see Psa. cxlvi. 8; Isa. xxxv. 5; xlii. 7;) and this is the first instance recorded by the evangelists in which Jesus proved himself to be the Messiah, by fulfilling those predictions.

Verses 32–34. *As they went out*—Namely, the men that had been blind; *behold, they brought to him a dumb man*—Whose dumbness was owing to his being *possessed with a devil*. From the circumstance of this demoniac's being dumb, Erasmus conjectures that he was also deprived of the use of his reason. If so, being insensible of his own misery, he had as little inclination as ability to apply for a cure. He could not even make his misery known by signs, and therefore needed to be brought to the Saviour by others. *And when the devil was cast out*—Namely, by the powerful word of Jesus; *the dumb spake*—Readily, distinctly, rationally, and fluently. *And the multitude marvelled*—Were astonished both at the greatness of the miracle and at the instantaneous manner in which it was wrought, as also at the many other miracles which they had just seen performed. *Saying, It was never so seen in Israel*—Not even in Israel, where so many wonders have been seen. "This reflection was perfectly just; for no one of the prophets, that we read of in the Old Testament, appears to have wrought so many beneficial miracles in his whole life, as our Lord did in this one afternoon."—Doddridge. *But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils*—Not being able to deny facts that were so notorious, in order to prevent the effect which they saw them likely to produce on the people, (namely, to convince them that Jesus was the Messiah,) being moved with the bitterest spite against him, they impudently, and contrary to all reason and common sense, affirmed that instead of being the Christ, or a prophet, he was a vile magician, who cast out devils by the help of Beelzebub, their prince. A calumny this which the Pharisees frequently uttered, but which our Lord fully confuted, as the reader will see in the notes on chap. xii. 22–30.

A. M. 4035. devils, through the prince of the
A. D. 31. devils.

35 ^b And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, ^c teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease, among the people.

36 ¶ ^d But when he saw the multitudes,

^b Mark vi. 6; Luke xiii. 22.—^c Chap. iv. 23.—^d Mark vi. 34.—^e Or, were tired and lay down.

Verses 35, 36. *Jesus went about all the cities, teaching in their synagogues*—See on chap. iv. 23. *When he saw the multitude he was moved with compassion*—Having come from heaven to earth to seek and save lost sinners, he was affected to see such multitudes desirous of instruction, and yet destitute of it, and in danger of perishing without it, being either deserted or misled by their spiritual guides, and living in ignorance of the things which it most concerned them to know, and in a state of guilt and depravity. *Because they fainted*—The original expression, *εκλελυμένοι*, denotes here a kind of faintness, or weakness, which is caused by hunger and weariness. Perhaps the expression may refer partly to the fatigue of their frequent journeys in following Christ from place to place; for many of them came, not only from the several parts of Galilee, but also from Judea and Idumea, from beyond Jordan, and the borders of Tyre and Sidon. Faintness of soul, however, is undoubtedly intended here, rather than of body. *And were scattered abroad*—Gr. *ερριμμένοι*, an expression which, according to Elsner, means exposed to continual danger, as *sheep having no shepherd*. And yet this people had many teachers; they had scribes in every city, and the priests, whose lips should have dispensed knowledge, and at whose mouth the people should have sought the law, (Mal. ii. 7,) were to be found in all parts of the land. But they had no teachers who cared for their souls; and none who were able, if they had been willing, to have given them such instruction as they needed. They had no *pastors after God's own heart*. "The teachers just mentioned," says Macknight, "were blind, perverse, lazy guides, who every day discovered their ignorance and wickedness more and more. They either neglected the office of teaching altogether, or they filled the people's minds with high notions of ritual observances and traditions, to the utter disparagement of moral duties, which in a manner they trampled under foot; so that instead of serving God, they served their own glory, their gain, and their belly. Wherefore, any appearance of religion which they had, was wholly feigned and hypocritical; inasmuch that they rather did hurt by it than were of real service to the interests of [piety and] virtue. Besides, the common people, being distracted by the disagreeing factions of the Pharisees and Sadducees, knew not what to choose or refuse. The case therefore called loudly for the compassion of Jesus,

he was moved with compassion on A. M. 4035.
them, because they ³ fainted, and were A. D. 31.

scattered abroad, ^e as sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, ^f The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few.

38 ^g Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

^f Num. xxvii. 17; 1 Kings xxii. 17; Ezek. xxiv. 5; Zech. x. 2; Luke x. 2; John iv. 35.—^g 2 Thess. iii. 1.

which indeed was never wanting to them at any time, for he always cherished the tenderest affection toward his countrymen; but it flowed particularly on this occasion, when he considered that they were in great distress for want of spiritual food." And therefore being deeply touched with a feeling of their miserable condition, he resolved to provide some remedy for it; which, as the evangelist here states, he proceeded to do immediately, directing his disciples to intercede with God to *send forth labourers into his harvest*, and immediately afterward appointing and sending those labourers.

Verses 37, 38. *Then saith he to his disciples*—To quicken their devotion and zeal, *The harvest*—Namely, of souls to be gathered in, *is plenteous*—The multitudes that followed Jesus, and expressed so earnest a desire of receiving his instructions, gave him occasion of making this reflection. He compared Judea and the neighbouring countries to fields covered with ripe corn, where nothing was wanting but reapers. See John iv. 35: and L'Enfant. *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest*—Whose peculiar work and office it is, and who alone is able to do it; *that he will send forth labourers into his harvest*—The word *εκβαλεῖν* properly means *to thrust out*, plainly implying the exercise of some degree of force. For it is an employ not pleasing to flesh and blood; so full of reproach, labour, danger, and temptation of every kind, that nature may well be averse to it. Those who never felt this, never yet knew what it is to be *labourers* in Christ's harvest. *He sends them forth*, when he calls them by his Spirit, furnishes them with grace and gifts for the work, and makes a way for them to be employed therein. "Christ's example here," says Baxter, "teacheth preachers to compassionate a willing multitude, when they want sufficient teachers, and to pray God to send forth more labourers when there are too few; and not to give over labouring themselves without being utterly disabled, though men forbid them. Some parishes in London have each about seventy thousand souls, some sixty thousand, some thirty thousand; and all the city and county, and much more, have but one bishop, and the curates or preachers cannot be heard [each] by above three thousand at once, or thereabouts." But how much greater is the population of London with its environs, and of the whole country, at the present day, than it was in Mr. Baxter's time!

CHAPTER X.

In this chapter we have, (1.) An account of our Lord's calling and commissioning his twelve disciples, (who are here named,) to co-operate with him in teaching and working miracles, 1-4. (2.) The instructions he gives them with respect to the objects of their ministry, and their mode of preaching and proceeding, 5-15. (3.) He predicts the opposition and persecutions they should meet with, and directs them how to behave in the midst of such trials, 16-25. (4.) Exhorts them not to fear, and encourages them with assurances of protection, aid, and a future reward of their labours, 26-39. (5.) He promises peculiar blessings to such as should receive and assist his servants in their work, 40-42.

A. M. 4035. A. D. 31. **AND** ^awhen he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power ¹against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, ^bwho is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son of Zebedee*, and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son of Alphaeus*, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus;

^a Mark iii. 13, 14; vi. 7; Luke vi. 13; ix. 1.—¹ Or, over. ^b John i. 42.—^c Luke vi. 15; Acts i. 13.—^d John xiii. 26. ^e Chap. iv. 15.—^f 2 Kings xvii. 24, John iv. 9, 20.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verse 1. *And when he had called his twelve disciples*—From the evangelist's naming them *the twelve*, it appears that he considered them as elected before this, though he has given no account of it in his gospel. The number seems to have relation to the twelve patriarchs and the twelve tribes of Israel. *He gave them power against unclean spirits*—Evil spirits are called *unclean*, because they are wicked, and delight in wickedness; which is the only pollution of a spiritual being. *And to heal all manner of sickness, &c.*—By this power of working miracles the apostles, though men of low degree and illiterate, were enabled to draw the attention of their countrymen, and to gain credit to the before unheard-of doctrine which they were to preach; and by our Lord's *giving* them this power he gave a striking proof of his Deity, for who but God can communicate any such power to man?

Verses 2-4. *The first, Simon*—The first who was called to a constant attendance on Christ: although Andrew had seen him before Simon, John i. 41. *James the son of Zebedee*—The fisherman, and *John his brother*—The beloved disciple; who were also called at the same time with the two former, as they were fishing at the sea of Galilee, Mark i. 19. The word *ιακωβος*, which we translate *James*, is the same name with that of the patriarch; but immemorial custom has appropriated, in our language, the name *James* to the two apostles, and *Jacob* to the patriarch. *Lebbeus*, who was also called *Judas*, or *Jude*, the brother of James. *Simon the Canaanite*—So called, it seems, because he was a native of Cana. *And Judas, named Iscariot*, from *Iscarioth*,

4 ^e Simon the Canaanite, and Judas ^f Iscariot, who also betrayed him. A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

5 ¶ These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, ^g Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of ^h the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 ⁱ But go rather to the ^j lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 ^k And as ye go, preach, saying, ^l The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: ^m freely ye have received, freely give.

^g Chap. xv. 24; Acts xiii. 46.—^h Isa. liiii. 6; Jer. i. 6, 17; Ezra xxxiv. 5, 6, 16; 1 Pet. ii. 25.—ⁱ Luke ix. 2.—^k Chap. iii. 2; iv. 17; Luke x. 9.—^l Acts viii. 18, 20.

the place of his birth, a town of the tribe of Ephraim, near the city of Samaria.

Verses 5, 6. *These twelve Jesus sent forth*—Namely, to preach the gospel and to work miracles; exercising therein his supreme authority over his Church. *And commanded, Go not into the way of the Gentiles*—That is, into their country. Their commission was thus confined now, because the calling of the Gentiles was deferred till after the more plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost. *And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not*—In travelling through Palestine the apostles would often have occasion to go into Samaria; but they were not to enter the cities thereof with a design to preach. It is true, in the beginning of his ministry, our Lord himself preached to the Samaritans with great success, John iv. 41, 42; and therefore, had he sent his apostles among them, numbers, in all probability, would have been induced to believe; but the inveterate enmity which the Jews bore to the Samaritans made the conversion of the latter improper at this time, as it would have laid a great stumbling-block in the way of the conversion of the Jews: as preaching now to the Gentiles would also have done. *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*—He calls the Jews *lost sheep*, because, as he had told his disciples, chap. ix. 36, *they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd*, and so were in danger of perishing. See Isa. xlix.

Verses 7, 8. *And as ye go, preach*—*κηρυσσετε*, proclaim, namely, with ardour and zeal, as becomes my heralds. The word is derived from *κηρυξ*, a herald. "Probably," says Doddridge, "they were to

A. M. 4035. 9 ^m Provide ² neither gold, nor silver, nor ^a brass in your purses ;

10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet ³ staves : (° for the workman is worthy of his meat.)

^m 1 Sam. ix. 7 ; Mark vi. 8 ; Luke ix. 3 ; x. 4 ; xxii. 35.
^a Or, *Get.*—² Mark vi. 8.

make this proclamation with a loud voice, as they passed through the streets of the towns they went to, as Jonah delivered his message to Nineveh." *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*—*ἤγγικεν*, hath approached. Publish everywhere the glad tidings of the approach of the Messiah's kingdom, promised by the prophets. Properly speaking, the kingdom of heaven, or gospel kingdom, did not begin till the Jewish dispensation was abolished, and therefore the apostles, in our Lord's time, and even our Lord himself, preached the *approach* only, and not the actual existence of that kingdom. But though the apostles were directed to preach the approach of this kingdom, they did not yet fully understand its nature, that it was not to be a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom, consisting in the dominion of truth and grace, of righteousness, peace, and joy within men. *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, &c.*—Perform all these miraculous cures in confirmation of your mission, to prove to men the certain truth and unspeakable importance of your message. *Freely ye have received*—All things ; in particular the power of working miracles : *freely give*—Exert that power wherever you come, and that in a manner honourable to yourselves and me : scorn the thought of making any gain of those for whom these works of mercy and power are performed. That this clause relates to the miraculous cures which the apostles were empowered to perform, and not to the stated offices of the apostolical function, is evident from Luke x. 7, where our Lord, in giving a like commission to the seventy, bid them eat and drink what was set before them, "because the labourer was worthy of his hire." Nay, in this very charge, no sooner did he order the apostles to give freely, than he forbade them to provide gold, &c., because the labourer, says he, *is worthy of his meat*, plainly insinuating that while they were preaching the gospel, they had a right to a maintenance from those who enjoyed the benefit of their labours, and should in the course of the divine providence be supplied with all things necessary.

Verses 9, 10. *Provide neither gold*—As if he said, Though I forbid you to take money for the miraculous cures which you shall perform, I do not mean that you should beforehand lay up money for your support during your journey. You are not even to provide the clothes and shoes which you may have occasion for before you return ; because you shall be supplied with whatever you need by those to whom you preach the gospel. Our Lord forbade his disciples to provide beforehand such things as might be necessary during their journey, because they would be an encumbrance and would incom-

11 ^p And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into a house, salute it.

13 ^q And if the house be worthy, let your

^p Gr. *a staff*.—^o Luke x. 7 ; 1 Cor. ix. 7, &c. ; 1 Tim. v. 18.
^r Luke x. 8.—^q Luke x. 8.

mode them in travelling. He probably also ordered them to go out thus unfurnished, partly that they might be inured, in his own lifetime, to bear the hardships they would be exposed to afterward, when discharging the apostolical office ; and partly that their faith in the providence of God might be confirmed. For it must have afforded them great comfort ever after, to reflect on the singular care that was taken of them while out on their first mission, wholly unprepared to execute such an undertaking. Accordingly this was the use which Christ himself directed them to make of it, Luke xxii. 35. It may not be improper to observe here, that the word *ζωναις*, here rendered *purses*, properly means *girdles* : because the people in the East had a custom of carrying their money in a kind of fob-pocket, or fold, made in the duplicate of their girdles. The word *τρηρα*, rendered *scrip*, was a sort of large bag, in which shepherds and those who journeyed carried their provisions. Thus the bag into which David put the smooth stones wherewith he smote Goliath, is called both a *scrip* and a *shepherd's bag*. Our Lord, in saying, *Neither two coats nor shoes*, means that they were only to take one coat and one pair of shoes, that is, only the articles of raiment which they were wearing. "In the account which Mark gives of the repetition of these instructions, immediately before the disciples took their journey, he says, they were permitted to be *shod with sandals* ; (*αλλ' υποδεμμενες σανδαλια*, vi. 9.) The sandal was a piece of strong leather or wood fastened to the sole of the foot with strings, which they tied round the foot and ankle ; but the shoe was a kind of short boot, that covered the foot and part of the leg, and was a more delicate piece of dress than the sandal."—Macknight. *Nor yet staves*—Though in the margin we read, *Gr. a staff*, which is the common reading, many manuscripts and versions have *παδος*, *staves*, which some think reconciles this place with Luke ix. 3 ; and removes the seeming contradiction from Mark vi. 8, where we read, *Take nothing save a staff only* ; that is, as they explain it, he that had a staff might take it to walk with : but none of them were to take any sort of rod or staff besides, wherewith to defend themselves, because, being the servants of the Lord, they were to be defended by his power as well as supported by his bounty. But the more probable solution of the difficulty seems to be, any one of them that had a staff in his hand, might take it : but as for those who were walking without staves, they were not to provide them.

Verses 11–13. *Into whatsoever city, &c., ye shall enter, inquire who is worthy*—That you should abide with him, that is, who is of a good character, and

A. M. 4035. peace come upon it: ^r but if it be not
A. D. 31. worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 ^a And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, ^s shake off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, ^u It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city.

^r Psa. xxxv. 13.—^s Mark vi. 11; Luke ix. 5; x. 10, 11
^t Nen. v. 13; Acts xiii. 51; xviii. 6.—^u Chap. xi. 22, 24.
^v Luke x. 3.—^w Rom. xvi. 19; Eph. v. 15.

disposed to receive the gospel. *And there abide*—In that house, till ye leave the town. It is of much consequence that a preacher of the gospel should not endanger his reputation, by taking up his lodging in a disreputable family, or by removing from one family to another, out of regard to some little matter of domestic convenience or entertainment. This is more fully expressed in the instructions to the seventy, Luke x. 7. "*In the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have: go not from house to house.*" Doubtless the disciples on some occasions might change their quarters with decency; but our Lord absolutely forbade them to do it for the sake of better entertainment or accommodation, that they might not give mankind the least cause of imagining that they served their bellies, or were particularly solicitous about conveniences. *When ye come into a house, salute it*—In the usual Jewish form, "Peace, (that is, all blessings,) be to this house." *If the house be worthy*—Of it, God shall give them the peace you wish them. If not, he shall give you what they refuse. The same will be the case when we pray for them that are not worthy.

Verses 14, 15. *Whosoever shall not receive you*—That is, entertain you kindly; nor, in an obedient manner, hearken to your words, *when you depart, &c., shake off the dust of your feet*—The Jews thought the land of Israel so peculiarly holy, that when they came home from any heathen country they stopped at the borders, and shook or wiped off the dust of it from their feet, that the holy land might not be polluted with it. Therefore the action here enjoined was a lively intimation, that those Jews who had rejected the gospel were holy no longer, but were on a level with heathen and idolaters. *Verily, It shall be more tolerable, &c.*—As if he had said, And indeed you have reason to *shake off the dust of your feet* in such a case, for whatever profession such Jews may make of their regard to the true God, and however they may continue to boast of their national privileges, their punishment at the day of final judgment shall not only be greater than that of the generality of Gentile sinners, but even than that of those monsters of unnatural wickedness who formerly inhabited Sodom and Gomorrah, and were consumed with fire and brimstone from heaven. For the people of those cities never sinned against such extraordinary light and such

16 ¶ ^a Behold, I send you forth as ^{A. M. 4035.}
sheep in the midst of wolves: ^{A. D. 31.} ^r be ye
therefore wise as serpents, and ^s harmless^t as
doves.

17 But beware of men: ^u for they will deliver you up to the councils, and ^v they will scourge you in their synagogues:

18 And ^o ye shall be brought before governors

^r 1 Cor. xiv. 20; Phil. ii. 15.—^s Or, simple.—^t Chap. xxiv. 9; Mark xiii. 9; Luke xii. 11; xxi. 12.—^u Acts v. 40.
^v Acts xii. 1; xxiv. 10; xxv. 7, 23; 2 Tim. iv. 16.

singular favours as they will do who reject the gospel now to be preached to them, with great plainness and power, by you, and attested by such miracles as I shall enable you to perform.

Verse 16. *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves*—I now send you forth weak and defenceless among a wicked, cruel, and persecuting people. "Considering the nature of the tidings which the apostles were now sent out to publish, namely, that *the kingdom of heaven was at hand*—considering, also, the number and variety of the miraculous cures which they were to be enabled to perform in confirmation of their doctrine, together with the greatness of the benefits they were to confer upon the families who should entertain them kindly, it is reasonable to think that they were flattering themselves with the hopes of great honour and acceptance wherever they came. In the mean time, the event was by no means to answer their expectation. They were everywhere to be despised, persecuted, delivered up into the hands of public justice, and punished as evil doers. Our Lord, therefore, who thought fit to forewarn them of these things, made them large promises of the divine aid, and gave them directions with respect to their conduct in every circumstance."—Macknight. *Be ye therefore wise as serpents*—On the one hand, be so prudent as not to irritate the wicked, and those who shall oppose you, either by your behaviour or your doctrine, unnecessarily, and avoid all unnecessary dangers: *and harmless as doves*—On the other hand, let not your prudence degenerate into craft, lest it lead you to betray the truth, or to encourage or countenance men in their evil practices; maintain at all times a holy simplicity of soul; and to your prudence join a harmless and inoffensive behaviour, rendering yourselves remarkable for *integrity* amid the greatest temptations, and for *meekness* amid the greatest provocations.

Verses 17, 18. *Beware of men*—That is, be on your guard against the men of the world with whom you converse, that you do not, by any inadvertency, give them advantage against you, and think not that all your innocence and all your wisdom united can screen you from persecution. *For they will deliver you up to the councils*—They will seek all occasions of mischief against you, and deliver you up to the sanhedrim, and other inferior courts of judicature: *and they will scourge you in their syna-*

A. M. 4035. and kings for my sake, for a testimony
A. D. 31. against them and the Gentiles.

19 ^d But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for * it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 ^f For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit

^d Mark xiii. 11-13; Luke xii. 11; xxi. 14, 15.—^e Exod. iv. 12; Jer. i. 7.

gogues—A sort of discipline which was used in their synagogues, where they held their courts about both civil and ecclesiastical affairs. Comp. Matt. xxiii. 34, and Acts xxii. 19. And ye shall be brought before governors—Namely, to be punished by them as malefactors, not for any crimes wherewith they can charge you, but for my sake. Although these things did not happen while the apostles were out on their first mission, yet they came to pass after Christ's ascension, when Peter and John were called before the sanhedrim, Acts iv. 6, 7, and beaten, Acts v. 40: also when James and Peter were brought before Herod, Acts xii. 3; Paul before Agrippa and his wife, and the Roman governors, Gallio, Felix, Festus; and, last of all, before the Emperor Nero, and his prefect, Helius Cæsarianus. For a testimony against them and the Gentiles—All these things will be permitted to befall you, that your innocence may be manifested, the truth of the gospel demonstrated, and an opportunity afforded you of testifying it with greater solemnity both to Jews and Gentiles. "The patience which the apostles showed under continual persecutions, and the courage wherewith they went to death, in confirmation of their doctrine, became strong proofs of their innocence and of the truth of the gospel. Moreover, if the apostles had never been brought before the supreme powers, nor defended their cause in the presence of kings and governors, it might have been said that, because Christianity could not bear a strict examination from able judges, it was preached to none but men of vulgar understanding, who were not capable of detecting it. But, when persons of the highest distinction for birth, fortune, capacity, and learning, had the gospel laid before them in the defences which the apostles were obliged to make, at the public tribunals of every country, its standing such a trial was certainly a great confirmation of its truth to persons of inferior note."—Macknight.

Verse 19. *But take no thought how or what ye shall speak*—When you are compelled to appear before such personages be not anxiously careful about your defence there, or how you shall answer for yourselves, but cheerfully confide in the divine direction, which shall certainly be given you, and shall be abundantly sufficient for you. The apostles being, in general, persons of a low education, and wholly unacquainted with the laws of the different countries whither they were to go, and with the forms of their courts, might have been much terrified at the thought of appearing before kings,

of your Father which speaketh in A. M. 4035.
you. A. D. 31.

21 ^e And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

22 And ^h ye shall be hated of all men for my

^f 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, Acts v. 8; vi. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 17.—^g Mic vii. 6; verses 35, 36; Luke xxi. 16.—^h Luke xxi. 17.

governors, and other persons of distinction, and might have feared lest, in the hurry of their spirits, they should be betrayed into some impropriety of language or behaviour, by which the cause of the gospel might be injured. Nothing, therefore, could have been more proper, or better suited to the circumstances in which they were placed, than the promise which our Lord here makes them, which, if received in faith, was sufficient to prevent a thousand anxious apprehensions. Observe, reader, neither at such a time as is here referred to, nor on any sudden call, need the true disciples of Jesus be careful what or how to answer.

Verse 21. *And the brother, who believeth not, shall deliver up the believing brother to death, and the father the child, &c.*—As if he had said, All the wisdom and justice of your apologies, though divinely inspired, will not disarm the malice of your unreasonable enemies, which shall prevail to such a degree as even to triumph over natural affection, and break asunder the strictest bonds of social life: for the nearest relations shall betray one another, not only to some slighter punishments, but even to violent and tormenting deaths. And fathers shall thus become the murderers, instead of being the guardians and protectors, of their children: and children, on the other hand, forgetting all the obligations of filial duty and affection, shall rise up, as witnesses, against their own parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men—Namely, of all that know not God. You, my apostles, notwithstanding all the humanity of your character, and benevolent design of your office, shall be the objects of general aversion, censure, and persecution, and all this for my name's sake—That is, for your attachment to me and my cause, though it be the cause of righteousness and truth, of the redemption and salvation of the human race. *But he that endureth to the end shall be saved*—But be not discouraged at the prospect of these trials, for he that perseveres in the faith and practice of the gospel, and who bears constantly and with invincible patience these persecutions, (which my grace is sufficient to enable you all to do,) shall be finally and eternally saved from all sin and misery, into the kingdom and glory of God: whatever extremities he may be called to suffer in this world, God will not only deliver him from the destruction which shall come upon the wicked, but will repay his fidelity with unspeakable and everlasting felicity in the next.

A. M. 4035. name's sake: ¹ but he that endureth
A. D. 31. to the end shall be saved.

23 But ^k when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not ^s have gone over the cities of Israel ¹ till the Son of man be come.

24 ^m The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord: if ⁿ they

¹ Dan. xii. 12, 13; Chap. xxiv. 13; Mark xiii. 13.—^k Chap. ii. 13; iv. 12; xii. ⁵; Acts viii. 1; ix. 25; xiv. 6.—^s Or, end, or, finish.—^l Chap. xvi. 28.—^m Luke vi. 40; John xiii.

Verse 23. *But, &c.*—As if he had said, I do not say this with a view to encourage you to rush upon martyrdom before you have a plain and lawful call to it; on the other hand, it will rather be your duty to prolong your useful lives to the utmost limits you lawfully may. Therefore, *when they persecute you in one city, flee to another*—And though this may contract the time of your abode in each, be not discouraged at that, which may, on the whole, be no inconvenience: for *ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel*—To preach the gospel in each of them, make what haste you will, *until the Son of man shall come*—To destroy their capital city, temple, and nation. The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus is often called *the coming of the Son of man*. See chap. xxiv. 27, 37, 39, 44; Luke xviii. 5.

Verses 24–26. *The disciple is not above his master*—As if he had said, As for the unkind usage I have warned you to expect, you have no reason to be surprised at it, considering what I have intimated respecting the persecutions awaiting my disciples *for righteousness' sake*. See Matt. v. 10–12. And, that you may bear all with a becoming fortitude, consider that they have calumniated, traduced, and persecuted me your Master, for which cause you, my disciples, cannot think it hard if they shall calumniate and persecute you: *for if they have called the master, Beelzebub, how much more, &c.*—This cannot refer to the quantity of reproach and persecution; (for in this the servant cannot be above his Lord;) but only to the certainty of it. *Fear them not therefore*—Be not afraid of their calumnies, however false or malicious, for ye have only the same usage that your Lord has: and neither shall their wickedness nor your innocence be always concealed: both shall be manifested, at least, in the day of judgment. *For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, &c.*—“The words,” says Whitby, “are capable of two good senses: 1st, Let not the dread of these persecutors deter you from preaching the gospel, as despairing of the success of it; for, though at present it seems to be hidden from the world, and it is likely to be obscured for a while by the calumnies of the Jews and others, I will cause it to shine through all the world, and dissipate all the clouds they cast over it, and will render it *mighty to cast down whatever exalts itself*

have called the master of the house A. M. 4035
⁶ Beelzebub, how much more *shall* A. D. 31.
they call them of his household?

26 Fear them not therefore: ^o for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the house-tops.

28 ^p And fear not them which kill the body,

16; xv. 20.—^a Chap. xii. 24; Mark iii. 22; Luke xi. 15; John viii. 48, 52.—⁶ Gr. *Beelzebub*.—^o Mark iv. 22; Luke viii. 17; xii. 2, 3.—^p Isa. viii. 12, 13; Luke xii. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 14.

against the knowledge of God, &c. Or, 2dly, thus, Fear not the calumnies with which they shall load you, as they did your Master, for I will make the innocence and the excellence of your doctrine as clear as the light; and your integrity in the dispensing of it, and your patience in suffering for it, to redound to your praise, honour, and glory, throughout all ages, and especially at my revelation from heaven, 1 Pet. i. 7.”

Verses 27, 28. *What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light*—The doctrines of the gospel which I deliver to you in private, and in obscure parables, preach plainly and openly, without the fear of man, in the audience of all. *And what ye hear, as it were whispered, in the ear, preach ye*—Proclaim publicly, as though you addressed multitudes, from *the house-tops*. Two customs of the Jews seem to be alluded to here. Their doctors used to whisper in the ear of their disciples what they were to pronounce aloud to others. And as their houses were low and flat-roofed, they sometimes preached to the people from thence. And, according to Hegeppus, they carried James the Just to the top of the temple to preach to the people at the passover. *And fear not them that kill the body*—Be not afraid of any thing which ye may suffer for proclaiming it, even though the boldness of your testimony should at length cost you your lives: for *they who kill the body, are not able to kill, or hurt, the soul*—The spiritual and immaterial part of you: this “will still survive in all its vigour, while its tabernacle lies in ruins.” So Dr. Doddridge, who justly observes, “These words contain a certain argument to prove the *existence* of the soul in a *separate state*, and its perception of that existence; else the soul would be as properly killed as the body.” On this argument Dr. Whitby enlarges as follows: “These words contain a certain evidence that the soul dies not with the body, but continued afterward in a state of sensibility: for that which, it is allowed, men can do to the body, it is denied that they can do to the soul. But, if by killing the body men could make the soul also to perish till the reunion and reviviscence both of body and soul; or, if by killing the body they could render the soul insensible, or deprive it of all power of thinking or perceiving any thing, they would kill the soul:”

A. M. 4035. but are not able to kill the soul: but
A. D. 31. rather fear him which is able to de-
stroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?
and one of them shall not fall on the ground
without your Father.

30 ^a But the very hairs of your head are all
numbered.

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value
than many sparrows.

^a It is in value a half-penny farthing in the original, as being the
tenth part of the Roman penny: Chap. xviii. 28.—¹ Sam.
xiv. 45; 2 Sam. xiv. 11; Luke xxi. 18; Acts xvii. 34.

for it is not easy to conceive how an intelligent, thinking, and perceiving being can be more killed than by depriving it of all sensation, thought, and perception; the body itself being killed by a total privation of sense and motion. It remains, that the soul doth not perish with the body, nor is it reduced into an insensible state by the death thereof." Add to this, our Lord may well be supposed to speak here as the Jews would certainly understand his words; now they would certainly thus understand him, it being their received opinion, [namely, that of the Pharisees,] that the soul, after the death of the body, is in bliss or misery, and therefore continues in a state of sensibility. *But, fear him, &c.*—Fear lest, being unfaithful in so important a trust, you should incur the displeasure of Him *who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell*—Who has power to fill the separate spirit with unspeakable anguish, and at the final judgment to reunite it to the body, and to condemn both to everlasting misery in that infernal prison. It must be observed, that instead of *ἀποκτείναι, to kill, the word ἀπολεσαι, to destroy, is used in this second clause, which also often signifies to torment.* "What an awful verse is this before us! How fit is it that this eternal and almighty God should be the object of our humble fear! and that in comparison of him we should fear nothing else! All the terrors and all the flatteries of the world are disarmed by this! an idea which, in every state of life, should engage us to be faithful to God; so shall we be most truly faithful to ourselves."

Verses 29–31. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing*—As if he had said, The particular providence of God is another reason for your not fearing man. For this extends to the very smallest things, even to sparrows and the hairs of your heads, which are all numbered. In other words, the meanest of God's creatures are under the protection of his providence, insomuch that nothing befalls them without its direction; and therefore your enemies cannot touch even your bodies without your heavenly Father's permission. A most consolatory doctrine this, indeed, and a strong reason why we should exercise a continual dependance on God, and in all circumstances and situations cast our *care on him who thus careth for us. Fear ye not therefore*—

32 ^r Whosoever therefore shall con-
fess me before men, ^s him will I con-
fess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 ^t But whosoever shall deny me before men,
him will I also deny before my Father which is
in heaven.

34 ^u Think not that I am come to send peace
on earth; I came not to send peace, but a
sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance

^r Luke xii. 8; Rom. x. 9, 10.—^s Rev. iii. 5.—^t Mark viii.
38; Luke ix. 26; 2 Tim. ii. 12.—^u Luke x. 49, 51–53.

Lest ye should be overlooked or neglected, ye, my rational and immortal creatures, especially ye my children, adopted and regenerated, and above all, ye ministers of my word, honoured with so important an employment as that of preaching my gospel: *ye are of more value than many sparrows*—Yea, than the whole species of them: and therefore you may assure yourselves that providence will watch over you.

Verses 32, 33. *Whosoever, &c.*—As a further encouragement to you to cast off all unnecessary cares and fears, to trust in God, and arm yourselves with courage to encounter, and resolution to endure whatever persecutions, injuries, or other trials he in his providence may permit to befall you, be assured, whatever you may now suffer for your fidelity to me, it will, on the whole, be most amply rewarded. *For whosoever shall confess me*—That is, publicly acknowledge me for the promised Messiah, receiving my whole doctrine for the rule of his faith and practice, obeying all my precepts, relying on my promises, revering my threatenings, and imitating my example: *him will I confess before my Father*—Him will I own as my true disciple in the presence of my Father at the day of final judgment, and will claim for him the rewards which my Father has promised to such. *But whosoever shall deny me*—Whosoever shall be ashamed or afraid to acknowledge his relation to me, or shall not confess me *before men*, in the sense now mentioned, *him will I also deny, &c.*—As having any relation to me, in that awful day. "There is an unspeakable majesty in this article of our Lord's discourse. Although he was now in the lowest state of humanity, he declares that his confessing us before God is the greatest happiness, and his denying us the greatest misery that can possibly befall us."

Verses 34–36. *Think not that I am come, &c.*—As if he had said, Because the prophets have spoken glorious things of the peace and happiness of the world under the reign of the Messiah, whom they have named, for that reason, *the Prince of peace*, you may imagine that I am come to put the world into that happy state forthwith; and that universal peace will be the immediate consequence of my coming. But this is far from being the case; for, though the nature of my government be such

A. M. 4035. * against his father, and the daughter
A. D. 31. against her mother, and the daughter-
in-law against her mother-in-law.

36 And ^v a man's foes *shall be* they of his
own household.

37 * He that loveth father or mother more

* Mic. vii. 6.—^v Psa. xli. 9; lv. 13; Mic. vii. 6; John xiii. 18;
* Luke xiv. 26.

as might produce abundant felicity, inasmuch as my religion breathes nothing but love, men will not lay aside their animosity, nor will they exercise a mutual friendship among themselves as soon as the gospel is preached to them. No; such is their wickedness, that they will make the gospel itself an occasion of such bitter dissensions that it will look as if I had not come to *send peace, but a sword* among men. For, as I told you before, the nearest relations shall quarrel among themselves, and both public and private divisions will follow whosoever my gospel comes with power. Yet, observe well, reader, this is not the design, though it be the event of his coming, through the opposition of devils and men to his truth and the blessed effects of it. *And a man's foes*—The foes of a man that is converted to my religion, and loves and follows me, *shall be they of his own household*—Persons of his own family, or such as are nearly related to him.

Verses 37, 38. *He that loveth father or mother more than me*—He that is not ready to give up all these when they stand in competition with his duty; *is not worthy of me*—Nor shall have any interest in my saving benefits. *And he that taketh not his cross, &c.*—Every one condemned to crucifixion by the Romans was compelled to carry the cross, on which he was to be suspended, to the place of execution. Thus our Lord himself was treated. Now, as this was not a Jewish, but a Roman punishment, the allusion to it, on this occasion, may justly be looked on as the first hint given by Jesus of the kind of death he was to suffer. And the words express this sentiment with great energy, that no man is worthy of Christ, that is, worthy to bear his name, or be accounted a true Christian, unless he be willing to suffer whatever pain or inconvenience cannot be avoided but by doing some evil or omitting some good; yea, and to endure the greatest hardships, and all sorts of persecutions, even the most shameful and painful death, rather than renounce his religion and deny Christ.

Verses 39-42. *He that findeth his life shall lose it*—He that saves his life by denying me shall lose it eternally; and he that loses his life by confessing me shall save it eternally. Or, as Macknight expresses it, "He that makes shipwreck of faith and a good conscience to save his life, shall lose that which is really his life—his everlasting happiness; whereas, he that maintaineth integrity at the expense of life, and all its enjoyments, shall find what is infinitely better—a blessed immortality." It is justly observed by Campbell, that there is a kind of a paronomasia in the sentence, whereby the same

than me, is not worthy of me: and A. M. 4035.
he that loveth son or daughter more A. D. 31.
than me, is not worthy of me.

38 * And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 ^b He that findeth his life shall lose it: and

* Chap. xvi. 24; Mark viii. 34; Luke ix. 23; xiv. 27.—^b Chap. xvi. 25; Luke xvii. 33; John xii. 25.

word is used in different senses, in such a manner as to convey the sentiment with greater energy to the attentive. "He who, by making a sacrifice of his duty, preserves temporal life, shall lose eternal life; and contrariwise." The trope has a beauty in the original which we cannot give it in a version: the word *ψυχη* being equivocal, and signifying both *life* and *soul*, and consequently being much better fitted for exhibiting, with entire perspicuity, the two meanings, than the English word *life*. The Syro-Chaldaic, which was the language then spoken in Palestine, had, in this respect, the same advantage with the Greek. *He that receiveth you receiveth me*—And as you shall be thus rewarded, so, in proportion, shall they who entertain you for my sake. *He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet*—That is, because he is such, *shall receive a prophet's reward*—Shall have a reward like that conferred on a prophet. It is evident, that by a *prophet* here is meant, not merely one that foretels future events, but a minister of God in general. And the word *δεξομαι*, rendered *receive*, plainly signifies here *to entertain in an hospitable way*, as it does also Heb. xi. 31; James ii. 25, &c. Nor can the gradation, in the following words, be understood without such an interpretation, for Jesus descends here from a prophet to a *righteous man*, and from a righteous man to a *disciple*, termed a *little one*, that is, any believer, however poor, mean, and contemptible in the world. It must be observed, that what renders the good works here mentioned valuable in the sight of God, and procures them a recompense from him, is their being done out of regard for him and his blessed Son. By the rewards here promised, Le Clerc understands the happiness of heaven, paraphrasing the words thus: "He that showeth kindness to a prophet, on account of his mission and doctrine, or to a righteous man, on account of his righteousness, especially if by so doing he exposes himself to persecution, shall be as highly rewarded as that righteous man or prophet shall be; nay, he who doth any good office whatever to the meanest of my disciples, though it should be but the small service of handing a cup of cold water to them, shall not go unrewarded," that is, if he shall give it to him *in the name of a disciple*, or with a real affection to him, on account of his relation to me. This seems to be the true interpretation of the passage. Thus also Dr. Hammond, "How great soever your persecutions are, and how dangerous soever it be to profess to be a follower of Christ, yet shall no man have reason to fear the entertaining of you; for the same protection which

A. M. 4035. he that loseth his life for my sake,
A. D. 31. shall find it.

40 ¶ ^c He that receiveth you, receiveth me ;
and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that
sent me.

41 ^d He that receiveth a prophet in the name
of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward ;

* Chap. xviii. 5 ; Luke ix. 48 ; x. 16 ; John xii. 44 ; xiii. 20 ;
Gal. iv. 14.

awaits you, and the same reward that attends you,
shall await them that receive you. It shall be as if
they had entertained, not only angels, but Christ
and God himself. He that doth support, and enable
a prophet to do His work that sent him, shall re-
ceive the same reward that he should if himself had

and he that receiveth a righteous A. M. 4035.
man in the name of a righteous man, A. D. 31.
shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 * And whosoever shall give to drink unto
one of these little ones a cup of cold water only
in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you,
He shall in no wise lose his reward.

^d 1 Kings xvii. 10 ; xviii. 4 ; 2 Kings iv. 8.—^e Chap. viii. 5, 6 ;
xxv. 40 ; Mark ix. 41 ; Heb. vi. 10.

been sent to prophesy." This, "as it is a great
incitement to others to express their kindness to
Christ's ministers and faithful servants, so is it also
to his ministers to apply themselves to his service
with a ready mind, and with the utmost diligence
in the execution of their pastoral office."—Whitby.

CHAPTER XI.

Here we have, (1.) Christ's unwearied diligence in his great work of preaching the gospel, 1. (2.) His discourse with the disciples of John concerning the evidence of his being the Messiah, 3-6. (3.) An honourable testimony given by him to John, 7-15. (4.) His representation of the perverseness of the Jewish nation, with respect both to John's ministry and his own; and a denunciation of terrible judgments about to come on some particular places, which had abused peculiar advantages and privileges, 16-24. (5.) His thanksgiving to his Father for the wise and gracious method he had taken in revealing the great mysteries of the gospel, and his gracious invitation to weary and heavy-laden sinners to come to him for rest, comfort, and salvation, 25-30.

A. M. 4035. AND it came to pass, when Jesus
A. D. 31. had made an end of command-
ing his twelve disciples, he departed thence to
teach and to preach in their cities.*

2 ¶ ^a Now when John had heard ^b in the

* Third Sunday in Advent, gospel, verse 2 to verse 11.
^a Luke vii. 18, 19, &c.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verse 1. *When Jesus had made an end of commanding, that is, of giving instruction to his twelve disciples, and thereby of preparing them for the service they were now to undertake, he departed to teach and preach in their cities*—The other cities of Israel, being unwearied and constant in his great work.

Verses 2-6. *Now when John had heard in the prison (into which he had been cast by Herod Antipas, a little after he began his public ministry, chap. iv. 12, and xiv. 3, &c.) of the works of Christ*—That is, of some of his many miracles, &c.—*He sent two of his disciples*—Not, as is probable, because he doubted himself, but to confirm their faith. And said, *Art thou he that should come*—Namely, the Messiah? *Or look we for another*—Under that character? "Considering what clear evidence John had received by a miraculous sign from heaven that Jesus was the Messiah, (see John i. 33,) and what express and repeated testimonies he himself had

prison the works of Christ, he sent A. M. 4035.
two of his disciples, A. D. 31.

3 And said unto him, Art thou ^c he that
should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go

^b Chap. xiv. 3.—^c Gen. xlix. 10 ; Num. xxiv. 17 ; Dan. ix. 24 ;
John vi. 14.

borne to this truth, it cannot reasonably be supposed that he now doubted of it. But some of his disciples, offended and discouraged by his long imprisonment, as well as the freedom of Christ's conversation, so different from the austerity used by their master and his disciples, might begin to call it in question, and therefore John might think it necessary to put them in the way of obtaining further satisfaction."—Doddridge. Now at this very time, according to Luke, (chap. vii. 21,) *Jesus cured many of their infirmities and plagues, &c.* He therefore said to these disciples, *Go and show John those things which ye hear and see*—Which are a stronger proof of my being the Messiah than any bare assertions can be. Comp. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6, and lxi. 1. *And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me*—Or brought to doubt my being the Messiah on account of the mean circumstances in which I appear. For many will be induced to question it, notwithstanding all the evidences I have given, and shall give of it.

A. M. 4035. and show John again those things
A. D. 31. which ye do hear and see :

5 ^d The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and ^e the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not ^f be offended in me.

7 ¶ ^g And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? ^h A reed shaken with the wind?

^a Isa. lxxix. 18; xxxv. 4-6; xlii. 7; John ii. 23; iii. 2; v. 36; x. 25, 28; xiv. 11.—^b Psa. xxii. 26; Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18; Jam. ii. 5.—^c Isa. viii. 14, 15; Chap. xiii. 57; xxiv. 10; xvi. 31;

Verses 7-10. *And as they departed*—Or, as Luke has it, *when they were departed, Jesus began to say concerning John*—What he would not say concerning him in the hearing of these his disciples, lest he should seem to flatter him, or to compliment him into an adherence to his former testimony. To avoid all suspicion of this kind, he deferred his commendation of him till the messengers were gone: and then delivered it to the people, to prevent all imaginations as if John were wavering in his judgment, and had sent the two disciples for his own rather than their satisfaction. *What went ye out into the wilderness, in which he preached, to see? A reed shaken by the wind*—That is, a man of an unstable disposition, of a weak and cowardly conduct? In this question, which implies a strong negation, the invincible courage and constancy of the Baptist are applauded. His imprisonment for reproving King Herod showed that he was not afraid of men; and as for his constancy, though it might seem a little shaken by the message which he sent, it was not impaired by it in the least. For his faith in Christ could not but remain inviolable, as it had been founded on a particular revelation, and on the visible descent of the Holy Spirit, accompanied by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God. *A man clothed in soft raiment*—An effeminate courtier, accustomed to fawning and flattery? You may expect to find persons of such a character in palaces, not in a wilderness. In this question, the austere and mortified life of the Baptist is praised, and the spiritual nature of the Messiah's kingdom insinuated. His forerunner did not resemble any of the officers who attend the courts of earthly princes, and consequently Christ himself was in no respect to be like an earthly prince. *A prophet? yea, and more* (Luke, much more) *than a prophet*—John justly deserved to be called a prophet, because he excelled in every thing peculiar to a prophet. He was commissioned by God, and had immediate communication with him, John i. 33; he foretold that the kingdom of heaven, spoken of by Daniel, was *at hand*. He pointed out the Messiah by revelation. He declared the terrible judgments that were to

8 But what went ye out for to see? A. M. 4035. A man clothed in soft raiment? Be- A. D. 31 hold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in king's houses.

9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, ⁱ and more than a prophet.

10 For this is *he* of whom it is written, ^k Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a

Rom. ix. 32, 33; 1 Cor. i. 23; ii. 14; Gal. v. 11; 1 Pet. ii. 8. ^l Luke vii. 24.—^m Eph. iv. 14.—ⁿ Chap. xiv. 5; xxi. 26; Luke i. 76; vii. 26.—^o Mal. iii. 1; Mark i. 2, Luke i. 76; vii. 27.

befall the Jews on account of their impenitence, their unbelief, and their rejecting the Messiah, Luke iii. 17. And he was *more than a prophet*, inasmuch as he was the Messiah's harbinger, sent to prepare the way before him, (see note on Mal. iii. 1,) an office which clothed him with a dignity superior to that of a simple prophet; not to mention that he had the honour of baptizing the Messiah himself.

Verse 11. *Among them that are born of women*—That is, among the whole race of mankind in all former ages, *there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist*—As John, with regard to his religious and moral character, was the best of men, so he had some peculiar honours superior to any prophet of former generations. "Our Lord," says Mac-knight, "honoured the Baptist with the magnificent title of the greatest of all the prophets, under the law, for four reasons. 1st, He was the subject of ancient prophecies, and had long been expected by the people of God under the character of Elias, a name given him by Malachi, because he was to possess the spirit and power of Elias. 2d, His conception and birth had been accompanied with miracles. 3d, When the season of his inspiration came, he was favoured with a clearer revelation concerning the Messiah than had been enjoyed by any of the prophets under the law. 4th, By his preaching he prepared the Jews for receiving the gospel, and consequently began that more excellent dispensation." *Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven*—That is, in the gospel dispensation, when fully opened, understood, and enjoyed in all its privileges and blessings, *is greater than he*—For Christ's ministers, and even his real people in general, under the gospel, were to receive superior supplies of the Spirit, and know many important truths respecting our Lord and his kingdom which had not been revealed to John himself. So Doddridge understands the clause. But Baxter confines it to Christ's ministers, paraphrasing the verse thus: "There hath not been a greater than John before him; as being nearest the kingdom of the Messiah: but yet the least of my ministers in this my kingdom is greater than he, and shall have more emi-

A. M. 4035. greater than John the Baptist: not-
A. D. 31. withstanding, he that is least in the
kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 ¹ And from the days of John the Baptist
until now, the kingdom of heaven ¹ suffereth
violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 ² For all the prophets and the law pro-
phesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive it, this is ² Elias
which was for to come.

15 ³ He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 ¶ ⁴ But whereunto shall I liken this
generation? It is like unto children sitting in

¹ Luke xvi. 16.—¹ Or, is gotten by force, and they that thrust
men.—² Mal. iv. 6.—³ Mal. iv. 5; Ch. xvii. 12; Luke i. 17.

ment gifts of the Spirit, as well as a more excellent
office and work; so far shall my kingdom, begun
after my ascension, excel all ages that were before
it." Others, again, think the expression, *is greater
than he*, is only applicable to Christ's first servants,
namely, the apostles and evangelists, and New Tes-
tament prophets, and interpret the words thus:
"Though the Baptist excelled all the preceding
prophets, the least inspired person in the kingdom
of heaven, the least apostle or preacher of the gos-
pel, was a greater prophet than he, being much
better acquainted with the character, disposition, and
doctrine of Christ. They were also employed, not
in making preparation for, but in erecting the Mes-
siah's kingdom; hence they were greater than the
Baptist in respect of the dignity of their office.
Moreover, having gifts bestowed on them to fit
them for that office, far superior to his, they were
greater in respect of their illumination. They had
the Spirit so dwelling in them, that, on all occasions,
they could declare the will of God infallibly, being,
as it were, living oracles. To conclude, as they
had likewise been the subjects of ancient oracles,
Acts ii. 16, they had long been expected by the peo-
ple of God."

Verse 12. *And from the days of John the Baptist*
—That is, from the time he had borne his public
testimony to the approach of the Messiah, or from
the time when he had fulfilled his ministry, *the
kingdom of heaven*—The dispensation which admits
all persons equally, upon their repentance and faith,
suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force—
The spirits of men are so excited and animated by
a desire after this kingdom, that it is, as it were,
attacked like a besieged city, men of all sorts press-
ing to get into it, with a violence like that of men
who are taking a place by storm. As if he had said,
"Multitudes are flocking around me, to be instructed
in the nature of my kingdom; and some, who were
formerly of most licentious characters, and looked
upon as utterly unfit to be subjects of the Messiah's
kingdom, are resolutely set on enjoying the bless-
ings of it." *He that hath ears to hear, let him*

the markets, and calling unto their A. M. 4035.
fellows, A. D. 31.

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and
ye have not danced; we have mourned unto
you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drink-
ing, and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drink-
ing, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous,
and a wine-bibber, ⁴ a friend of publicans and
sinners. ⁵ But wisdom is justified of her chil-
dren.

20 ¶ ⁶ Then began he to upbraid the cities

⁴ Ch. xiii. 9; Luke viii. 8; Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 29; iii. 6, 13, 22.
⁵ Luke vii. 31.—⁶ Ch. ix. 10.—⁷ Luke vii. 35.—⁸ Luke x. 13.

hear—A kind of proverbial expression, requiring
the deepest attention to what is spoken.

Verses 16–19. *Whereunto shall I liken this gen-
eration*—That is, the men of this age? They are
like those froward children, of whom their fellows
complain that they will be pleased no way. *Say-
ing, We have piped unto you, &c.*—"It was usual
in Judea, at feasts, to have music of an airy kind,
accompanied with dancing, Luke xv. 25; and at
funerals, melancholy airs, to which were joined the
lamentations of persons hired for that purpose.
The children, therefore, in that country, imitating
these things in their diversions, while one band of
them performed the musical part, if the other, hap-
pening to be froward, would not answer them by
dancing or lamenting, as the game directed, it natu-
rally gave occasion to this complaint, *We have
piped, &c.*, which at length was turned into a pro-
verb." *John came neither eating nor drinking*—
In a rigorous, austere way, like Elijah. *And they
say, He hath a devil*—He is melancholy from the
influence of an evil spirit. So, it is probable, the
Pharisees in particular said. *The Son of man
came eating and drinking*—Conversing in a free,
familiar way. *And they say, Behold a man glut-
tonous, &c.*—Jesus did not practise those mortifica-
tions which rendered the Baptist remarkable. He
fared like other men, and went into mixed com-
panies, not avoiding the society even of publicans
and sinners, but neither would they hear him; for,
notwithstanding he maintained the strictest temper-
ance himself, and never encouraged the vices of
others, either by dissimulation or example, they at-
tributed that free way of living to a certain laxness
of principle, or unholiness of disposition. *But
wisdom is justified of her children*—That is, my
wisdom herein is acknowledged by all those who
are truly wise, and all such will justify all God's
dispensations toward them in order to their salva-
tion, and will entirely acquiesce therein.

Verses 20–24. *Then began he to upbraid the
cities*—Which he had often blessed with his pre-
sence, and in which he had preached many awaken-

A. M. 4035. wherein most of his mighty works
A. D. 31. were done, because they repented not :

21 Wo unto thee, Chorazin ! wo unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago ' in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, " It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, * which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell : for if the mighty works which have been done

¹ John iii. 7, 8.—² Chap. x. 15 ; verse 24.—³ Isa. xiv. 13 ; Lam. ii. 1.—⁴ Chap. x. 15.—⁵ S. *Matthias'* Day, gospel, verse

ing sermons, and performed many astonishing miracles. It is observable, he had never upbraided them before. Indeed, at first they had received him with all gladness, Capernaum in particular. *Wo unto thee, Chorazin, &c.*—That is, miserable art thou. For these are not curses or imprecations, as has been commonly supposed ; but a solemn, compassionate declaration of the misery they were bringing on themselves. Chorazin and Bethsaida were cities of Galilee, standing by the lake of Gennesareth, in which and the neighbouring places Jesus spent a great part of his public life. See notes on chap. iv. 13-16. *If the mighty works*—The great miracles, which were done in you, had been done [of old] in Tyre and Sidon—Though cities inhabited by heathen, and remarkable for their luxury, pride, and contempt of religion, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes—That is, they would have exercised the deepest repentance, for sackcloth and ashes were used by the Jews in token of the bitterest grief. *But I say unto you*—Besides this general denunciation of wo to those stubborn unbelievers, I declare particularly that the degree of their misery will be greater than even that of Tyre and Sidon, yea, of Sodom. *And thou, Capernaum, &c.*—He mentions Capernaum separately by itself, and last of all, because, being the place of his ordinary residence, it had been blessed with more of his sermons and miracles than any other town. Nevertheless it abounded with wickedness of all kinds, and therefore he compared it to that city which, on account of the greatness of its crimes, had been the most terrible example of the divine displeasure that ever the world had beheld. *It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, &c.*—That is, the condition of the inhabitants even of the land of Sodom, in the day of the final judgment, shall be more tolerable than thy condition. For thy condemnation shall rise in proportion to thy more aggravated guilt, and to those more valuable mercies and privileges which thou hast abused. Dr. Hammond understands this passage as referring to the temporal calamities to come on those places by the Romans ; who did indeed shortly after overrun the

in thee, had been done in Sodom, A. M. 4035. it would have remained until this A. D. 31. day.

24 But I say unto you, ¹ That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

25 ¶ ² At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because ³ thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, ⁴ and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father ; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

25 to the end.—¹ Luke x. 21.—² Psa. viii. 2 ; 1 Cor. i. 19, 27 ; ii. 8 ; 2 Cor. iii. 14.—³ Chap. xvi. 17.

whole country, and made dreadful ravages in some of those cities. But, as Doddridge justly observes, " There is no evidence that the destruction of those cities was more dreadful than that of Tyre and Sidon, and it was certainly less so than that of Sodom and Gomorrah : besides, our Lord plainly speaks of a judgment that was yet to come on all these places that he mentions." From this passage, therefore, we learn " two important particulars : 1st, That the punishments to be inflicted upon wicked men in the life to come shall not be all equal, but in exact proportion to the demerit of the sins of each. 2d, That great and signal punishments, befalling sinners in this life, will not screen them from the wrath of God in the life to come ; for Jesus Christ, the judge, here declares that Sodom, though burned by fire and brimstone from heaven, shall suffer such dreadful things, that, in speaking of the pains of the damned, he mentions this city as an example of very great punishment."—Macknight.

Verses 25, 26. *At that time Jesus answered, &c.*—This word does not always imply that something had been spoken, to which an answer is now made. It often means no more than the *speaking in reference* to some action or circumstance preceding. The following words Christ speaks in reference to the case of the cities above mentioned : *I thank thee*—That is, I acknowledge and joyfully adore the justice and mercy of thy dispensations. The original word, εὐχαριστοῦμαι, sometimes denotes to *confess sins*, sometimes to *acknowledge favours*, and sometimes also to *adore or celebrate*. It is chiefly in the last of these senses that the word is to be here understood. *Because thou hast hid*—That is, because thou hast suffered these things to be hid from men, who are in other respects wise and prudent, while thou hast discovered them to those of the weakest understanding, to them who are only wise to God-ward. We have the same idiom, Rom. vi. 17, *God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed, &c.*—The thanks are not given for their having been formerly the servants of sin, but for their being then obedient. " It seems they were but a few, and those generally

A. M. 4035. 27 ° All things are delivered unto
A. D. 31. me of my Father; and no man
knoweth the Son, but the Father; ° neither
knoweth any man the Father, save the Son,
and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

° Chap. xxviii. 18; Luke x. 22; John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2;
1 Cor. xv. 27.—^d John i. 18; vi. 46; x. 15.

the lower sort of people, who embraced Christ's doctrine, and co-operated with him in erecting his kingdom; nor was his religion soon to meet with a better reception in the other countries where it was to be preached; circumstances which, in the eyes of common wisdom, were melancholy and mortifying. But our Lord foresaw that, by the direction of God, these very circumstances would become the noblest demonstrations of his personal dignity, the clearest proofs of the excellence of his religion, and the most stupendous instances of his power, who, by such weak instruments, established his dominion in every part of the habitable world, against the policy, the power, and the malice of devils and men combined to oppose it. Our Lord, therefore, properly made the rejection of the gospel by the great men of the nation, and the reception of it by persons in lower stations, the matter of a special thanksgiving, both now and afterward in Judea, Luke x. 21. *Νηπιοι*, *babes*, in Scripture language, are persons whose faculties are not improved by learning, but who, to that sagacity and understanding which is purely natural, join the dispositions of modesty, sincerity, humility, docility, and all the other engaging qualities that are to be found in children. This is plain from chap. xviii. 3. *Babes*, therefore, stand in opposition, not to men of sound judgment and reason, but to proud politicians and men of learning, who are so full of themselves that they disdain to receive instruction from others, and who make all their abilities subservient to their advancement in this world."—Macknight.

Verse 27. *All things are delivered unto me, &c.*—Here our Lord seems to address, not so much his disciples, as those of the people that stood near him, with a reference to what he had last spoken. As if he had said, Do not be led, by the example of your great and learned men, to slight and despise me; for mean and humble as my circumstances now appear, all things relating to the salvation of mankind are delivered into my hands, even all authority, power, and judgment. *And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father*—No one knoweth the mystery of his person, his character, and dignity; no one knoweth what he has done, and what he is yet to do, for the salvation of the world; save the Father that sent him. "These words evidently declare that there is something inexplicably mysterious in the nature and person of Christ; which indeed appears in the most convincing manner, from the account elsewhere given of his Deity in Scripture." *Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, &c.*—Neither can any one savingly know God the Father, but the Son, by whom alone he is fully

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28 ¶ Come unto me, all ye that A. M. 4035.
labour and are heavy laden, and I A. D. 31.
will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, ° and learn of
me; for I am meek and ° lowly in heart;

° John xiii. 15; Phil. ii. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 21; 1 John ii. 6.—^f Zech.
ix. 9; Phil. ii. 7, 8.

comprehended in his nature and attributes, his counsels and dispensations, his works and ways; and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him—Or make him savingly known by the gospel, and the illumination of the Spirit. Thus John, *The Son of God hath given us an understanding to know*, (*τον αληθινον*), *the true one; and we are in the true one in, or through, his Son Jesus Christ.* The worship, therefore, of the Jews, who reject Christ, and consequently do not receive the knowledge of the living and true God through him, of modern Deists, and of all unbelievers, is in fact rendered to an imaginary deity; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ being to them an *unknown God*.

Verse 28. *Come unto me*—Our Lord here shows to whom he is pleased to reveal the Father, and the things said above to be hid from the wise and prudent; to those *that labour*, or, *are weary*, as *κοπιωτες* may be rendered, and *are heavy laden*; namely, those that are weary of the slavery of sin and Satan, and of the love of the world and the pursuit of its vanities, and desire and labour after a state of reconciliation and peace with God, and rest in him; and who, till they enjoy these blessings, are *heavy laden* with a sense of the guilt and power of their sins, and of the displeasure of God due to them on account thereof. To these, and also to such as are burdened with the distresses of life and various trials, Jesus graciously says, *Come unto me*—The original word, *Δεϋτε*, *come*, expresses not so much a *command*, as a *friendly request*; a familiar exhorting, desiring, and begging a person to do any thing, particularly what is pleasant, and would be profitable to him if done. *To come to Christ*, is to apply to him in faith and prayer for such blessings as we see we want. *And I—I alone*, (for no one else can,) *will give you freely*, (what you cannot purchase,) *rest*, namely, from the guilt of sin by justification, and from the power of sin by sanctification; rest, from a sense of the wrath of God and an accusing conscience, in peace with God and peace of mind; rest, from all carnal affections, and fruitless worldly cares, disquietudes, and labours, in the love of God shed abroad in your hearts; and rest in the midst of the afflictions, trials, and troubles of life, in a full assurance that all things shall work for your good, and that, though in the world you may have tribulation, in me you shall have peace. Some commentators, by the rest offered in this invitation, understand that freedom from the burdensome services of the law which Christ has granted to men through the promulgation of the gospel. And it must be owned that this interpretation is favoured by the

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A. M. 4035. ^gand ye shall find rest unto your
A. D. 31. souls.

^g Jer. vi. 16.

subsequent clause, in which men are invited to take on them Christ's yoke and burden, from the consideration that they are light and easy, namely, in comparison of Moses's yoke. There is no reason, however, for confining the *rest of the soul* here offered to that particular privilege of Christianity. It is more natural to think that it comprehends therewith all the blessings of the gospel whatsoever. Christianity, when embraced in faith and love, and possessed in the life and power of it, gives rest to the soul, because, 1st, it clearly informs the judgment concerning the most important points, removing all doubts concerning them; 2d, it settles the will in the choice of what is for its happiness; 3d, it controls and regulates the passions, and keeps them under subjection to the peace and love of God. Phil. iv. 7; Col. iii. 14, 15. See Dodd's sermon on this text.

Verses 29, 30. *Take my yoke upon you*—Believe in and obey me: hearken to me as a teacher, rely on me as a Saviour, and be subject to me as a governor. *And learn of me*—*Μαθετε απ' εμου, Be my disciples; be taught by me*, namely, all things pertaining to your acceptance with God, your duty, and your happiness: *for I am meek and lowly in heart*—*Meek* toward all men, *lowly* toward God. As an instructor, I will show myself to be most mild, gen-

30 ^hFor my yoke is easy, and my ^{A. M. 4035}
^{A. D. 31.}burden is light.

^h 1 John v. 3.

tle, and forbearing; kind and condescending toward all my disciples, directing them with tenderness, patience, and lenity, in the way to pardon, life, and salvation, not imposing on them any unnecessary burdens: and, as an example, recommending by my practice both meekness and humility; meekness by bearing all kinds of injuries, and humility by condescending to do the meanest good offices to the meanest of mankind. Learn, then, of me to be meek and humble, both in disposition and behaviour; *and ye shall find rest to your souls*—That composure, tranquillity, and satisfaction which nothing but humility and meekness, with an entire subjection to me, can give. The original words may be properly rendered, *Ye shall find refreshment to your souls*, such as you would in vain seek elsewhere; refreshment, arising from clear manifestations of the divine favour, consoling influences of his Spirit, lively hopes of his glory, and sensible communion with him. *For my yoke is easy*—Gr. *χηρος*, gracious, sweet, benign, agreeable; and *my burden light*—Or, *pleasant*, as *ελαφρον* also signifies. Such it is to those in whose hearts the love of God prevails over the love of the world and sin. To them, *the commandments of God are not grievous*, but delightful. *They love his law, and their pleasure is in it all the day long.*

CHAPTER XII.

In this chapter, (1.) To show that works of necessity and mercy are to be done on the sabbath day, Christ vindicates his disciples for plucking and eating ears of corn thereon, and his own healing a withered hand, 1-13. (2.) To avoid the fury of the enraged Pharisees, he withdraws, and is followed by multitudes, all whose sick he heals, and, by his prudence, humility, and self-denial in so doing, fulfils a remarkable prediction of Isaiah, 14-21. (3.) He heals a demoniac, who was blind and dumb, and answers the blasphemous cavils of the Pharisees, who imputed his miracles to a compact with Satan, 22-37. (4.) He refuses to grant any sign from heaven; shows the wickedness of the Jews in rejecting him, and foretels their impending ruin in the parable of the relapsed demoniac, 38-45. (5.) He manifests his affection to his disciples, and preference of obedient believers to his natural relations, 46-50.

A. M. 4035. **A**T that time ^aJesus went on the
A. D. 31. sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were a hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

^a Deut. xxiii. 25; Mark

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. *Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn*—The cornfields near Jerusalem, attended by his disciples and some of the Pharisees, whose curiosity, it is probable, prompted them to mix with the crowd on this occasion, in expectation of seeing more miracles. *His disciples began to pluck [and rub in their hands, Luke vi. 1] the ears of corn, and to eat*—Just what sufficed for present necessity.

2 But when the Pharisees saw it, ^{A. M. 4035}
^{A. D. 31.}they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.

ii. 23; Luke vi. 1.

The word *σαρας*, here used, may indifferently signify ears of any kind of grain; but probably barley is here intended, that being first ripe in those parts. Dried corn was a common food among the Jews.

Verses 2-4. *The Pharisees said, Thy disciples do what is not lawful*—The law of Moses so expressly allowed the plucking ears of corn as one passed through a field, that, malignant as they were, they pretended not to find fault with the action itself,

A. M. 4035. 3 But he said unto them, Have ye
A. D. 31.

not read ^b what David did when he was a hungered, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat ^c the show-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, ^d but only for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the ^e law how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

^b 1 Sam. xxi. 6.—^c Exod. xxv. 30; Lev. xxiv. 5.—^d Exod. xix. 32, 33; Lev. viii. 31; xxiv. 9.—^e Num. xxviii. 9;

(see Deut. xxiii. 25,) but they were perverse enough to think this to be a kind of reaping and dressing the grain, which was indeed forbidden on the sabbath. *But he said—Have ye not read what, in a case of like necessity, David did, and his followers?* and his necessity was a sufficient plea for his transgressing the law in a higher instance. *How he entered into the house of God—*Into the tabernacle: the temple not being yet built. The meaning cannot be, that David himself went into the very tabernacle, for none but priests could go in thither: but it was into the house or chamber of the high-priest that he entered, situated beside the tabernacle, and called the house of God on that account. See note on 1 Sam. xxi. 3-6. Thus the apartment in which the High-priest Eli and his servant Samuel slept, is called the house of the Lord, 1 Sam. iii. 15. *And did eat the show-bread—*Gr. τῆς ἀρτῆς τῆς προθέσεως, the bread of exhibition, or, the bread set forth. The Hebrew expression, כֶּבֶד פָּנֵי, is literally, the bread of the face, or, of the presence, so called, because it stood continually before the face, (so to speak.) of Jehovah; that is, before the ark, where God was peculiarly present. It consisted of twelve loaves, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, and was set every sabbath day, by the priest who served that week, on the golden table that was in the holy place of the tabernacle or temple. When the new loaves were brought, the stale ones were taken away, but were to be eaten by the priests only. See notes on Exod. xxv. 30; Lev. xxiv. 6-9.

Verses 5, 6. *Have ye not read in the law, &c.—*He does not mean that the words following were to be found in the law, but only that they might read in the law, how the priests were obliged, on the sabbath days, to perform such servile work in the temple as, considered separately from the end of it, would have been a profanation of the sabbath, but really was not so, because it was necessary to the public worship of God, on account of which the sabbath was instituted. If it be asked what servile work the priests performed on the sabbath, the answer is obvious. On that day, as well as on other days, they made up the fires, killed, flayed, and dressed the sacrifices, and performed other pieces of manual labour necessary to the religious service which God had established among them. Nay, be-

6 But I say unto you, that in A. M. 4035.
this place is ^f one greater than the A. D. 31.
temple.

7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, ^g I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

9 ¶ ^h And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:

John vii. 22.—^f 2 Chron. vi. 18; Mal. iii. 1.—^g Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6-8; Chap. ix. 13.—^h Mark iii. 1; Luke vi. 6.

sides the continual burnt offering, the priests were obliged, on the sabbaths, to sacrifice two lambs extraordinary, by which their servile work was that day double of what it was on the other days of the week. See Num. xxviii. 9. *But in this place is one greater than the temple—*As if he had said, "If you reply that the priests were not culpable in those actions, because they were undertaken for the temple service, I acknowledge it; but at the same time I must observe, that if the temple, with its service, is of such importance as to merit a particular dispensation from the law of the sabbath, I and my disciples, whose business of promoting the salvation of men is a matter of more importance, may, on that account, with more reason take the same liberty in a case of the like necessity. According to this interpretation, the reading *μείζων*, a greater work, instead of *μείζων*, a greater person, which is authorized by many manuscripts, will have a peculiar elegance. Then the sense will be, 'There is here a much more noble work carrying on than the temple service.'"—Macknight.

Verses 7, 8. *But if ye had known what that meaneth—*If ye had known the intent of that scripture, Hos. vi. 6, *I will have mercy, &c.—*That is, I always prefer acts of mercy before matters of positive institution, when in any instance they interfere with each other; and even before all ceremonial institutions whatever; because these being only means of religion, are suspended, of course, if circumstances occur wherein they clash with love, which is the end of it: *ye would not have condemned the guiltless—*As you have now done, merely for rubbing out a handful of corn to refresh themselves in my service. *For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day—*The law enjoining the observation of every seventh day as a day of holy rest, as all other laws, is in my power, and may be altered, enforced, or dispensed with, as I see good. My disciples, therefore, are guiltless, were it only on this account, that they act by my authority, and attend on me in my ministry, as the priests attended on God in the temple. This expression, *is Lord even of the sabbath*, evidently implies, that the sabbath was an institution of great and distinguished importance. It may, perhaps, also refer to that signal act of authority which Christ afterward exerted over it, in changing

A. M. 4035. 10 And behold, there was a man
A. D. 31. which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, ¹ Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and ² if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

12 How much then is a man better than a

¹ Luke xiii. 14; xiv. 3; John ix. 16.—² Exod. xxiii. 4, 5; Deut. xxii. 4.—³ Chap. xxvii. 1; Mark iii. 6; Luke vi. 11;

it from the seventh to the first day of the week. If we suppose here a transposition of the seventh and eighth verses, then the eighth verse is a proof of the sixth.

Verse 10. *There was a man which had his hand withered*—The nerves and sinews of it being shrunk up, so that it was entirely useless. *And they*—Namely, the scribes and Pharisees, who had either mixed with the crowd that followed Jesus, or were in the synagogue before he came; *asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?*—They made this inquiry merely that they might find matter whereon to ground an accusation against him. For they fully expected he would say that it was lawful, in opposition to the doctrine of their learned men, who accounted performing cures on the sabbath a violation of the holy rest of that day. Accordingly Mark says, *They watched him whether he would heal, &c.*—So gross was their hypocrisy, that they resolved to raise an outcry against him, if on the sabbath he should give a lame man the use of his hand, while they themselves were profaning it by an action which would have polluted any day; were seeking an opportunity to murder one who had never done them any harm, but had been and was incessantly doing them good!

Verses 11–13. *And he said*—That he might show their unreasonableness, and confute them by their own practice: *What man—that shall have—Or, Who, if he have but one sheep, that on the sabbath day shall fall into a pit, and it be in danger of perishing there, will not lay hold on it, &c.*—The stress of the question does not lie on supposing a man to have only one sheep, but on one only falling into a pit; and yet, for the comparatively small value of that one, his not scrupling to undertake the labour of helping it out on the sabbath day. *How much then is a man better than a sheep?* As if he had said, If the regard you have for the life of your cattle leads you to do servile work on the sabbath, for the preservation of a single sheep, charity should much rather induce you to labour for the preservation of a fellow-creature, though the good office is to be done on the sabbath day. *Wherefore it is lawful to do well*—To save a beast, much more a man, or to perform any of the lovely acts of mercy and charity on the sabbath day. Our Lord, having spoken as above, according to St. Mark, chap. iii. 5, *looked round about upon them with anger, with a*

sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

14 ¶ Then ¹ the Pharisees went out, and ² held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew it, ³ he withdrew

John v. 18; x. 39; xi. 53.—¹ Or, *took counsel.*—² Chap. x. 23; Mark iii. 7.

holy indignation at their wickedness, *being grieved for the hardness of their hearts*, for their stupidity and impenitence, and for that condemnation and ruin which he knew they were thus bringing on themselves, as well as for the pernicious effect which their conduct would have on others. But at the same time that he testified his displeasure at the Pharisees, he relieved and comforted the infirm man, saying to him, *Stretch forth thy hand*, and, a divine power accompanying the word, he immediately stretched it out, and, in an instant, it was made sound as the other. The evangelists say no more; but leave their readers to imagine the wonder and astonishment of the numerous spectators, and the joy of the man who had recovered the use of so necessary a member.

Verses 14, 15. *Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him*—They were so incensed at the affront which they imagined they had received, in our Lord's neglecting their censure, and intimating his knowledge of the evil purposes of their hearts, (Luke vi. 8,) that they were no longer able to bear the place, and therefore withdrew. Luke says, *They were filled with madness, and communed with one another what they might do to Jesus*; or, as Matthew and Mark express it, *how they might destroy him*. Being as little able to find fault with the miracle, as they had been to answer the argument by which Jesus justified his performing it on the sabbath day, they were filled with such diabolical rage, that they acted like downright madmen. They could not but be sensible of the greatness of the miracle, and, perhaps, were convinced of the truth of his mission who had performed it; but their wrath, on account of his having violated their precepts concerning the sabbath, and their other evil passions, pushed them on to such a pitch of extravagance, that they went away and joined counsel with their inveterate enemies, the Herodians, or Sadducees, (Mark iii. 6,) in order to have him taken out of the way; for they found it was not in their power otherwise to keep the people from being impressed with his doctrine and miracles. This, it must be observed, is the first time that mention is made of a design on our Saviour's life. Thus, "while the eyes of distressed multitudes were turned to Christ as their only physician and most valuable friend, the eyes of these Pharisees were continually upon him for evil: and they be-

A. M. 4035. himself from thence: ^a and great mul-
A. D. 31. titudes followed him, and he healed
them all :

16 And ^o charged them that they should not
make him known :

17 That it might be fulfilled which was
spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

18 ^p Behold my servant, whom I have chosen ;
my beloved, ^q in whom my soul is well pleased :
I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall
show judgment to the Gentiles.

^a Chap. xix. 2.—^o Chap. ix. 30.—^p Isa. xlii. 1.—^q Chap.

held his miracles, not for their own conviction, but that they might, if possible, turn them into the means of his destruction. So ineffectual are the most obvious and demonstrative arguments, till divine grace conquer men's natural aversion to the Redeemer's kingdom, and captivate their hearts to the obedience of the faith! To have reviled and dishonoured Christ, and to have endeavoured to prevent the success of his ministry, would have been a daring crime: but these desperate wretches conspire against his life; and, different as their principles and interests were, form a transient friendship, to be cemented by his blood. Blessed Jesus! well mightest thou say, *Many good works have I shown you, and for which of them would you murder me?*—Doddridge. *But, when Jesus knew it—Or rather, Jesus, knowing it, withdrew himself from thence, in order that nothing might hinder him from fulfilling his ministry.* It appears from Mark iii. that he retired into Galilee, where he preached and wrought miracles as privately as possible, that he might avoid giving offence. His fame, however, was now so great that vast multitudes gathered round him there, among whom were many who, having seen or heard of the miracle on the infirm man at Bethesda, (John v.) and on the withered hand in the synagogue, followed him from Jerusalem and Judea. *And he healed them all*—That is, all that had need of healing. By this it appears, that it was not mere curiosity that drew together this immense multitude. Many, no doubt, were moved by that principle, but others came to him to be healed of their infirmities and diseases, and others again to hear and be instructed by his divine discourses.

Verses 16–21. *And charged them that they should not make him known*—Partly that he might avoid the envy and rage of his persecutors, and partly because the time was not yet come for him to declare himself openly to be the Messiah. *That it might be fulfilled, &c.*—Here the evangelist assigns another reason why the Lord Jesus prosecuted his ministry in this humble, meek, quiet, and unostentatious way: it was, that he might fulfil Isaiah's prophecy, chap. xlii. 1–4, in which it was foretold that he should conduct himself in this manner. It must be observed, that the passage here referred

19 He shall not strive, nor cry; nei- A. M. 4035.
ther shall any man hear his voice in A. D. 31
the streets.

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and
smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send
forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

22 ¶ ^r Then was brought unto him one pos-
sessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and he
healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb
both spake and saw.

iii. 17; xvii. 5.—^r Chap. ix. 32; Mark iii. 11; Luke xi. 14.

to is not quoted exactly according to the Hebrew original, the evangelist contenting himself with giving us the substance of it in a contracted form: nor is it quoted according to the version of the LXX., who have given but a very indifferent interpretation of it. *He shall show judgment*—The word κρισις, judgment, here used by Matthew, answers to שפוט, in the prophet, a word which, in the Old Testament, is often put for the laws of God in general. And by Christ's *showing judgment to the Gentiles*, is evidently meant his declaring the laws of religion, the eternal rules of righteousness, or the will of his heavenly Father, not only to the single nation of the Jews, but also, and especially, to the Gentile nation. *He shall not strive, nor cry, &c.*—He shall not be contentious, noisy, or ostentatious; but gentle, quiet, and lowly. *A bruised reed shall he not break*—Such as are convinced of their sinfulness and guilt, and bruised under the weight thereof. *Smoking flax shall he not quench*—The least good desire, the faintest spark of grace. He alludes to the wick of a lamp when it is first beginning to kindle, and is put out by any little motion. *Till he send forth judgment unto victory*—Till he make righteousness completely victorious over all its enemies. *And in his name*, that is, in him, *shall the Gentiles trust*, for salvation, present and eternal. See notes on Isa. xlii. 1; where the original passage is explained at large.

Verses 22–24. *Then was brought unto him*—Namely, By the person's friends, *one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb*—Many, no doubt, supposed these defects to be merely natural: but the Spirit of God saw otherwise, and gives the true account, both of the disorder and the cure. How many other disorders, seemingly natural, may even now be owing to the same cause! *And he healed him*—He immediately expelled the evil spirit, and in an instant removed the effects of his diabolical influence: *And all the people were amazed*—At so extraordinary a miracle, by which the noblest sense, and likewise the most useful faculty of the human body, were restored together: *and said, Is not this the Son of David?*—that is, The Messiah. *But when the Pharisees—Who were present, and the scribes, who had come down from Jerusalem, heard it, that is, heard this natural reflection of the people.*

A. M. 4035. 23 And all the people were amazed,
A. D. 31. and said, Is not this the son of David ?

24 ¶ But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by ² Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus 'knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation ; and every city

or house divided against itself shall not stand : A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself ; how shall then his kingdom stand ?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out ? therefore they shall be your judges.

* Chap. ix. 34 ; Mark iii. 22 ; Luke xi. 15.—² Gr. *Beelzebub* :

and so verse 27.—¹ Chap. ix. 4 ; John ii. 26 ; Rev. ii. 22.

and observed that they were beginning to infer, from the wonderful miracles which they saw Jesus perform, that he was the expected Messiah ; fearing lest such a belief, if it should gain ground, would put an end to their credit with, and authority over, the people, they said, *This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, &c.*—Thus giving the most malicious and unreasonable turn to the matter which could be imagined.

Verses 25, 26. *And Jesus knew their thoughts*—“ It often happens, that through ignorance or weakness men form wrong judgments of things ;” a conduct which, though censurable, admits of some excuse : “ but when wrong judgments proceed from evil dispositions, then, indeed, do they become highly culpable. Therefore, to show that the judgment which the Pharisees passed at this time upon our Lord’s miracles was of the latter kind, the evangelist observes, that Jesus *knew their thoughts* : he knew that the wickedness of their hearts, and not the weakness of their understandings, had led them to form the opinion they had uttered, if it was their real opinion ; or rather, to affirm it contrary to the conviction of their minds, which was the reason that, at the conclusion of his defence, he reprimanded them in the sharpest manner.” *And said, Every kingdom divided against itself, &c.*—He proceeds to demonstrate the absurdity of their calumny, by an argument drawn from the common affairs of life :—As if he had said, “ If evil spirits assist me in working miracles for the confirmation of my doctrine, they do what they can to promote the spiritual worship and ardent love of the true God, and, as effectually as possible, excite men to the practice of universal justice, benevolence, temperance, and self-government ; all these virtues being powerfully recommended by my doctrine. But thus to make the evil spirits fight against themselves, is evidently to make them ruin their own interest ; unless it can be thought that the strength and welfare of a society is advanced by jarring discord and destructive civil wars. Your judgment, therefore, of my conduct, is palpably malicious and absurd.” —Macknight. The word *Beelzebub* signifies the lord or master of flies. This was the great idol of the Ekronites ; and from his name we may infer that they considered him as having the command of the various insects wherewith, in those warm climates, they were infested, and which oftentimes gathered into such swarms as proved both a noi-

some and a deadly plague. The Greeks, likewise, had a god, whose title was *μυιαρος*, *Muscarum venator*, *The destroyer of flies*. But he was in no great reputation among them, their country not being subject to this sort of calamity. The Ekronites being near neighbours to the Jews, the great veneration which they had for this idol made him the object both of the horror and detestation of the devout worshippers of the true God. Accordingly, to express in what detestation they held him, they appropriated his name to the most hateful being in the universe, calling the devil, or the prince of the evil angels, *Beelzebub* ; for the next verse shows, that *Beelzebub* and *Satan* are different names of the same person ; and consequently that Satan was considered as the prince of those demons who were cast out by Christ, and who are elsewhere represented as his angels. The word in the Greek is *Beelzebub*, which signifies, *the lord of a dunghill*, and seems to be a contemptuous change of the former name, by which it was intimated, that the noblest of the heathen deities were more fit to dwell on a dunghill than to be worshipped in a magnificent temple.

Verses 27, 28. *And if I by Beelzebub, &c.*—This is the second argument made use of by Jesus for confuting the calumny of the Pharisees ; *by whom do your children cast them out?*—As if he had said, “ For the same reason that you attribute my miracles to the devil, you may attribute all the miracles that ever were wrought in the world to the devil, and particularly the miracles of your own prophets which, nevertheless, you acknowledge to be divine.” To this purpose Dr. Chandler paraphrases the verse, “ Ye do not impute the miracles of your prophets to Beelzebub, but on the evidence of these miracles ye receive them as the messengers of God. Nevertheless, ye reject me, who work greater and more numerous miracles than they, and impute them to the power of evil spirits. Is this conduct of a piece ? Wherefore these prophets shall be your judges ; they shall condemn you.” It seems, however, more probable that, by *your children*, is meant *your disciples*, or *your countrymen* in general, for “ that many of the Jews did, at this time, attempt to cast out devils, is plain from Mark ix. 38 ; Luke ix. 49 ; Acts xix. 13 ; Josephus, *Antiq.*, viii. 2. Calvin thinks that God conferred power of this kind on some particular persons among the Jews anciently, that by thus proving his presence among them he might

A. M. 4035. 28 But if I cast out devils by the
A. D. 31.

Spirit of God, then ^a the kingdom of God is come unto you.

29 ^a Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

^a Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14; Luke i. 33; xi. 20; xvii. 20, 21.—^a Isa. xlix. 24; Luke xi. 21-23.

retain the nation in the faith of his covenant; and that the people, having experienced God's power in those instances, came foolishly to institute for themselves the office of an exorcist. Agreeably to this it may be observed, that our Lord's argument does not require that the demons were actually expelled by these exorcists. It is sufficient that the Jews thought they were expelled, and did not find fault with those pretended miracles, as they did with Christ's real ones." *Therefore they shall be your judges*—Ask them, if Satan will cast out Satan; let even them be judges in this matter. And they shall convict you of obstinacy and partiality, who impute that in me to Beelzebub, which in them you impute to God. *But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God*—As it is evident, and you cannot reasonably deny that I do; *then the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you*—The time is certainly come which God has appointed for taking the power out of the hands of the devil, in order that he may himself rule, both in the bodies and souls of men. The word *εφασκεν*, rendered *is come*, implies, *is come unawares*; before you expected it. In other words, the Messiah's kingdom is come, and you ought with joy to enter it.

Verses 29, 30. *How can one enter, &c.*—How could I cast out Satan, and destroy his works, if I did not first overcome him? "The house of the strong man (or, strong one, as *το ισχυρος* should rather be rendered) into which Christ entered, was the world, fitly called Beelzebub's house, or palace, because there he is served by luxury, lust, covetousness, pride, anger, and the other evil passions of men. The goods or vessels belonging to the strong one are the wicked, called Satan's vessels metaphorically, as Paul is called Christ's chosen vessel, Acts ix. 15. Or, by the vessels, or furniture of Beelzebub's house, we may understand the lusts and passions of men's hearts, the instruments by which he keeps possession of them." *He that is not with me is against me*—He that does not unite and co-operate with me, who am contending against Satan and his kingdom, is against me, as being unwilling that his kingdom should be destroyed. *And he that gathereth not with me*—That does not set himself, according to his ability, to gather subjects into my kingdom, and promote the cause of truth and grace among men, *scattereth abroad*—Hinders the work of God upon earth, and either prevents men from entering upon a life of piety and virtue, or obstructs their progress therein. In other words,

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30 He that is not with me is ^a against me; and he that gathereth ^a not with me scattereth abroad. A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

31 ¶ Wherefore I say unto you, ^a All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: ^a but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

^a Mark iii. 28; Luke xii. 10; Heb. vi. 4, &c.; x. 26, 29; 1 John v. 16.—^a Acts vii. 51.

there are no neuters in this war: every one must be either with Christ or against him; either a loyal subject or a rebel; and there are none upon earth who neither promote nor obstruct his kingdom. For every one does either one or the other daily. Much more criminal and fatal, then, must the character and conduct of those be, who, with deliberate, implacable malice, oppose Christ's cause, and are resolved, at all adventures, to do their utmost to bring it down, as the Pharisees were now attempting to do by these vile suggestions, whereby they endeavoured to represent Christ, who came to save men, as an accomplice with Satan, who was labouring to destroy them.

Verse 31. *All manner of sin and blasphemy*—The word rendered *blasphemy*, denotes injurious expressions, whether against God or man. When God is the object, it is properly rendered *blasphemy*. It is evident that, in this passage, both are included, as the different kinds are compared together: consequently the general term *detraction*, or *injurious speech*, ought to be employed, which is applicable alike to both; whereas the term *blasphemy*, with us, is not used of any verbal injury that is not aimed directly against God. *Shall be forgiven unto men*—That is, on condition of true repentance, and faith in the mercy of God through Christ; or, as the words evidently mean, *may be forgiven unto men*; for we are not to understand our Lord as asserting that every such sin shall actually be pardoned, but that it is, in the divine economy, capable of being pardoned. *But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men*—By the blasphemy here spoken of, we are evidently to understand injurious or impious speaking against the Spirit of God, such as the Pharisees were now guilty of; that is, attributing to the devil those miracles which Christ gave full proof that he wrought by the Holy Spirit. That this, and nothing but this, is the sin here intended, is manifest from the connection in which the words stand in this place; and more especially still from the parallel passage, Mark iii. 28-30, in which the evangelist, assigning the reason of our Lord's making this declaration, adds, *Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit*; that is, "hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of devils casteth out devils." This, then, and this only, is the *sin*, or *blasphemy*, as it should rather be called, (and as the Scriptures always call it,) *against the Holy Ghost*. It is an offence of the tongue; it is committed not by *thinking*, but by

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A. M. 4035. 32 And whosoever ^a speaketh a
A. D. 31. word against the Son of man, ^b it
shall be forgiven him : but whosoever speaketh
against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven
him, neither in this world, neither in the world
to come.

33 Either make the tree good, and ^o his fruit

^a Chap. xi. 19; xiii. 55; John vii. 12, 52.
^b 1 Tim. i. 13.

speaking, by *evil-speaking*, by belying, slandering, or reviling the Divine Spirit, by which our Lord wrought his miracles, ascribing them to the devil: which in fact was calling the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of the one living and true God, the devil: a more heinous crime than which is not to be conceived.

Verse 32. *Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man*—In any other respect, it shall be forgiven him—Upon his true repentance: *But whosoever speaketh*, namely, in this manner, *against the Holy Ghost*—and most unreasonably ascribes his extraordinary and beneficent operations to the grand enemy of God and man, *it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come*—The original words, *στε εν τωτω τω αιωνι, στε εν τω μελλοντι*, may be rendered, *neither in this age, or dispensation, (namely, the Jewish,) nor in the age, or dispensation, to come, namely, the Christian.* Thus the clause is understood by Macknight, who considers it as importing, that “no expiation was provided for the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, either under the Jewish or Christian dispensations.” But it seems rather to have been a mere proverbial expression among the Jews, for a thing that would never be done. Accordingly, in the parallel passage in Mark, we read, *He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of, or rather, is liable to, eternal damnation.* It is well known, that the Papists argue from this passage, for the remission of some sins in purgatory, after this life is ended, which are not remitted by God here. But “the Scripture,” says Whitby, “knows only two times for the remission of sins: one here upon earth, Mark ix. 6, to the penitent and believing; and the other at the day of judgment, when the great Judge shall pronounce the sentence of absolution to all his faithful servants; Christ, therefore, here signifies, that this blasphemy shall neither obtain forgiveness now, nor at the great day of final accounts: that is, shall never be forgiven. It may be proper to observe here, that as no one can be pardoned for any sins but through Christ, and in consequence of faith in him, as the Son of God and Saviour of the world; and as none can believe in him as such that supposes he wrought his miracles by the aid of the devil; and as his miracles, united with his holy life, were the chief proofs of his divine mission; therefore, those who attributed them to Satan, were of course thereby precluded from believing on him, and of consequence from obtaining pardon.” Mr. Baxter’s paraphrase

good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

34 O ^d generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? ^e for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man, out of the good treasure of

^c Chap. vii. 17; Luke vi. 43, 44.—^d Chap. iii. 7; xxiii. 33.
^e Luke vi. 45.

on the passage is to nearly the same purpose—thus: “All other sin and blasphemy against me, as I appear in my human nature, hath some excuse, and may be cured, and so pardoned: but seeing the great works of the Holy Ghost done by me, and to be done by my disciples, in miracles and sanctification, are the greatest evidences that God will give the world to convince them of the truth of my gospel; he that is convinced of the fact, that all these miracles and this holiness is wrought, and yet will deny it to be God’s attestation, and blasphemously insist that it is the work of the devil; this man rejects the greatest evidences, and shall have no greater, and so his infidelity is incurable, and aggravated with blasphemy and obstinacy, and will never be repented of, nor forgiven.”

Verses 33–35. *Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, &c.*—That is, you must allow they are both good, or both bad: for if the fruit be good, so is the tree; if the fruit be evil, so is the tree also. “Judge, therefore, by my works, of the power by which I work: if it be not a good work to heal the sick, and blind, and lame, and cast out devils, and preach repentance and forgiveness of sins, to convert and save souls, then God is not the author of them. If they be bad works, they have a bad cause; if they be good works, they have a good author: either say plainly, (you that ascribe them to the devil,) that the works are good and the devil is good; or else that the devil is bad and the works are bad: or, if you confess that the works are good, confess that they are done by the Spirit of God.”—Baxter. *O generation of vipers*—Perverse, venomous, deceitful creatures; *how can ye, being evil*—Being envious and malicious, *speak good things*—It is surely a force upon nature whenever you do so; and you will easily return to such uncharitable and impious language as we have now been hearing from you; the thoughts of your hearts showing themselves by the words of your mouths. *For out of the abundance of the heart*—The overflowing pride, envy, and malice thereof, *the mouth speaketh*—Utters words of the same nature with the corrupt source from whence they flow. *A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart*—The wisdom and piety, the truth and grace lodged there, *bringeth forth good things*—Freely and abundantly, to the edification of all with whom he converses. *And an evil man*—A man full of corrupt affections and dispositions; a man of an earthly, sensual, and devilish mind, *out of the evil treasure*—The corrupt principles and inclinations which are within him, *bringeth forth evil*

A. M. 4035. the heart, bringeth forth good things :
A. D. 31. and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 ¶ Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

† Chap. xvi. 1 ; Mark viii. 11 ; Luke xi. 16, 29 ; John ii. 18 ; 1 Cor. i. 22.—‡ Isa. lvii. 3 ; Chap. xvi. 4 ; Mark viii. 39 ;

things—Wicked words and actions, and that naturally and readily : “and even when he labours most artfully to disguise himself and his character, breaks out, like you, in some unguarded moment, into such language as betrays the shame he would conceal.”

Verses 36, 37. *But I say unto you*—You may perhaps think God does not much regard your words, but I assure you, that not only for blasphemous and profane, malicious, false, slanderous, and reviling words, but *for every idle word which men shall speak* : for all light, vain, trifling expressions ; for all useless, unprofitable conversation, and all discourse uttered without seriousness and caution, and which does not conduce to the glory of God and the good of mankind ; *that men shall speak*—At any time, or on any occasion, *they shall give an account in the day of judgment*—“I cannot think,” says Dr. Doddridge, “that our Lord here uses *αργον, idle*, merely to signify *mischievous*. We are certainly accountable for *useless* as well as *wicked* discourses, and they will be taken into that last survey which is to determine our character and state : which they whose life is one continued scene of *whim*, or *sneering raillery*, would do well seriously to consider. And it was to our Lord’s purpose to observe it here, as it inferred, by the strongest consequence, the danger of such vile and criminal discourses as those of the Pharisees in this case. But discourse tending to exhilarate the spirits is not idle discourse ; as the time spent in necessary recreation is not idle time ; nor does a wise and gracious God expect from men the life of angels. If any are dissatisfied with the account of things here given, I would beg leave to ask them whether unprofitable talk be not a sinful wasting of time ? and whether that must not render a man in some degree criminal before God ?” *For by thy words*—That is, by the evidence of thy words, as well as of thy tempers and works, *thou shalt be justified*, &c.—Shalt be either acquitted or condemned ; since by the tenor of these the disposition of thy heart is shown, and thy true character discovered. Therefore these shall be produced in evidence for or against thee at the great day, and by this evidence thou shalt then stand or fall.

Verses 38–40. *Then certain of the scribes, &c.*—Now present, upon hearing how plainly Christ

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and [†]adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas.

40 [‡]For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41 [§]The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and [¶]shall condemn

John iv. 48.—[‡] John i. 17.—[§] Luke xi. 32.—[¶] Jer. iii. 11 ; Ezek. xvi. 51, 52 ; Rom. ii. 27.

admonished, and how severely he rebuked them, *answered*—Probably with a view to divert the discourse to another topic, *We would see a sign from thee*—As if they had said, Otherwise we will not believe this doctrine. Thus they insinuated that the ejection of devils was but a trifling miracle, which, for all he had said to the contrary, might be done by the help of devils, and that no signs of that kind, however numerous, should convince them ; for that they would not believe unless he would prove his mission by what is here called *a sign*, and in Luke xi. 16, *a sign from heaven*, meaning, probably, some such celestial appearance as several of the ancient prophets gave ; particularly Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and Elijah. *But he answered, An evil and adulterous generation*—A spurious breed, which has degenerated from the faith and piety of their great progenitor, Abraham ; or, a generation whose heart wanders from God, though they profess him to be their husband. Such adulterers are all those who love the world, and all who seek the friendship of it. *Seeketh a sign*—After all the signs they have had already, which were abundantly sufficient to have convinced them, had not their hearts been estranged from God, and consequently averse to the truth. *And there shall no sign be given to it, but [or, unless it be] the sign of the Prophet Jonas*—Who was herein a type of Christ. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights, &c.*—It was customary with the eastern nations to reckon any part of a natural day of twenty-four hours for the whole day. Accordingly, they used to say a thing was done after *three, or seven days, &c.*, if it was done on the *third* or *seventh* day from that last mentioned. Instances of this may be seen, 1 Kings xx. 29 ; 2 Chron. x. 5, 12, and in many other places. And, as the Hebrews had no word exactly answering to the Greek *νυχθημερον*, to signify a natural day of twenty-four hours, they used *night and day*, or *day and night*, for it. See also Esther iv. 16 ; v. 1 ; Gen. vii. 4, 12 ; Exod. xxiv. 18 ; xxxiv. 28. *In the whale’s belly*—Or, in the belly of the great fish that swallowed him. See note on Jonah i. 17. *So shall the Son of man be—in the heart of the earth*—That is, in the earth ; for the expression does not imply that he was to be buried in the middle of the earth, but in the earth simply. Thus, in Ezek. xxviii. 2, Tyre

A. M. 4035. it: ¹because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

42 ^m The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

¹Jonas iii. 5.—^m1 Kings x. 1; 2 Chron. ix. 1; Luke xi. 31.

is said to be *in the heart of the sea*, though it was so near the continent, that, when Alexander besieged it, he carried a causeway from the land to the city.

Verse 41. *The men of Nineveh, &c.*—"The Ninevites being judged at the same time with the men of that generation, and their behaviour being compared with theirs, should make their guilt appear in its true colour and condemn them. For though they were idolaters, they repented at the preaching of Jonah, a stranger, a poor person, one that continued among them only three days, and wrought no miracle to make them believe him. But the men of that generation, though worshippers of the true God by profession, could every day hear unmoved the much more powerful preaching of a prophet infinitely greater than Jonah, even the preaching of the eternal Son of God, who confirmed his doctrine by the most astonishing miracles."—Macknight. Of the reasons which might induce the Ninevites to repent, see note on Jonah iii. 5, 6.

Verse 42. *The queen of the south, &c.*—Of this queen, see note on 1 Kings x. 1. *She came from the uttermost parts of the earth*—That part of Arabia from which she came was the uttermost part of the earth that way, being bounded by the sea. *A greater than Solomon is here*—"Our Lord speaks of himself in this sublime language with the utmost reason, and with perfect modesty and decorum. The humble form of his appearance, and his necessary reserve in declaring himself the Messiah in so many words, made it yet more expedient, that by such phrases as these he should sometimes intimate it: and indeed his saying he was *greater than Solomon*, that most illustrious of all the descendants of David, was as plain an intimation as could well be given."—Doddridge.

Verses 43-45. *When the unclean spirit, &c.*—In these verses, with a view to show how dreadful the state of the Jewish people would be, if they continued to reject him and his gospel, our Lord introduces a parable, borrowed from the late subject of his dispute with the Pharisees. He compares their condition to that of a man, who, after having had an evil spirit expelled out of him, is again, through God's permission, as a punishment of his continuing in sin, taken possession of by that spirit, with seven others still more wicked, and is thereby brought into a worse condition than ever. The parable evidently supposes the existence of demoniacal possessions,

43 ⁿ When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, ^ohe walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: ^pand the

ⁿLuke xi. 24.—^oJob i. 7; 1 Pet. v. 8.—^pHeb. vi. 4; x. 26; 2 Pet. ii. 20-22.

for if there had been no reality in them, the comparison would have meant nothing; and it supposes, also, that the Pharisees allowed their existence, otherwise our Lord's words, instead of convincing or instructing them, must have been treated by them with contempt. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man*—Not of his own accord, or willingly, but compelled by one that is stronger than he; *he walketh*—Wanders up and down, *through dry places*—Barren, dreary, desolate; or places not yet watered with the gospel. The words contain a plain allusion to the common notion, that evil demons had their haunts in deserts and desolate places. Compare Isa. xiii. 21; where, instead of *satyrs*, the LXX. read *δαίμονια*, *demons*. See also Rev. xviii. 2. *Seeking rest*—To his own malignant nature, in observing barren wastes and desolations, rather than such agreeable scenes as might present to his view the memorials of God's goodness to the human race: *and findeth none*—How should he find any, while he carries with him his own hell? And is it not the case of his children, too? Reader, is it thy case? *Then he saith, I will return into my house*—He resolves to make another attack on the person out of whom he had been expelled: *whence I came out*—He speaks as if he had come out of his own accord: see his pride! *And when he is come, he findeth it empty*—Of truth and grace; of wisdom and piety; of God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit: *swept and garnished*—That is, prepared to receive him: *swept*, from love, lowliness, meekness, and all the fruits of the Spirit, and adorned with levity and folly, vanity and sin. In other words, he finds the miserable sinner unaffected with his late affliction and deliverance, and still a slave to those vices which render him an agreeable dwelling for Satan. *Then goeth he and taketh seven other spirits*—That is, a great many, the number seven denoting perfection, whether of good or bad things; *more wicked than himself*—Whence it appears that there are degrees of wickedness among the devils themselves. *And they enter in, finding easy access, and dwell there*—Namely, for ever, in him that is forsaken of God. *And the last state, &c., is worse than the first*—The devils having taken a sevenfold stronger possession of him than they had before. *So shall it be also unto this wicked generation*—Who resist the convictions which my doctrine and miracles have raised in them. Instead of growing wiser and better, they

A. M. 4035. last state of that man is worse than
A. D. 31. the first. Even so shall it be also unto
this wicked generation.

46 ¶ While he yet talked to the people, ^q behold, his mother and ^r his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

¶ Mark iii. 31; Luke viii. 19-21.—Chap. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3; John ii. 12; vii. 3, 5; Acts i. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 5; Gal.

will become seven times more foolish, sinful, and miserable, "as both the natural and judicial consequence of their rejecting the methods used by divine grace for their recovery; till, as if they were possessed by a multitude of devils, they are madly hurried on to their irrecoverable ruin in this world and the next. They who have read the sad account, given by Josephus, of the temper and conduct of the Jews after the ascension of Christ, and just before their final destruction by the Romans, must acknowledge that no emblem could have been more proper to describe them. Their characters were the vilest that can be conceived, and they pressed on to their own ruin, as if they had been possessed by legions of devils, and wrought up to the last degrees of madness."—Doddridge. But this parable is also designed to teach men, in every age, the danger and awful consequences of resisting the convictions produced in their minds by the truth and grace of God; or of grieving, quenching, and doing despite to the Holy Ghost, by breaking through their resolutions, and relapsing into their former sins; the effect being commonly to render them more obdurate and abandoned than before.

Verses 46-50. *While he yet talked with the people*—While he was uttering these solemn truths, and giving these awful warnings, in the audience of the vast multitudes that were gathered around him: *behold, his mother and his brethren*—Or near kinsmen. (namely, the sons of Mary the wife of Cleopas, or Alpheus, his mother's sister,) *stood without*, not being able to come near him because of the multitude that sat about him: *But he said, Who is my mother? &c.*—We must not suppose that our Lord

48 But he answered and said unto A. M. 4035.
him that told him, Who is my mo- A. D. 31.
ther? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50 For ^s whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

i. 19.—John xv. 14; Gal. v. 6; vi. 15; Col. iii. 11; Heb. ii. 11.

meant to put any slight on them, especially on his mother. He only took this opportunity of expressing his affection to his *obedient disciples* in a peculiarly endearing manner; which could not but be a great comfort to *them*, and a rich equivalent for all the fatigue and expense which their zeal for him and his heavenly doctrine occasioned. *Stretching forth his hand toward his disciples, he said, Behold my mother, &c.*—"This short speech, related by the evangelists with great simplicity, is, without their seeming to have designed it, one of the finest encomiums imaginable. Could the most elaborate panegyric have done Jesus Christ and his religion half the honour which this divine sentiment hath done them? *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, &c., the same is my brother, and sister, and mother!*—A saying, this, which will never be forgotten while there are memories in the world to retain it, or tongues to repeat it." As if he had said, "I regard obedience to God so highly, that I prefer the relation it constitutes, and the union it begets, to the strongest ties of blood. They who do the will of my Father, have a much greater share of my esteem than my kinsmen, as such. I love them with an affection tender and steady, like that which subsists between the nearest relations; nay, I reckon them, and them only, my brethren, my sisters, and my mother. A high commendation this, and not a reflection upon our Lord's mother, who, without doubt, was among the chief of those who did the will of God. What veneration should live in the hearts of men for Jesus and his religion, which exhibits such perfection in goodness!"—Mac-knight.

CHAPTER XIII.

Here, (1.) Christ, teaching by the sea-side, delivers the parable of the sower, 1-9. (2.) He assigns the reason of his speaking in parables, 10-17. (3.) He explains the parable of the sower, 18-23. (4.) He delivers the parable of the tares and the wheat, 24-30. Of the grain of mustard-seed, 31, 32. Of the leaven, 33. (5.) The prophecy fulfilled by this way of teaching, 34, 35. (6.) Jesus explains to his disciples the parable of the tares, 36-43. (7.) He adds three other parables, viz., of the treasure hid in a field, 44; of the pearl-merchant, 45, 46; of the net gathering of every kind, 47-50. (8.) He applies the whole, 51, 52. (9.) He teaches in his own country, but is despised by his countrymen, because of the meanness of his parentage and family, 53-58.

a

A. M. 4035. **T**HE same day went Jesus out
A. D. 31. of the house, ^aand sat by the
sea side.

2 ^b And great multitudes were gathered to-

^a Mark iv. 1.—^b Luke viii. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verses 1, 2. *The same day*—On which Jesus delivered the discourse, and performed the miracles recorded in the preceding chapter, being unwearied and incessant in the blessed work in which he was engaged, he *went out of the house*, into which he had retired for a while, *and sat by the sea-side*—Namely, the sea of Galilee, or lake of Gennesareth, that he might give the people an opportunity of resorting unto him, and being instructed by his blessed doctrine. *And great multitudes were gathered unto him*—The calumnies of the Pharisees not having had the effect intended. On the contrary, the crowd was now become so great, that neither the house, nor the court before it, could contain the people. *So that*, for the conveniency of being better heard, and less incommoded by them, *he went into a ship, and sat*—A small vessel on the lake, which, it seems, constantly waited upon him while he was on the coast. See Mark iii. 9. Here, being conveniently seated, at a little distance from the shore, on which the whole multitude stood, and which probably might be somewhat circular and declining, he could be both easily seen and heard.

Verse 3. *And he spake many things unto them*—“Delivered many doctrines of the highest importance, wisely making choice of such for the subject of his sermons, when he had the greatest number of hearers, because on those occasions there was a probability of doing the most good by them.” *In parables*—The word *parable* sometimes signifies a *sublime discourse*, elevated beyond the common forms of speech, as Num. xxiii. 7, and xxiv. 15; Job xxvii. 1, and xxix. 1, where see the notes: sometimes a mere proverb, or adage, such as those mentioned Luke iv. 23, *Physician, heal thyself*; and vi. 39, *Can the blind lead the blind?* in both which places the word *παροιμία*, *parable*, is used in the original, and in the former place is rendered *proverb* in our translation. Sometimes the word means an *apologue*, or *fable*, as Ezek. xvii. 2, where also see the note. But here, and generally in the gospels, the word is to be understood, according to its Greek etymology, as signifying a similitude or *comparison*, namely, taken from the ordinary affairs of men, and used to illustrate the things of God. As this is the first time the term occurs in this history, and as we shall frequently meet with it hereafter, it may not be improper to make the following general observations, applicable, more or less, to all our Lord's parables. 1st. It is not necessary to a parable that the matter contained, or things related in it, should be true in fact. For parables are not spoken to inform us in matters of fact, but in some spiritual truths, to which they bear some proportion. This we see in Jotham's parable of the trees going to

gether unto him, so that ^che went ^{A. M. 4035.}
into a ship, and sat; and the whole ^{A. D. 31.}
multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things unto them in

^c Luke v. 3.

choose themselves a king, Judges ix. 7–15. 2d. It is not necessary that all the actions of men, mentioned in a parable, should be morally just and good. The actions of the unjust steward, Luke xvi. 1–8, were not so. 3dly. For the right understanding of a parable, our great care must be to attend to the main scope of it; or to what our Lord had chiefly in view, and designed to teach by it. 4th. This may be learned, either from his general or more particular explication of it; or from what hath been termed the *pro-parabola*, or preface to the parable; or the *epi-parabola*, or conclusion of it. 5th. It is not to be expected that all the particular actions or things represented in a parable, should be answered by something in the explication. Lastly, Though the scope of the parable be the main thing we are to attend to, yet it may collaterally inform us in several other things also. This way of teaching, extremely common in the eastern countries, and much used by our Lord, was particularly calculated to draw and fix the attention of mankind; to excite the inquiry of such as were well disposed, and to lead them to a serious examination and diligent searching after the truth veiled under such emblems; to teach, in a manner the most natural, beautiful, and instructive, by common and familiar objects, the most divine and important doctrines, and give clearer ideas of them than could have been otherwise attained; to cause divine truths to make a more deep and lasting impression on men's minds, and to be better remembered. Our Lord's parables were particularly adapted to produce this last-mentioned effect, being generally taken from those objects about which his hearers were daily employed, or which daily came under their observation. Add to this, he taught by parables, that he might convey in a manner the least offensive some very ungrateful and unpalatable truths, such as the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles. It must be observed, also, as we learn from verses 11–15, that, by an awful mixture of justice and mercy, our Lord intended hereby to throw a veil over some of the mysteries of his kingdom, and to conceal from the proud and careless those truths which, if they understood, he foresaw they would only abuse to their greater condemnation.

In this chapter our Lord delivers seven parables, directing the four former, as being of general concern, to all the people; the three latter, to his disciples. He begins with the parable of a sower who cast his seed on four different kinds of ground, only one of which brought forth fruit, not because of any difference in the seed wherewith the others were sown, or any defect in the cultivation of them, but because of other reasons specified in the parable. And these were designed to represent four classes

A. M. 4035. parables, saying, ^d Behold, a sower
A. D. 31. went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought

forth fruit, some ^e a hundred-fold, A. M. 4035.
some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. A. D. 31.

9 ^f Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 ¶ And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because ^g it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 ^h For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

^d Luke viii. 5.—^e Gen. xxvi. 12.—^f Chap. xi. 15; Mark iv. 9.—^g Chap. xi. 25; xvi. 17; Mark iv. 11; 1 Cor. ii. 10;

1 John ii. 27.—^h Chap. xxv. 29; Mark iv. 25; Luke viii. 18; xix. 26.

of hearers of the word of God, only one of which bears fruit to his glory; not because a different doctrine is declared to the others, or less labour bestowed upon them, but because of the hinderances of fruitfulness spoken of in the explanation of the parable. How exquisitely proper was this parable to be an introduction to all the rest! inasmuch as in it our Lord shows us why, when the same sower, he himself, or any messenger of his, always sows the same seed, it does not always produce the same effect.

Verses 4-9. *When he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side*—By the side of a beaten path which lay through the ground he was sowing. This way-side being neither broken up by the plough nor hedged in, the seed that fell here lay uncovered, and was partly *trodden down*, and partly *devoured* by the fowls, Luke viii. 5, so that no fruit could be expected. *Some fell upon stony places*, *ἐπι τα πετρωδη, upon rocky places*. Luke says, *ἐπι την πετραν, upon the rock; where they had not much earth*—Either above them to retard their springing, or under them to nourish their roots; and *forthwith, εὐθως, speedily, they sprung up*, and looked very promising. *And when the sun was up, and shone hot upon them, that is, upon the tender blades, they were scorched* by the warmth of his beams, and *because they had no root*—No room for taking root in so shallow a bed of earth, and *lacked moisture*, (so Luke,) *they withered away* and perished. Observe, if they had had sufficient depth of earth, wherein to take root, and had not lacked moisture, the heat of the sun, however great, would not have caused them to wither, but rather would have promoted their growth. *And some fell among thorns*—Under the word *thorns* is included brambles, thistles, and every other kind of weed which is apt to spring up among corn, and to prevent its growth and fruitfulness. Weeds, of whatever kind, do not usually appear immediately when the corn is sown, nor perhaps till long after. The corn takes root, springs up, and perhaps even covers the ground, and bids fair for a plentiful crop, before they make their appearance: but as they are the natural product of the soil, they thrive better

and grow faster than the corn, and soon overtop it. And, if they be suffered to remain, they absorb the moisture, and exhaust the fertilizing virtue of the ground; they also shade the corn from the kindly influences of the sun and rain, and so choke it that it has not room to expand itself. It therefore gradually declines, and at last dies away, and renders the husbandman's labour, and the seed sown, fruitless. *But other, the rest of the seed, fell into good ground, soft and ploughed up, not hard, unbroken, and trodden down, like a way-side; not a rocky place, but a deep soil; not a bed of thorns, brambles, and weeds, but ground purged of all such obstructions to fertility; and brought forth fruit*—Being deeply rooted and nourished, it grew, and increased so as not only to produce an ear, but full and ripe corn in the ear, and that in rich abundance; *some of it thirty times as much as the seed sown, some sixty, and some even a hundred times as much. Who hath ears to hear, let him*—A proverbial expression used by our Lord, when he spake of things of very great importance, and which deserved peculiar attention. Such were the things now declared; they merited, and will merit, the most serious consideration of all who would not be forgetful or unfruitful hearers of the word of God, but would bring forth fruit worthy of their privileges.

Verses 10-12. *The disciples*—Mark says, *οι περι αυτον συν τοις δωδεκα, those that were about him, with the twelve*, that is, not only the apostles, but such other well-disposed persons as generally attended on Christ's ministry, and were desirous of learning of him; *came to him, namely, when the assembly was broke up, and Christ had delivered many other parables afterward mentioned; for they came when he was alone, Mark iv. 10, and said, Why speakest thou to them in parables?*—Although not only the Jewish doctors, but all the wise men of the East taught by parables, yet because this way of teaching had in it somewhat of obscurity, and the doctrine contained under the veil of these allegories was not so easy to be apprehended as if it had been exhibited plainly and openly, without such a cover, there-

A. M. 4035. 13 Therefore speak I to them in
A. D. 31. parables: because they seeing, see
not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do
they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of
Esaias, which saith, ¹ By hearing ye shall hear,
and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall
see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and
their ears ² are dull of hearing, and their eyes
they have closed; lest at any time they should
see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,

¹ Isa. vi. 9; Ezek. xii. 2; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John
xiii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26, 27; Rom. xi. 8; 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15.

fore the disciples inquire why he used this more ob-
scure, and to many unintelligible, mode of teaching.
He said, Because it is given to you—Who have for-
saken all to follow me, whose minds are divested of
prejudice, and open to receive the truth in the love
of it; to know, experimentally and practically, as
well as to understand, the mysteries of the kingdom
of heaven—That is, the more deep and spiritual
matters relating to the Messiah's kingdom, especially
such as respect inward and vital religion. For the
truths here alluded to, and explained in the inter-
pretation of this parable, are as far from being mys-
teries, in the common acceptation of the word, that
is, doctrines incomprehensible, as any thing in the
world can be. *But to them*—Who have not been
prevailed upon to forsake any thing in order to fol-
low me, and who are obstinate to such a degree that
they will not hear any thing contrary to their pre-
judices and passions, it is not given: *For whosoever
hath*—That is, improves what he has, uses the grace
and blessings imparted according to the design of
the Giver, to him shall be given—More and more,
in proportion to that improvement. *But whosoever
hath not*—Improves it not, from him shall be taken
even what he hath—Here is the grand rule of God's
dealing with the children of men: a rule, fixed as
the pillars of heaven. This is the key to all his
providential dispensations, as will appear to men
and angels in that day.

Verses 13-15. *Therefore speak I to them in para-
bles, because they seeing, see not*—In pursuance of
this general rule, I do not give more knowledge to
this people, because they use not that which they
have already: having all the means of seeing, hear-
ing, and understanding, they use none of them; they
do not effectually see, or hear, or understand any
thing. For instance, seeing my miracles, which are
incontestable proofs of my divine mission, they are
not convinced thereby that I am their long-expected
Messiah: and hearing my discourses, they are not
instructed by what they hear in the design of my
coming, and the nature of my kingdom. *Neither
do they understand*—My doctrine. *And in them is
fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias*—Which indeed
was principally intended of the men of this genera-

and should understand with their A. M. 4035.
heart, and should be converted, and I A. D. 31.
should heal them.

16 But ¹ blessed are your eyes, for they see:
and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, ² That many
prophets and righteous men have desired to see
those things which ye see, and have not seen
them; and to hear those things which ye hear,
and have not heard them.

18 ¶ ³ Hear ye therefore the parable of the
sower.

¹ Heb. v. 11.—² Chap. xvi. 17; Luke x. 23, 24; John xx. 29.
³ Heb. xi. 13; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.—⁴ Mark iv. 14; Luke viii. 11.

tion. See note on Isa. vi. 9, 10. *Which saith, By
hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand*—
Or rather, as the words are more properly rendered,
ye will hear, but in nowise understand; that is, *ye
will surely hear*; opportunities of hearing, all pos-
sible means of instruction, will be given you; yet
they will profit you nothing. *For this people's
heart is waxed gross*—*Επαχυνθη, is waxed fat, is*
sensual, stupid, and insensible. *And their ears are
dull of hearing*—*Βαρως ηκουσαν, they hear heavily,*
or with heavy ears, like persons half asleep. *And
their eyes they have closed*—Namely, against the
light. Observe, they themselves have done it, not
God. In other words, They have benumbed or shut
up all their spiritual senses, lest at any time they
should see with their eyes—That light of divine
knowledge which would put them to pain; and
should hear with their ears—Those sacred truths
which would convince them of sin; and should un-
derstand with their heart—Their real condition of
guilt and depravity; and should be converted—Ef-
fectually turned to God in true repentance, living
faith, and new obedience; and I should heal them—
Of their spiritual diseases. They are unwilling to
understand the things of God, and afraid, not desir-
ous, that he should heal their souls, and save them
from their sins.

Verses 16, 17. *But blessed are your eyes, &c.*—
For you both see and hear, and understand. You
have not only greater opportunities of instruction
than others, but you both know how to prize, and
are concerned to improve them. *For verily I say
unto you, That many prophets*—Who prophesied
of the coming of the Messiah; and *righteous men*—
To whom God familiarly showed himself, and made
known his will, as he did to Abraham and the pa-
triarchs; and *many kings*, Luke x. 24; from whose
seed the Messiah was to spring, and whose king-
doms and persons were types of him and his king-
dom, have desired to see—Before their eyes, those
things which ye thus see, and have not seen them,
they only seeing them afar off in the promises made
to them concerning these days. See Heb. xi. 13;
and 1 Peter i. 11, 12.

Verses 18, 19. *Hear ye therefore the parable of the*

A. M. 4035. 19 When any one heareth the word
A. D. 31. ° of the kingdom, and understandeth
it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth
away that which was sown in his heart.
This is he which received seed by the way-
side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony

° Chap. iv. 23.—P Isa. lviii. 2; Ezek. xxxiii.

sower—A parable which our Lord judged to be so important that he introduced it with a double demand of attention, *Hearken, behold*; Mark iv. 3; and concluded it with a third, and still more solemn demand thereof, *who hath ears to hear, let him hear*; and here, proceeding to the explanation of it, he calls for attention the fourth time. And the reason of this is evident: the parable sets before us, in a summary point of view, all the grand hinderances of our bearing fruit, and that in the same order in which they occur. The first danger is, lest the birds should devour the seed, or it should be trodden down. If it escape this, there is then another danger, namely, lest it be scorched, and wither away. It is long after this that the thorns spring up and choke the good seed. A vast number of those who hear the word of God, receive the seed as by the way-side. Of those who do not lose it by the birds, yet many receive it as on stony places. Many of them who receive it on a better soil, yet suffer the thorns to grow up and choke it: so that few even of these endure to the end, and bear fruit unto perfection: yet in all these cases, it is not the will of God that hinders, but their own voluntary perverseness. *When any one heareth, &c.*—The parable, it must be observed, only concerns the hearers of the gospel. As to those who decline, or neglect to hear it, their portion is frequently given them elsewhere, and their danger and misery declared with sufficient clearness; *the word of the kingdom*—Namely, of the kingdom of Christ, generally termed in the gospels, *the kingdom of God, or of heaven*: the word which describes the nature, and shows the excellency and necessity of the kingdom of grace, preparatory to that of glory, and points out the way leading thereto. See notes on Rom. xiv. 17; and Mark i. 15. This is the good seed, which every sower sent by Jesus Christ will be careful to sow. Not the chaff of metaphysical speculations, of human traditions, and empty notions, nor the light corn of mere moral doctrines, much less the tares of superstitious injunctions, or of enthusiastical, or Pharisaic, or antinomian delusions; but the solid and well-bodied grain of the essential truths of the gospel of Christ. *And understandeth it not*—For the truths that are not understood, how often soever they are heard, are in this parable fitly compared to the seed which lies uncovered on the surface of the ground, exposed to be instantly picked up by the fowls of heaven. But why is not *the word of the kingdom* understood? Either, 1st, because, while delivered, it is not attended to; or, 2d, because it is not heard

places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon ° with joy receiveth it; A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by ° he is offended.

31, 32; John v. 35.—4 Chap. xi. 6; 2 Tim. i. 15.

in a spirit of prayer for divine illumination, without which divine things are not understood, Luke xxiv. 45; 1 Cor. ii. 11, 14. But the Greek expression, *μη σκεπτερος*, may with equal propriety be rendered *considereth it not*. Considering or meditating upon the word heard, is like harrowing in and covering up the seed sown on the ploughed ground; in consequence whereof, and not otherwise, imbibing moisture from the earth, it vegetates and springs up. When the word is not thus understood and considered, then cometh the wicked one; Satan cometh immediately; (so Mark;) either inwardly filling the mind with thoughts of other things, and exciting earthly and carnal desires and dispositions in the heart; or by his agents, such as all they are that introduce other subjects when people should be considering what they have heard. *And catcheth away that which was sown in his heart*—Which was intended deeply to impress and sink into it; and to remain, not only in the understanding and memory, but also in the affections, as a seed of true piety and virtue. And now the seed, the truths heard, being taken away, with the good impressions produced thereby, no fruit is to be looked for. It is justly observed here by Dr. Whitby, that this industry of Satan to snatch the word out of our hearts, as it discovers his enmity against the gospel, so doth it highly commend the excellency and efficacy of it: for were it not of great importance to preserve it there, he would not be so industrious to snatch it thence. And were it not, when there, a powerful instrument to work within us that faith which purifies the heart, why doth he do this *lest we should believe*? See Luke viii. 12. *This is he that receiveth seed by the way-side*—And a great proportion of most congregations are of this description.

Verses 20, 21. *He that received the seed into stony, rather, rocky, places*—Where the bed of earth was very shallow, *is he that heareth the word*—Hears it with attention, and in a spirit of prayer, sincerely desiring that the eyes of his understanding may be opened; nay, and understands what he hears, and even seriously considers it afterward. For he is said, Luke viii. 13, *to believe for a while*, and here to *receive it with joy*; being struck, doubtless, with the beauty of the truth, and drawn by the preventing grace of God. *Yet hath he not root in himself*—No deep work of grace in his soul; no real change in the ground of his heart. He is not truly regenerated and made a new creature in Christ. The consequence is, *he only endureth for a while*—Continues to profess an attachment to the truth, as long as the

A. M. 4035. 22 * He also that received seed
A. D. 31. * among the thorns is he that hear-
eth the word; and the care of this world, and
the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and
he becometh unfruitful.

† Ch. xix. 23; Mark x. 23; Lu. xviii. 24;

truth is held in esteem, and proceeds on, apparently, in the way of the kingdom, while the way is smooth, and no stumbling-block, or difficulty, occurs therein. *But when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word*—When the truth and its professors are exposed to reproach and infamy, and the disciples of Jesus are called to drink of his cup of suffering, *by and by*, Greek *εὐθὺς*, *immediately, he is offended, σκανδαλίζεται, he is stumbled.* He finds a thousand pretences for leaving so narrow and rugged a way. Luke has it, *εν καιρῷ πειρασμῶν ἀφίστανται, In time of temptation, or trial, they fall off*, namely, as blossoms from the trees, through a frost in the spring. It has been observed above, that the warmth of the sun's beams will rather promote than hinder the growth of the corn, if it hath sufficient depth of earth, wherein to take root, and sufficient moisture; in like manner, if a deep work of grace be wrought in a man's heart, and he be really born from above, tribulation, persecution, and other trials and temptations will be so far from destroying his piety, or even obstructing the growth of grace in his soul, that they will rather promote it, and though not joyous but grievous while they continue, yet will *afterward yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness*, to those that are exercised thereby; and will tend to perfect their faith and patience, and other graces, and prepare them for heaven, as hot weather before the harvest ripens the corn, when full in the ear, for the sickle.

Verse 22. *He that received seed among thorns is he that heareth the word*—And proceeds further in the way of duty than either of those mentioned in the former instances. In spite of Satan and his agents, the person here intended considers, marks, learns, and inwardly digests what he hears. Yea, he has *root in himself*. The word sinks into his mind and heart. He is deeply humbled under a sense of his sinfulness and guilt, and brought to experience repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He is even inwardly changed, so that he does not draw back even when *tribulation and persecution ariseth*. And yet, even in him, together with the good seed, the thorns, &c., spring up, (perhaps unperceived at first, at least neglected and not rooted up,) till they gradually choke it, destroy all its life and power, and it becometh *unfruitful*. To thorns among corn our Lord here compares the cares of the world, namely, anxious cares, which most beset the poor, but not them only; for persons in the middling ranks of life, and even the rich, are often no little harassed by them, and greatly obstructed in their Christian progress. By *thorns* also our Lord intends the *deceitfulness of riches*; deceitful indeed! for they promise much, but perform little; offer themselves to many, but give themselves

23 But he that received seed into A. M. 4035.
the good ground is he that heareth A. D. 31.
the word, and understandeth it; which also
beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.

1 Tim. vi. 9; 2 Tim. iv. 10.—Jer. iv. 3.

to few; and to those few bring care and perplexity, rather than satisfaction and comfort. They promise to abide with us through life, if not to preserve our name in everlasting remembrance: but, alas! frequently take themselves wings and fly away. They engage our dependance, and we lean on them as though they were the staff of life; but quickly find, by sad experience, they are but "a broken reed at best, and oft a spear," piercing us through with many sorrows. Like Judas, whom they corrupted, "they kiss and betray, they smile and smite into hell. They put out the eyes, harden the heart, steal away all the life of God, fill the soul with pride, anger, and love to the world, and make men enemies to self-denial and the whole cross of Christ."—Wesley. Luke also mentions the pleasures of life as another weed, choking and rendering unfruitful the good seed. To which pleasures deceitful riches minister, and are a great temptation, putting it into men's power to gratify their carnal desires and unruly appetites and passions in every excess to which Satan or their own hearts prompt them. But not only are such gross indulgences as these here included in the hurtful pleasures which are represented as choking the good seed, but all the fashionable amusements and gratifications of sense and fancy in which mankind, and especially the young of both sexes, are prone to seek their happiness. There is yet another weed, which too frequently prevents the fruitfulness of the incorruptible seed, and all improvement, if not even perseverance in true piety, and that is, *desires after other things*, mentioned in the parallel passage by Mark. This equally annoys high and low, rich and poor, young and old; and if not eradicated or suppressed is equally destructive to the life of God in all. God himself is all-sufficient to satisfy the most enlarged desires of all his intelligent creatures. There is enough in him to make them completely happy. All our desire therefore should be unto him, or, at least, nothing should be esteemed, desired, delighted in, or pursued, but in perfect subordination to him and his love: and when this is not the case, but the desire of our heart is turned toward other objects, our intercourse with God is of necessity interrupted, and the influences of his Spirit withheld from us; the consequence of which is, we lose all union with him, and become *twice dead, plucked up by the roots*. Now when all these, who receive the seed as among thorns, *who begin in the Spirit, but end in the flesh; run well for a time, but are afterward hindered*; are also, as well as the two preceding classes, excepted, alas! how few yet remain to be compared to the good ground, mentioned in the next verse!

Verse 23. *He that received seed into the good*

A. M. 4035. 24 ¶ Another parable put he forth
A. D. 31. unto them, saying, The kingdom of
heaven is likened unto a man which sowed
good seed in his field :*

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and
sowed tares among the wheat, and went his
way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and
brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came

* Fifth Sunday, Epiphany, gospel,

ground—Described in note on verse eight, is *he that heareth the word and understandeth, or, considereth it*—Herein he differs from the first class of hearers: he understands what he hears, and makes it the matter of his serious and frequent meditation. And he differs from those of the second class; for, according to Luke, *he keeps, or, retains it*, as *καρτεει* signifies. Notwithstanding the opposition or persecution he meets with, he holds fast what he has received, namely, both the word of truth itself, and the change it was instrumental in producing in him. So that he not only *endureth for a while, but to the end*. He is also distinguished from those of the third class: for he receives and retains the truth in *an honest and good heart*, Luke viii. 15; a heart, not honest and good by nature, but made such by grace; a *new heart* given him by God, and a *new spirit put within him*. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Therefore he is not like the ground overrun with thorns, and other weeds, which was dishonest, so to speak; eluding the tiller's toil, and deceiving the husbandman's expectations. *Which also beareth fruit*—Namely, the fruits of the Spirit, internal and external, holy tempers, words, and works, repentance toward God, and *fruits meet for repentance*, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the proper fruits of faith, godliness and righteousness, piety and virtue, in all their branches: *some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty*—That is, in various proportions, some abundantly more than others, the situations and circumstances in which some are placed by the providence of God affording them far greater opportunities for receiving and doing good than fall to the lot of others, and the abilities and capacities for usefulness in some far exceeding those of others.

Verses 24–30. *Another parable put he forth unto them*—In which he further explains the case of unfruitful hearers, and shows that persons of various characters would profess to receive the gospel, and be accounted members of the Christian Church; but that there should be a final separation between them in the other world, however they might be blended together in this. *The kingdom of heaven*—This expression, as has been observed before, sometimes signifies the gospel dispensation, sometimes true religion under the gospel; sometimes the Church of Christ, and that as well in its militant as in its triumphant state. The phrase is also often used for a

and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou
sow good seed in thy field? from
whence then hath it tares? A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31.

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the

verse 24, to verse 31.

person or thing relating to any of those. Here the meaning seems to be, that Christ, preaching the gospel, may be *likened to a man sowing good seed, &c.* Or, that the state of things in the gospel Church may be illustrated in the following manner. *Which sowed good seed in his field*—God formed our first parents upright, and sowed nothing but good in his whole creation. And Christ sowed only the good seed of truth in his Church, and planted it with such as were truly righteous. *But while men slept*—Who were set to watch, namely, magistrates and ministers, the servants of the husbandman. Observe, reader, Satan hath a power to persuade, allure, seduce; but not to force. If the servants of Christ watched, and did their duty, there would be much less open wickedness in the world, and less secret sin in the Church than there is. *His enemy came and sowed tares*—Rather *darnel*, as it seems *ζιζανια* ought to be rendered. "It appears," says Dr. Campbell, "from the parable itself, 1st, That this weed was not only hurtful to the corn, but otherwise of no value, and therefore to be severed and burnt. 2dly, That it resembled corn, especially wheat, since it was only when the wheat was putting forth the ear that these weeds were discovered. Now neither of these characters will suit the *tare*, which is excellent food for cattle, and sometimes cultivated for their use; and which, being a species of vetch, is distinguished from corn, from the moment it appears above ground. Therefore, as it cannot be the *tare* that is meant, it is highly probable that it is the *darnel*, in Latin *lolium*, namely, that species called by botanists *temulentum*, which grows among corn, not the *lolium perenne*, commonly called *ray*, and corruptly *rye grass*, which grows in meadows. For, 1st, This appears to have been the Latin word by which the Greek was wont to be interpreted. 2dly, It agrees to the characters above mentioned. It is a noxious weed; for when the seed of it happens to be mingled and ground with the corn, the bread made of this mixture always occasions sickness and giddiness in those who eat it; and the straw has the same effect upon the cattle. It is from this quality, and the appearance of drunkenness which it produces, that it has the specific name given it by botanists. And probably for the same reason it is called by Virgil, *infelix lolium*. It has also a resemblance to wheat sufficient to justify all that relates to this

A. M. 4035. reapers, Gather ye together first the
A. D. 31.

tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but 'gather the wheat into my barn.

31 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 ¶ "Another parable spake he unto them;

¹ Chap. iii. 12.—² Isa. ii. 2, 3; Mic. iv. 1; Mark iv. 30; Luke xiii. 18, 19.—³ Luke xiii. 20.—⁴ The word in the Greek is a measure containing about a peck and a half, wanting a little more

in the parable." "The only English translation," adds the doctor, "in which I have found the word *darnel*, is Mr. Wesley's." *When the blade was sprung up, &c., then appeared the tares, rather, the darnel, also—It was not discerned before, but now could easily be distinguished. So the servants of the householder—Or, of the proprietor of the estate, as οικοδεσποτης seems to signify here: came and said, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field?—That is, good seed only; the seed of pure wheat, without any corrupt mixture? whence then hath it darnel?—He said, An enemy hath done this—A plain answer to the great question concerning the origin of evil. God made men (as he did angels) intelligent creatures, and consequently free either to choose good or evil; but he implanted no evil in the human soul. An enemy (with man's concurrence) hath done this. Darnel in the Church is properly hypocrites, or mere outside Christians, such as have only the form of godliness without the power. Open sinners, such as have neither the form nor the power, are not so properly darnel as thistles and brambles, which ought to be rooted up without delay, and not suffered in the Christian community. Whereas, should fallible men attempt to gather up the darnel, they would often root up the wheat with it.*

Verses 31, 32. Another parable put he forth—The two former parables relate chiefly to unfruitful hearers: the two that follow, to those who bear good fruit. *The kingdom of heaven—Both the gospel dispensation in the world, and the kingdom of grace in the souls of true believers, especially the former; is like to a grain of mustard-seed—Small and contemptible in its beginning. Which is indeed the least of all seeds—*"That is, of all those seeds with which the people of Judea were then acquainted. Our Lord's words are to be interpreted by popular use. And we learn from this gospel, chap. xvii. 20, that like a grain of mustard-seed was become proverbial for expressing a small quantity." *But when it is grown, it becometh a tree—*The term *tree* is applied by botanists to plants of the larger kind, which grow to the magnitude of shrubs, and for that reason are termed *plantæ arborescentes*: and "that

The kingdom of heaven is like A. M. 4035.
unto leaven, which a woman took, A. D. 31.
and hid in three ² measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 ³ All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, "I will open my mouth in parables; "I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

than a pint.—⁴ Mark iv. 33, 34.—⁵ Psa. lxxviii. 2.—⁶ Rom. xvi. 25, 26; 1 Cor. ii. 7; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 26.

there was a species of the *sinapi*, [mustard seed,] or, at least, what the Orientals comprehended under that name, which rose to the size of a tree, appears from some quotations brought by Lightfoot and Buxtorf from the writings of the rabbies, men who will not be suspected of partiality when their testimony happens to favour the writers of the New Testament." "The Talmud mentions a mustard-tree so large that a man might with ease sit in it; and another, one of whose branches covered a tent. And it is certain we shall be much mistaken if we judge of *vegetables* or *animals*, in the eastern and southern countries, merely by what those of the same species are among us."—Doddridge. Thus, from small beginnings, will the Christian doctrine spread in the world, and the life of Christ, or true religion, in the soul.

Verse 33. Another parable spake he unto them—With a view still further to illustrate the progress of the gospel in the world, and of true religion in the soul. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman hid—*That is, covered up; in three measures of meal—Which seems to have been the quantity that they usually baked at once; till the whole was leavened—For although the leaven seemed lost for a while in the mass of dough, it secretly wrought through it by a speedy though almost insensible fermentation. Thus shall the gospel spread in the world, and divine grace in the souls of men, influencing and assimilating their spirit and conduct.

Verses 34, 35. All these things spake Jesus in parables—Mark has it, *With many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to bear it.* That is, he preached the doctrines of the gospel in these and many other parables of a like nature, according as his hearers were able to receive them. *And without a parable spake he not unto them—*That is, not at this time; at other times he did. *That it might be fulfilled—*That is, whereby was fulfilled; that which was spoken by the prophet—Namely, by Asaph, Psa. lxxviii. 2, whose words the evangelist here quotes, and accommodates to Jesus. See notes on chap. ii. 15, 17.

A. M. 4035. 36 ¶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

38 ^bThe field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are ^cthe children of the wicked one;

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; ^dthe harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, ^eand they shall gather out of his kingdom all ³things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 ^fAnd shall cast them into a furnace of fire: ^gthere shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 ^hThen shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. ⁱWho hath ears to hear, let him hear.

^b Chap. xxiv. 14; xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15, 20; Luke xxiv. 47; Rom. x. 18; Col. i. 6.—^c Gen. iii. 13; John viii. 44; Acts xiii. 10; 1 John iii. 8.—^d Joel iii. 13; Rev. xiv. 15.

^e Ch. xviii. 7; 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.—^f Or, *scandals*.—^g Ch. iii. 12; Rev. xix. 20; xx. 10.—^h Chap. viii. 12; ver. 50.—ⁱ Dan. xii. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 58.—^j Verse 9.

Verses 36-39. *Then Jesus sent the multitude away*—The evening probably drawing on, for the people had now been long collected together: *and went*—From the vessel where he had been preaching; *into the house*—Probably a friend's house, that he might refresh himself a little: *and his disciples came, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares*—They say nothing of the two other parables, because, probably, they understood them; or, perhaps, this parable affected them more than either of the others, in regard of its dreadful conclusion. Jesus readily granted their request, pleased, doubtless, that they were desirous of understanding every part of his doctrine. *He answered, He that soweth the good seed, is the Son of man*—Christ sowed the good seed of truth by preaching the gospel, and thereby, through the influences of his Spirit, forming and raising up real Christians, with whom to plant his church. *The field is the world*—To enlighten and save the world is the great end for which the gospel is preached, and out of it believers are gathered. Or rather, as appears from the parable itself, the church in the world is meant by the field. *The good seed are the children of the kingdom*—That is, the children of God, the righteous. *But the tares [or darnel] are the children of the wicked one*—How much soever they may have of the form of godliness, and however unblameable they may appear in their outward conduct, not being justified by grace, nor renewed in the spirit of their minds, but still in a state of guilt and depravity, they are not the genuine children of God, but those of the wicked one. "The good seed," says Baxter, "as sown, is the gospel; but as springing up in fruit, it is the faithful, who are properly the members of the Church of Christ. The tares, as sown, are evil doctrines and temptations; but as sprung up in fruit, are the children of the devil, who is the father of wickedness, and that enemy of God and man who sowed them." *The harvest is the end of the world*—Even the day of final judgment and retribution; *the reapers are the angels*—Who shall be employed in the services of that day, and especially in gather-

ing together the saints, and separating them from the rest of mankind, in order to their eternal salvation, and in executing the sentence of condemnation passed on the ungodly.

Verses 40-43. *As the tares are gathered*—At the command of the owner of the field; *and burnt in the fire*—So totally destroyed as never to revive and flourish again; *so shall it be at the end of the world*—With regard to the finally impenitent: their destruction, not their annihilation, shall be complete and eternal; without any hope or possibility of a restoration. See note on chap. iii. 12. *The Son of man shall send forth his angels*—Who shall all attend him on that solemn occasion, chap. xxv. 31. What a high idea does our Lord here give us of himself; representing the holy angels as his attendants, who shall wait on him at the last day, and at his order assemble the whole world before him! *And they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend*—Whatever had grieved the children of God, or been an obstruction to them in their Christian course; whatever things or persons had hindered the good seed which Christ had sown from taking root or bearing fruit. The Greek, *παντα τα σκανδαλα*, is, *all the scandals*, or, *stumbling-blocks*. *And them which do iniquity*—Who shall now be perfectly and eternally separated from the righteous, and excluded from Christ's kingdom. *And shall cast them into a furnace of fire*—These blessed spirits, as the executioners of the divine vengeance, shall cast them into the unquenchable fire of hell. *There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth*—The most extreme torment, attended with the height of anguish, rage, and despair; a despair aggravated by all the privileges they once enjoyed, and the vain hope which, as professors of the true religion, they once entertained. Therefore they shall not be annihilated, nor their misery alleviated by any expectation of being ever restored or delivered from their sufferings. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun*—"Being freed from all the humbling circumstances which attend mortality, they shall shine like the sun in the firmament for brightness and beauty

A. M. 4035. 44 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven
A. D. 31. is like unto treasure hid in a field; the
which when a man hath found, he hideth, and
for joy thereof goeth and ^k selleth all that he
hath, and ^l buyeth that field.

45 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like
unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who, when he had found ^m one pearl of
great price, went and sold all that he had, and
bought it.

47 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like

unto a net, that was cast into the sea, A. M. 4035.
and ⁿ gathered of every kind: A. D. 31.

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to
shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into
vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the
angels shall come forth, and ^o sever the wicked
from among the just.

50 ^p And shall cast them into the furnace of
fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of
teeth.

* Phil. ii. 7, 8.—† Isa. lv. 1; Rev. iii. 18.—‡ Prov. ii. 4; iii. 14,

15; viii. 10, 19.—§ Ch. xxii. 10.—¶ Ch. xxv. 32.—⊖ Ver. 42.

and shall find no diminution of their splendour by
age. A noble image this to represent the glory and
happiness of the righteous with God their Father.”
Who hath ears to hear, let him hear—“This excla-
mation intimates, that truths of greater importance
and solemnity cannot be uttered than those which
respect the final misery of the wicked, and the in-
conceivable happiness of the righteous, and that all
who have the faculty of reason, ought therefore
to regard them with becoming attention.”—Mac-
knight.

Verse 44. *Again*—The three following parables
were proposed, not to the multitude, but peculiarly
to the apostles: the two former of them relate to
those who receive the gospel; the third, both to
those who receive, and those who preach it. *The
kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field*
—The kingdom of God, to be set up in the hearts of
men, *which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the
Holy Ghost*, or the salvation of the gospel, is a trea-
sure indeed, but a treasure which, though contained
in the field of the Scriptures, is hid from the carnal
part of mankind, even from the most wise and pruden-
dent of them. Many who frequently traverse this
field are not aware that it contains such a treasure.
But when a man, in consequence of having the eyes
of his understanding opened, has discovered it, he
hideth it in his heart—makes, at first, his discovery
the matter of his serious meditation in private, ra-
ther than the subject of his conversation in public;
or uses the greatest care and caution, and is more
intent on securing the treasure to himself, than on
telling to others what a discovery he has made: *and
for joy thereof*—Through joy arising from the pros-
pect of being speedily enriched; *goeth and selleth
all that he hath*—Gives up all other happiness; parts
with every object that has engaged, or would en-
gage, his affection; renounces every desire, care,
and pursuit, every interest and pleasure that he
sees to be incompatible with his enjoyment of the
salvation he seeks, or would prevent his obtaining
it; *and buyeth that field*—Makes himself acquainted
with, and embraces by faith *the truth as it is in Je-
sus, the glad tidings* announced thereby, and re-
vealed in the Scriptures, and with the field obtains
the treasure: for this *law of the Spirit of life in*

*Christ Jesus makes him free from the law of sin
and death*, Rom. viii. 2.

Verses 45, 46. *Again, the kingdom of heaven*—
That is, one that earnestly seeks for it; *is like unto
a merchant-man*, who goes about from one city or
country to another, *seeking goodly, or beautiful
pearls, or jewels*. Thus the sacred writers often
compare and prefer wisdom, or true religion, to
costly jewels. See Job xxviii. 15–19; Prov. iii. 15;
viii. 11. *Who, when he had found one pearl of great
price*—Of an exceeding great value, *sold all that
he had and bought it*—As well knowing he would
be a great gainer though he should part with all he
possessed for it. Thus the truly enlightened be-
liever freely and readily gives up, not only all sin,
but all that is in the world, which he is called to
part with, that he may receive the kingdom of God
into his heart, and may be made a partaker of the
blessings of the gospel. “He,” says Baxter, “that
findeth not by faith enough in the love of God and
heavenly glory, and in Christ the way thereto, to
make him consent sincerely and practically to sell
or part with all the world, rather than lose it, is not
capable of a just title to it, nor shall obtain it.”

Verses 47–50. *The kingdom of heaven is like
unto a net, &c.*—The gospel preached to the world
may be compared to a net *cast into the sea*, and
gathering fishes of all kinds. For by the preach-
ing of it congregations are gathered, and a visible
church is formed, and both good and bad men are
brought to profess themselves members of it, and
are mingled together in such a manner, that it
would be difficult, if not impossible, to make a pro-
per distinction between them: Christian discipline,
however, and strong, close exhortation, in all well-
regulated churches, or properly-constituted Chris-
tian societies, begin that separation in this world
which shall be accomplished by the angels of God
in the world to come. “This parable will appear
peculiarly proper, if we consider that it was spoken
to fishermen, who had been called from their em-
ployments, with a promise that they should *catch
men*, Matt. iv. 19. It differs from the parable of the
tares in its extent, representing the gathering of
wicked men in general into the visible church along
with the good, by means of the preaching of the

A. M. 4035. 51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye
A. D. 31. understood all these things? They
say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every
scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of
heaven is like unto a man *that is* a household-
er, which bringeth forth out of his treasure
“things new and old.

53 ¶ And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus
had finished these parables, he departed
thence.

† Cant. vii. 13.—‡ Chap. ii. 23; Mark vi. 1; Luke iv.
16. 23.

gospel, together with the final judgment and state
of the wicked; whereas the parable of the tares
represents the introduction and punishment of hy-
pocrites in particular.”—Macknight.

Verses 51, 52. *Jesus saith, Have ye understood
all these things?*—As well those parables of which
I have given you no particular explication, as those
that I have explained? Thus a conscientious teacher
will sedulously inquire concerning the profiting of
his hearers. *They say unto him, Yea, Lord*—We
have understood them. *Then saith he, Every
scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*—
That is, every duly-prepared preacher of the gos-
pel, *is like unto a man that is a householder, &c.*—
Has a treasure of divine knowledge, out of which
he is able to bring forth all sorts of instructions.
By this similitude our Lord showed his disciples the
use they were to make of the knowledge they had
acquired, whether from the old revelation that had
been made to them by the prophets, or from the
new one of which Jesus was the author and dis-
penser. As if he had said, As the wise master of a
family, who possesses plenty of all sorts of provi-
sions, brings them forth as the occasions of his fam-
ily require, just so every able minister of the gos-
pel, out of the stores of his knowledge, must bring
forth instructions suitable to the necessities of his
hearers. The word *treasure* signifies any collec-
tion of things whatsoever, and the places where
such collections are kept.

Verses 53–55. *When Jesus had finished these
parables*—Namely, those last mentioned, delivered
in the house, which he added to the others spoken
before in public; *he departed thence*, (see Mark
vi. 1,) and came once more *into his own country*—
Namely, Nazareth: but with no better success than
he had had there before: for though he preached in
their synagogue with such wisdom and eloquence
that they were astonished, and also performed some
miracles, yet the Nazarenes were not disposed to
believe on him, taking offence at the poverty and
meanness of his family and relations. They said,
therefore, *Whence hath this man this wisdom, and
these mighty works?*—Whence? certainly from
above, for you yourselves acknowledge that they
are too extraordinary to be ascribed to a poor un-

a

54 † And when he was come into A. M. 4035.
his own country, he taught them in A. D. 31.
their synagogue, insomuch that they were as-
tonished, and said, Whence hath this *man*
this wisdom, and *these* mighty works?

55 † Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his
mother called Mary? and † his brethren † James,
and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us?
Whence then hath this *man* all these things?

57 And they † were offended in him. But

† Isa. xlix. 7; Mark vi. 3; Luke iii. 23; John vi. 42.—‡ Chap.
xii. 46.—§ Mark xv. 40.—¶ Chap. xi. 6; Mark vi. 3, 4.

educated man. *Is not this the carpenter’s son?*—In
Mark it is, *Is not this the carpenter, the son of
Mary?*—Although the word, *ὁ τεκτων*, rendered
carpenter, may mean one that works either in wood,
iron, or stone, yet it is probable that a *carpenter*,
properly so called, is here intended. Accordingly
Justin Martyr tells us that Jesus, before he entered
on his public ministry, was employed in this occu-
pation: and the ancient Christians were all of the
same opinion. The Jewish canons required that
all parents should teach their children some trade;
and, probably, the poverty of the family engaged
Christ, while he was at home with Joseph, to work
at his. What an additional proof is this of the hu-
miliation of the blessed Redeemer for our sakes!
The four persons here mentioned and termed the
brethren of Christ, it appears, were *his cousins*, the
sons of his mother’s sister, the wife of Cleophas, or
Alpheus. By *James* is meant *James the Less*,
whom St. Paul calls *the Lord’s brother*, Gal. i. 19.
Joses, or *Joseph*, (for the name is the same,) is the
only son of the virgin’s sister, who never was an
apostle. *Simon* is the same who is called the *Ca-
naanite*, or *Zelotes*, to distinguish him from Simon
Peter. And *Judas*, or *Jude*, is the author of the
epistle that goes under that name: wherein he is
styled *the brother of James*.

Verses 56, 57. *Whence then hath this man all
these things?*—“This, like many other things that
have since been objected against the gospel of
Christ, is as much the language of stupidity as of
infidelity; for the meanness of Christ’s education
was a demonstration that his teaching in so excel-
lent a manner must be the effect of some extraor-
dinary and divine influence on his mind.”—Dod-
dridge. *And they were offended in him*—Or scan-
dalized at him, by reason of his mean original and
humble circumstances in the world, and therefore
would not believe that he was the Messiah. *Jesus
said, A prophet is not without honour, save in his
own country*—Or, as Dr. Doddridge renders the
clause, *A prophet is nowhere less esteemed than in
his own country*. “This is plainly the sense of the
words, (though our translation is more literal,) for
a prophet may, and often is affronted at a
distance from home, as Christ himself found by fre-

A. M. 4035. Jesus said unto them, [†] A prophet is
A. D. 31. not without honour, save in his own
country, and in his own house.

[†] Luke iv. 24; John iv. 44.

quent experience." The expression is proverbial, signifying, "that those who possess extraordinary endowments are nowhere in less request than among their relations and acquaintance. The reason is, superior merit never fails to be envied, and envy commonly turns the knowledge it has of persons some way or other to their disadvantage."—Macknight.

Verse 58. *And he did not*, (Mark says, *he could not do*,) *many mighty works, because of their unbelief*—On which words it has been justly observed, that they are not to be understood so strictly as if the power of Christ was here disarmed; but only, that as they brought but few sick people to him for a cure, he did not judge it proper to obtrude his miracles upon them. On the same principle it is,

58 And ^{*} he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief. A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

^{*} Mark vi. 5, 6.

that faith, in some cases, though not in all, is made the condition of receiving a cure. And Christ saw it proper to make it so here, as well he might, considering what they must undoubtedly have heard of him from other places, and what they had confessed themselves but just before, of mighty works being wrought by his hands; which shows, indeed, that their unbelief did not so much consist in a doubt of his miraculous power, as of his divine mission, which, to any unprejudiced person's mind, that power so abundantly proved. "The reason," says Mr. Wesley, "why many mighty works are not wrought now, is not, that the faith is everywhere planted; but that unbelief everywhere prevails."

CHAPTER XIV.

Herod the tetrarch hears of Jesus, and suspects him to be John the Baptist, risen from the dead, 1, 2. An account of the imprisonment of John for his faithfulness to Herod, 3-5. Herod's beheading of him to please Herodias, 6-12. Jesus departs to a desert place, and by a miracle feeds multitudes, 13-21. After retiring to a mountain to pray, he walks on the water to his disciples in a storm, and saves them, 22-27. Peter asks and obtains leave to go to Jesus on the water, 28, 29. His faith fails, and he begins to sink, but is preserved by Jesus, 30, 31. The storm ceases on Jesus's entering the ship, and those in the ship worship him as the Son of God, 32, 33. Landing at Gennesaret, he heals many that were sick, 34-36.

A. M. 4036. **A**T that time ^{*} Herod the tetrarch
A. D. 32. heard of the fame of Jesus,

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and

^{*} A. D. 32 beginning.—[†] Mark vi. 14; Luke ix. 7.—[‡] Or,

therefore mighty works ¹ do show themselves in him. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

3 ¶ ^b For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for He-

are wrought by him.—^b Mark vi. 17; Luke iii. 19, 20.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Verses 1, 2. *Now at that time*—When our Lord had spent about a year in his public ministry, and had sent out his disciples to preach the gospel, to cast out devils, and to heal diseases, and they, by virtue of his name, had been successful in that work; Mark vi. 12-14; Luke ix. 6, 7; *Herod the tetrarch*—King of Galilee and Peræa, the fourth part of his father's dominions; (see note on chap. ii. 1;) *heard of the fame of Jesus*—Now everywhere spread abroad, in consequence of the marvellous works done by him and his apostles; *and said, This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead*—Herod was a Sadducee; and the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead: but Sadducism staggers when conscience awakes. See the note on Mark vi. 14-28.

Verses 3-7. *For Herod had laid hold on John*—Had formerly seized him; *and put him in prison for Herodias's sake*—On account of the reproof which John gave him for marrying Herodias, his

brother Philip's wife—Who was still living. *For John said to him*—Probably in some private conference he had with him, *It is not lawful for thee to have her*—Indeed it was not lawful for either of them to have her. For her father, Aristobulus, was their own brother. John's words were rough, like his raiment. He would not break the force of truth by using soft words even to a king. *And when he would have put him to death*—In a fit of passion; *he feared the multitude*—He knew his abuse of his power had already rendered him odious to the people, and as their resentments were much excited already, he was afraid if he should proceed to put a prophet to death, they would break out into a flame which he could not quench. He was then restrained by fear of the multitude; and afterward by the reverence he had for John, Mark vi. 19, &c. *But when Herod's birthday was kept*—Some think, that by γενεα, here rendered *birthday*, the day of Herod's accession to his tetrarchy is meant: and the word may perhaps be

A. M. 4034. Herodias's sake, his brother Philip's
A. D. 30. wife.

4 For John said unto him, ° It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, ° because they counted him as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced ° before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

° Lev. xviii. 16; xx. 21.—^d Chap. xxi. 26;

sometimes used with this latitude; but, unless where there is positive evidence that it has that meaning, the safer way is to prefer the customary interpretation. *The daughter of Herodias*—Whose name was Salome, and who was afterward infamous for a life suitable to this beginning, *danced before them*—Doubtless in consequence of a previous plan laid by her mother. For “in ancient times, it was so far from being the custom for ladies of distinction to dance in public, that it was reckoned indecent if they were so much as present at public entertainments. Queen Vashti thought it so dishonourable, that, rather than submit to it, even when commanded by King Ahasuerus, she forfeited her crown. Esther i. 12. It may, therefore, be believed, that this dancing of Herodias's daughter in such a large company of men, at a public entertainment, was a very extraordinary circumstance, and must have been brought about by some contrivance of her mother.” *And pleased Herod*—And also his guests, Mark vi. 22, *whereupon*, being delighted with her dancing and heated with wine, *he promised with an oath*—Profanely and foolishly swore unto her, and that, it seems, more than once, both the evangelists using the plural, ορκας, *oaths*, (see verse 9, and Mark vi. 26;) *to give her whatsoever she would ask, even to the half of his kingdom*, Mark vi. 23. “Thus profusely would he reward a worthless dance; while a prison and death were the recompense of the man of God who honestly sought the salvation of his soul!”—Scott.

Verse 8. *And she, being before instructed of her mother*—Namely, before she made her request: for, after the king had made her this promise, *she immediately went forth and said to her mother, What shall I ask?* And her mother, having now obtained the wished-for opportunity of executing her revenge, eagerly replied, *Ask the head of John the Baptist*; representing, no doubt, to her daughter, that he had attempted to expel and ruin them both; and that, considering the opinion which the king still entertained of him, he might some time or other, though in irons, regain Herod's favour and accomplish his design; for which reason, the opportunity of taking his life was not to be neglected, if she regarded her own safety. These, or such-

8 And she, being before instructed A. M. 4034. of her mother, said, Give me here A. D. 30. John Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.

Luke xx. 6.—³ Gr. in the midst.

like arguments, wrought up the young lady to such a pitch, that she not only consented to do as she was bidden, but became hearty in the cause: for, Mark vi. 25, *she came in straightway with haste*, Greek, ευθεως μετα σπουδης, *immediately with eagerness*; and while all the guests sat mute, expecting what mighty thing would be asked, she demanded the holy Baptist's head, as of greater value to her than the half of the kingdom. *Give me here*—Fearing if the king had time to consider, he would not do it; *John Baptist's head in a charger*—Επι πινακι, a large dish, or bowl. *And the king was sorry*—Knowing that John was a good man; yet, *for the oath's sake, &c.* So he murdered an innocent man for mere tenderness of conscience! Such was the tenderness of the consciences of those Jewish rulers, who, while they were using their utmost efforts to take away, by a most unjust and cruel process, the life of Christ, yet scrupled going into the judgment-hall of Pilate, *lest they should be defiled!* But Herod was influenced also by a regard for those *who sat with him at meat*. Doubtless he was unwilling to appear either rash, or fickle, or false before them, as they were probably the first persons of his kingdom for rank and character. Thus out of a misplaced regard to his oath and his guests, this king committed a most unjust and cruel action, which will ever reflect the greatest dishonour upon his memory.

Verses 10, 11. *And he sent and beheaded John in the prison*—How mysterious is the providence of God, which left the life of so holy a man in such infamous hands! which permitted it to be sacrificed to the malice of an abandoned harlot, the petulance of a vain girl, and the rashness of a foolish, perhaps drunken prince, who made a prophet's head the reward of a dance! But we are sure the Almighty will repay his servants in another world, for whatever they suffer in this. *And his head was brought and given to the damsel*. The head of the prophet, whose rebukes had awed the king in his loosest moments, and whose exhortations had often excited him to virtuous actions, was immediately brought, pale and bloody, in a charger, and given to the daughter of Herodias, in the presence of the guests; *and she brought it to her mother*—The young lady

A. M. 4036. 12 And his disciples came, and
A. D. 32. took up the body, and buried it, and
went and told Jesus.

13 ¶ When Jesus heard of it, he departed
thence by ship into a desert place apart: and
when the people had heard thereof, they fol-
lowed him on foot out of the cities.

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great

* Chap. x. 23; xii. 15; Mark vi. 32; Luke ix. 10;
John vi. 1, 2.

gladly received the bloody present, and carried it to her mother, who enjoyed the whole pleasure of revenge, and feasted her eyes with the sight of her enemy's head, now rendered silent and harmless. But the Baptist's voice became the louder for his being murdered, filling the earth, reaching up to heaven, and publishing the woman's adultery to all ages and to all people! St. Jerome tells us that Herodias treated the head in a very disdainful manner, pulling out the tongue, which she imagined had injured her, and piercing it with a needle. Thus they gratified themselves in the indulgence of their lusts, and triumphed in the murder of this holy prophet, till the righteous judgment of God overtook them all. For, as Dr. Whitby, with many others, observes, Providence interested itself very remarkably in the revenge of this murder on all concerned; Herod's army was defeated in a war occasioned by his marrying Herodias, which even many Jews thought a judgment sent upon him for the murder of John. Both he and Herodias, whose ambition occasioned his ruin, were afterward driven from their kingdom in great disgrace, and died in banishment at Lyons in Gaul: and, if any credit may be given to Nicephorus, Salome, the young lady who made this cruel request, fell into the ice, as she was walking over it, which closing suddenly cut off her head. See Macknight and Doddridge.

Verse 12. *And his disciples came and took up the body*—Which it seems had been thrown over the prison walls, without burial, probably by order of Herodias. *And buried it*—Laid it, says Mark, doubtless with great reverence and due lamentation, in a tomb, belonging to some of them who were willing to pay this last act of duty to their master's memory. *And went and told Jesus*—What had happened; and, remembering the repeated testimony which John had borne to him, probably continued their attendance upon him.

Verses 13, 14. *When Jesus heard it, he departed thence*—It appears from Mark vi. 30, that the disciples of John arrived with the news of their master's death at, or immediately after, the time when the apostles returned from their mission, and gave Jesus an account of the miracles which they had performed, and of the success of their ministry. Perhaps tidings of John's death had reached them before their return, and had caused them to hasten it. Be this as it may, it is probable that the distressing intelligence had thrown them into great consterna-

tion, and that our Lord retired into the desert with them with a view to allay it, and to give them an opportunity to indulge such meditations as were suitable to so awful a dispensation. Mark assigns also another reason of our Lord's retreat on this occasion, namely, the continual hurry the apostles were kept in by the multitude, which thronged about Jesus to such a degree, that they had not leisure so much as to eat without interruption, and much less for religious retirement and recollection. Perhaps, likewise, by this retreat, our Lord proposed to shun Herod, who desired to see him, and might be contriving some method of obtaining an interview with him; for Jesus had perfect knowledge not only of the conversation which passed at the court of Galilee, but also of Herod's thoughts and designs. *When the people heard thereof*—That is, heard to what place he was going, they followed him on foot out of the cities—They went after him by land, and travelled with such eagerness that they arrived at the place before him, having increased their numbers out of all the cities by which they passed. *And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude*—Much greater, it appears, than that which he had left at Capernaum. On this occasion, as on many others, he was moved with compassion toward them, because, says Mark, they were as sheep not having a shepherd. Therefore, he both preached to them and healed their sick—Healed them, says Luke, that had need of healing—Even all, it appears, that were brought to him.

15 ¶ And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away; that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

† Chap. ix. 36; Mark vi. 34.—‡ Mark vi. 35; Luke ix. 12;
John vi. 5.

Verses 15–18. *And when it was evening his disciples came to him*—That is, the first evening, which began at three in the afternoon. That this is the meaning is plain from verse 23, where another evening is said to have come after the people were fed and dismissed. Accordingly, Mark says, they came when the day was now far spent; and Luke, when the day began to wear away: saying, *This is a desert place*—Where there is neither food nor lodging to be had; and the time is now past—The word *upa*, here translated *time*, denotes the season of doing any thing. Here it seems to signify the season of the people's attending on Christ, which was now past, because they had continued with him as long as they could without receiving some refreshment. *Send the multitude away, that they may go, and buy themselves victuals*—Thus the disciples manifested their concern for the temporal as well as spiritual relief of the people: and it be-

A. M. 4036. 16 But Jesus said unto them, They
A. D. 32. need not depart; give ye them to eat.

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven,

^b Chap. xv. 36.

comes all ministers of Christ to imitate them herein, and regard the bodily necessities of their hearers, as well as those of their souls. *But Jesus said, They need not depart*—Namely, in order to procure victuals. He would neither dismiss them hungry, as they were, nor detain them longer without food, nor put them to the trouble and charge of buying victuals for themselves, but orders his disciples to provide for them: *Give ye them to eat*—Alas, poor disciples! they had nothing for themselves: how then should they give the multitude to eat? Observe, reader, when Christ requires of us what of ourselves we are unable to perform, it is to show us our weakness, and to excite us to look to him that *worketh all our works in us and for us*. *They said, We have here but five loaves and two fishes*—Provision certainly very insufficient to satisfy the hunger of five thousand men, and a great multitude of women and children. It must be observed, that Christ had not yet shown his power in any such way as that in which he was now about to manifest it, and the proofs he had given of it in other instances were not now recollected or adverted to by the disciples. Christ's ordering them, therefore, to give food to this immense multitude of men, women, and children, seems to have greatly surprised them. But, as John observes, chap. vi. 6, *he himself knew what he would do*. *He said, Bring them hither to me*—That I may bless them. Observe, reader, the way to have our temporal blessings, blessings indeed, is to bring them to Christ; for they can only be sanctified by his word, and by prayer to him. That is likely to prosper, and be a comfort to us, which we put into the hands of our Lord Jesus, that he may dispose of it as he pleases, and that we may receive it back from his hand, and then it will be doubly sweet to us. And what we give in charity, we should bring to Christ first, that he may graciously accept it from us, and graciously bless it to those to whom it is given.

Verses 19–21. *He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass*—Mark says, by companies, as we render the phrase *συντροφιαι, συμπουσια*, which is literally, *companies, companies*, that is, *in separate companies*. These, as appears by comparing Mark vi. 39 with Luke ix. 14, consisted some of fifty persons, some of a hundred, according as the ground would admit. Our Lord probably ordered them to be ranged in this manner that they might sit compactly, that their numbers might appear, that the meat might be divided among them with ease, and

^a he blessed, and brake, and gave the A. M. 4036.
loaves to *his* disciples, and the disci- A. D. 32.
ples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained
ⁱ twelve baskets full.

21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

ⁱ 2 Kings iv. 1–7.

that none might be neglected in the distribution. And no sooner did Christ signify his will to the disciples, and they intimated it to the multitude, than they all instantly did as they were ordered: so great an opinion had they of Christ's wisdom and power! Though they thus sat on the ground, under no canopy but the sky, and had only barley bread, and, as it seems, cold or dried fishes to eat, and probably nothing but water to drink; yet, as Mr. Henry truly and beautifully observes, there was more real grandeur displayed by the Master of this feast than by Ahasuerus, in that *royal feast* which was intended to show the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty. *And took the five loaves, &c.*—Thus acting like the master of a family among the Jews, who was wont to take the bread into his hands and to give thanks to God, before any at the table was permitted to eat any thing: *And looking up to heaven*—With great reverence and affection; *he blessed*—That is, says Dr. Whitby, with whom agree many other commentators, *he blessed*, or gave thanks to God, the liberal giver of all good, for his infinite beneficence in furnishing food to all flesh, and for the power he had conferred on him of relieving mankind by his miracles, particularly that which he was about to work, and which perhaps he prayed for, to raise the attention of the multitude, as we find him doing before the resurrection of Lazarus, John xi. 41. They apprehend that his looking up to heaven when he blessed, shows that his blessing was directed to God, and that it imported a thanksgiving for his great goodness. Accordingly John expresses it by *ευχαριστας, having given thanks*, he distributed, &c. It must be observed, however, that most commentators refer the expression, *he blessed*, to the loaves and fishes, because Luke says expressly, *εβλοησεν αυτους, he blessed them*; that is, he commanded upon them that singular blessing by which they were multiplied in the distribution. Thus God is said to bless the springing of the corn, Psa. lxx. 10. *And gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude*—“It is not to be supposed,” says Macknight, “that twelve persons could put first a piece of bread, and then a piece of fish, into the hands of five thousand men, besides the women and children, who were all fed with such expedition, that, notwithstanding the thing was not so much as proposed to the disciples till about three, all was over by five o'clock in the afternoon, as may be gathered from John vi. 16, where see the note. It is natural, therefore, to con-

A. M. 4036. 22 ¶ And straightway Jesus con-
A. D. 32. strained his disciples to get into a ship,
and to go before him unto the other side, while
he sent the multitudes away.

¶ Mark vi. 46.

clude, that, in distributing the meat, the disciples used the most expeditious method, putting, by their Master's direction, the bread first, and after that the fish, into the hands of those only who sat at the ends of the ranks, with orders to give it to their companions. On this supposition, the meat must have extended its dimensions, not in our Lord's hands only, but in the hands of the multitude likewise, continuing to swell till there was a greater quantity than they, who held it, could make use of; so that breaking off what was sufficient for themselves, they gave the remainder to the persons next them, who, in like manner, saw the bread and fish swell in their own hands till they also had enough and to spare. The meat being thus created among the hands of the multitude, and before their eyes, as long as there was a single person to be fed, they *did all eat, and were filled*, to their unspeakable astonishment. In this manner did he who is the Bread of Life feed about ten thousand people, (for doubtless the women and children were as numerous as the men,) with five loaves and two small fishes, giving a magnificent proof, not only of his goodness, but of his creating power. For after all had eaten to satiety, the disciples, at Jesus's command, (see note on John vi. 12,) took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces of meat, each disciple a basket, in which there must have been much more than the quantity at first set before the Lord to divide. The stupendous miracle, therefore, without all doubt, was conspicuous, not to the disciples only, who, carrying each his basket in his hand, had an abiding, sensible demonstration of its truth, but to every individual guest at this divine feast, who had all felt themselves delighted, filled, refreshed, and strengthened by the meal. This being one of the most astonishing, and at the same time the most extensively convincing of all the miracles Jesus performed during the course of his ministry, every one of the evangelists has recorded it; and, which is remarkable, it is the only one found in each of their histories.

Verse 22. *And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, &c.*—According to John, chap. vi. 15, the people were so affected with the above-mentioned miracle, that they were *about to take him by force, and make him a king*, very naturally supposing, doubtless, that he, who with five loaves and two fishes could feed so many thousands, was able to support armies any length of time he pleased. And it is probable that his disciples were disposed to encourage and aid them in these intentions. Jesus, therefore, knowing both the purposes of the multitude and the inclinations of the disciples, ordered the latter to get into a vessel, and make for Bethsaida, while he should dismiss

A. M. 4036. 23 † And when he had sent the
A. D. 32. multitudes away, he went up into a
mountain apart to pray: † and when the
evening was come, he was there alone.

¶ John vi. 16.

the former. This they were unwilling to do: it is therefore here said that Christ *constrained them*.

Verse 23. *When he had sent the multitudes away*—As well as his disciples, and was now alone, *he went up into a mountain apart*—Though Christ had so much to do with and for others, yet he chose sometimes to be alone; and those are not his followers who are averse to solitude, and out of their element when they have none to converse with, none to enjoy, but God and their own souls; *to pray*—This was our Lord's business while alone; not merely to meditate, but also, and especially, to pray to his heavenly Father. It is true, he had not the same reasons for prayer that we have, for he had no sins to be pardoned or conquered, nor any depravity of nature to be subdued, and taken away; but he had a variety of infinitely important services to perform, many temptations to overcome, and unparalleled sufferings to endure; and in all these, as man, "of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting," he had need of divine supports and consolations. He had also to pray for mankind in general, and his church in particular, and now especially for his disciples, whom he had just sent to sea, and who, he foresaw, were about to be overtaken by a dreadful storm, and therefore it was necessary he should pray for their preservation, and that their faith might not fail in the midst of their trouble. But in thus retiring to pray, as he often did, our Lord seems chiefly to have intended to set us an example, that we might follow his steps. Like him we must use private, as well as public and social prayer; and, as he directed, Matt. vi. 6, must perform it privately. As he dismissed the multitude and his own disciples, we must disengage ourselves from our worldly affairs, cares, and concerns, and even withdraw from our Christian friends and the members of our own families, that we may converse with God in secret. The ministers of Christ, in particular, must take care to mix secret devotion with their public labours for the instruction and salvation of mankind, if they would secure that divine blessing without which neither the most eloquent preaching, nor the most engaging or benevolent conduct, can command or promise success. *And when the evening was come*—This confirms the observation made on verse 15, that the Jews had two evenings. The latter is here meant, beginning at sunset, and termed by us the *twilight: he was there alone*—And, it appears from verse 25, there he was till toward morning. The night came on, and it was a stormy, tempestuous night, yet he continued instant in prayer. It is our duty, at least sometimes, upon special occasions, and when we find our hearts enlarged, to continue long in secret prayer, and to

A. M. 4036. 24 But the ship was now in the
A. D. 32. midst of the sea, tossed with waves:
for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Je-
sus went unto them, walking on the sea.

¹ Job ix. 8.

take full scope in pouring out our hearts before the Lord.

Verse 24. *But the ship*—In which the disciples were; *was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, &c.*—A striking emblem of his church, in the sea of this world, tossed, as it often is, on the waves of affliction and trouble, and assailed by the contrary wind of persecution. It is worthy of notice here, 1st, That the disciples were now where Christ had sent them, and yet they met with this storm. Had they been flying from their Master and their work, as Jonah was when he was arrested by the storm, it would have been less surprising that they should be thus assaulted; but they had a special command from their Master to go to sea at this time, and were going about his work, and yet a storm overtakes them! We see, therefore, that Christ's disciples may meet with troubles and afflictions in the way of their duty; and be sent to sea when their Master foresees a storm. They ought not, however, to take it unkindly; for what he does they know not now, but they shall know hereafter that Christ designs hereby to manifest himself with the more wonderful grace to them and for them. 2d. This storm did not attack them immediately on their setting out: they had got into the midst of the sea when it arose. We may have fair weather in the beginning of our course, and yet meet with storms before we arrive at the port we are bound for. Therefore let not him that girds on the harness boast as he that puts it off: after a long calm, expect some storm or other. 3d, It was a great discouragement to the disciples, that now they had not Christ with them, as they had formerly when they were in a storm: for though he was then asleep, he was soon waked, chap. viii. 24, but now he was at a distance from them. Thus Christ inures his disciples first to lesser difficulties, and then to greater, and so trains them by degrees to live and walk by faith, and not by sight. 4th, Though the wind was contrary, and they were tossed with waves; yet, being ordered by their Master to go to the other side, they did not tack about and come back again, but made the best of their way forward. Hereby we learn, that though troubles and difficulties may assault and annoy us in our duty, they must not drive us from it; but through the midst of them we must press forward.

Verse 25. *And in the fourth watch of the night*—The Jews, as well as the Romans, usually divided the night into four watches of three hours each. The first watch began at six, the second at nine, the third at twelve, the fourth at three. During these many tedious and distressing hours of storm and tempest, of darkness and danger, Jesus saw his dis-

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26 And when the disciples saw him A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32. ¹ walking on the sea, they were trou-
bled, saying, "It is a spirit; and they cried out
for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them,

⁼ Luke xxiv. 37.

ciples, though they saw not him: he beheld their perplexity and fear, while they were conflicting with the winds and waves, and observed how they toiled in rowing, Mark vi. 48; yet he delayed all this time to go to their relief; seeing it proper so long to try their faith and patience. *But in the fourth watch*—When, it is probable, as the storm was not at all abated, they had begun to despair of deliverance; *Jesus went unto them, walking on the water*—agitated, stormy, and tumultuous as its billows were. Thus God often lengthens out the troubles of his people, and defers the time of their deliverance. But when things are come to an extremity, and they are ready to think he hath forgotten them, he unexpectedly appears for their relief and rescue; of a sudden the storm becomes a calm, and they are happily brought into a safe port. Thus, in the morning watch he appeared for Israel in the Red sea, troubled and dismayed their pursuing enemies, and delivered his people: and in all ages the extremity of his church has been his opportunity to visit and appear for her. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps, but has constantly his eye upon them, and, when there is need, walks in darkness for their succour, support, and comfort. What a wonderful proof have we here of Christ's sovereign power over the creatures, which are all under his feet, and at his command, forgetting their natures, and changing their most essential qualities at his word! "To walk on the sea was thought so impracticable, that the picture of *two feet walking on the sea*, was an Egyptian hieroglyphic for an impossible thing. And in the Scripture it is mentioned, as the prerogative of God, that he alone treadeth on the waves of the sea, Job ix. 8."—Doddrige.

Verses 26, 27. *And when the disciples saw him, they were troubled*—"It is well known that it is never entirely dark on the water; not to urge that the moon might perhaps now be in the last quarter, as it must have been, if this was about three weeks before the passover." By that little light, therefore, which they had, the disciples, seeing him, but not perfectly discerning who he was, were much terrified: saying, *It is a spirit*, *Οτι φαντασμα εστι*, *It is an apparition*: for they justly supposed that no human body could be supported by the water. Although the original word here used is not *spirit*, but *apparition*, yet that the Jews in general, particularly the Pharisees, believed in the existence of spirits, and that spirits sometimes appeared, is evident from Luke xxiv. 37, 39, and Acts xxiii. 8, 9. *And they cried out with fear*—Through their dread of what might be the consequence: for, Mark vi. 50, *they all saw him, and were troubled*. We see here, that

A. M. 4036. saying, ^m Be of good cheer ; it is I ; be
A. D. 32. not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

^m Acts xxiii. 11.

even appearances and approaches of deliverance may be the occasions of trouble and perplexity to God's people, who are sometimes put into great fear when they are most highly favoured. See Luke i. 29, and Exod. iii. 6. To allay the fears of his disciples, Christ immediately drew near and spake to them, in a tone of voice with which they were all perfectly acquainted, saying, *θαραειρε, Take courage: it is I*—Your Lord and Master; *be not afraid*—Either of me, who am your friend, or of the violent tempest, which cannot hurt you while you are under my protection.

Verses 28–31. *And Peter said, Lord, if it be thou*—Or, since it is thou, (the particle *if* frequently bearing this meaning;) *bid me come unto thee on the water*—This was a rash request, proceeding from the warmth and forwardness of Peter's natural temper. *And he said, Come*—Our Lord granted his request, doubtless with a view to show him the weakness of his faith, and thereby to give a check to the high opinion he seems to have entertained of himself, as well as to demonstrate the greatness of his own power: for in supporting Peter on the water along with himself, he manifested greater power than if he had walked thereon singly. *And when Peter was come down out of the ship*—Being fully satisfied that Jesus was able to uphold and bear him up; *he walked on the water*—For a while; no little pleased, we may suppose, to find it firm under his feet. *But when he saw the wind boisterous*—Doubtless it became more so than before, making a dreadful noise, and causing the sea to rage horribly: *he was afraid*—His faith failed, his courage staggered, and, in the hurry of his thoughts, he forgot that Jesus was at hand, and was seized with a sudden terror. And now the secret power of God, which, while Peter confidently relied on Jesus, had made the sea firm under him, began to be withdrawn, and in proportion as his faith decreased, the water yielded, and he sunk. In this extremity he looked round for Christ, and on the very brink of being swallowed up, cried, *Lord, save me*—Peter, being a fisherman, had been used to the sea, and it appears from John xxi. 7, was a skilful swimmer. And probably he ventured on the attempt he now made with some secret dependance on his art, which God, for wise reasons, suffered to fail him. The word *καταποντισσθαι*, here rendered to *sink*, is very expressive, and may intimate that he felt himself sinking with such a weight that he had no hope of recovering himself, and ex-

30 But when he saw the wind ³boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning ^{A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.} to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

³ Or, strong.

pected nothing but that he should go directly to the bottom of the sea. *Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him*—Dealing thus mercifully with his servant, in not suffering him to perish as a punishment of his preceding rashness and self-confidence, and his subsequent diffidence and distrust of Christ's power: *And said, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*—Namely, of my protection, when I was so near? when thou hadst my commission to make the trial, and hadst in part experienced my power in supporting thee thus far on the waves? The reader must observe, Peter did not doubt that it was Jesus who walked upon the water. He was convinced of that before he left the vessel; yea, and while he was sinking; otherwise he would not have called to him for assistance: but he was afraid that Jesus could not, or would not support him against the wind, which blew more fiercely than before; a doubt most unreasonable, since it was as easy for Christ to support him against the storm, as to keep him up on the water, which Jesus had virtually promised to do in his permission, and which he had actually performed while Peter relied on him. "The people of God, warned by this example, should beware of presumption and self-sufficiency, and in all their actions should take care not to be precipitate. Wherever God calls them, they are boldly to go, not terrified at the danger or difficulty of the duty; his providence being always able to support and protect them. But he who goes without a call, or proceeds further than he is called; who rushes into difficulties and temptations without any reason, may, by the unhappy issue of his conduct, be made to feel how dangerous a thing it is for a person to go out of his sphere."—Macknight.

Verses 32, 33. *When they were come into the ship, the wind ceased*—And that so suddenly that all in the ship were sensible it was the effect of Christ's presence and power. He seems, also, according to John vi. 21, to have wrought another miracle at the same instant, for immediately on his entering the ship, *it was at the land!* These many wonderful miracles, succeeding each other so rapidly, greatly affected the minds of the disciples. *They were sore amazed, says Mark, in themselves, beyond measure, and wondered, namely, at the astonishing power of their Master. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves, though so lately performed, and so wonderful, and though they had the sensible proof of it before their eyes in the baskets of frag-*

A. M. 4036. 33 Then they that were in the ship
A. D. 32. came and worshipped him, saying,
Of a truth ^m thou art the Son of God.

34 ¶ ^a And when they were gone over, they
came into the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place had

^m Psa. ii. 7; Mark i. 1; Chap. xvi. 16; xxvi. 63; Luke iv. 41;
John i. 49; vi. 69; xi. 27; Acts viii. 37; Rom. i. 4.

ments which they had taken with them into the ship; and perhaps had been talking of it before the storm came on; for their *heart was hardened*, and they were so stupified with their fear, that they did not reflect on that miracle. We need not, therefore, be surprised that they did not call to mind a similar exertion of his power, which they had beheld while they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes. *Then they that were in the ship*—Not only the disciples, but all others that were therein; *came and worshipped him*—Fell down at his feet in a rapture of wonder, devotion, and reverence, *saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God*—That is, the Messiah, and a divine person, possessed of an unlimited power over the whole creation. Though on many occasions formerly, Jesus had given equal, if not greater evidences of his power, the disciples did not, till now, make open confession of his dignity. It seems, when his miracles came to be thus multiplied, but especially when they followed upon one another so closely, the apostles were more deeply affected with them than by seeing him perform any single miracle.

Verse 34. *They came into the land of Gennesaret*—A large tract of ground on the western shore of the lake, in a part of which Capernaum appears from hence to have been situated. For though Matthew and Mark speak only of their coming to the land of Gennesaret and putting to shore there, (see Mark vi. 53.) it is plain from John's account that Jesus, at his landing, came to Capernaum, for it was there the people found him that followed him in the morning from the other side of the sea. See Doddridge, and compare John vi. 22, 25, with verse 59. *And when the men of that place had knowledge of him*—Or rather, *the men, &c.*, ἐπιγινώσκοντες αὐτόν, *knowing, or having known him*, namely, formerly; Jesus having ordinarily resided in that neighbourhood, and the inhabitants thereof having seen many of his miracles, *sent out into all that country*—Christ having been absent some time, the people were glad that he was now returned, and sent messengers to all their friends and acquaintance in the neighbouring places who were sick, desiring them to come and be cured. And they, rejoicing at the

knowledge of him, they sent out into A. M. 4036.
all that country round about, and A. D. 32.
brought unto him all that were diseased:

36 And besought him that they might only
touch the hem of his garment: and ^o as many
as touched were made perfectly whole.

^a Mark vi. 53.—^o Chap. ix. 20; Mark iii. 10; Luke vi. 19;
Acts xix. 12.

opportunity, came as soon as possible, in great crowds, carrying their sick on beds and couches, and bringing them to Jesus. Thus those who have obtained the knowledge of Christ themselves, should do all they can to bring others to be acquainted with him also. And when we have opportunities of receiving instruction and other spiritual blessings, we should invite as many as possible to share with us. More than we think of would embrace the opportunities, if they were but called upon and invited to them. On this occasion, the number of those that came to Jesus was so great, that he could not bestow particular attention upon each of them. They and their friends, therefore, besought him to grant them the favour of touching, if it were but the extremity of his clothes, being certain of obtaining thereby a complete cure. Nor were their expectations disappointed; for *as many as touched him were made perfectly whole*—Whatever the distempers were under which they laboured, not because there was any virtue in his garments, otherwise the soldiers to whom they were given at his crucifixion might have wrought miracles by them, but because Jesus willed it to be so: and because those who touched him confided in his power and godness, and believed that he would thus heal them. It was in this neighbourhood that the woman mentioned Matt. ix. 20, had been cured of a bloody issue by touching the hem of his garment, and probably the information which these afflicted people, who now applied to Christ, had received of this fact, gave occasion to this peculiar exercise of faith in him. Observe, reader, the healing virtue that is in Christ is put forth for the benefit of those that by a true and lively faith touch him. Christ is in heaven, but his word is nigh us, and he himself in that word. When we mix faith with the word, apply it to ourselves, depend upon it, and submit to the influences and commands of it, then we touch the hem of Christ's garment. It is but this touching, and we are made whole. On such easy terms are spiritual cures offered by him, that if our souls are not healed, we have only ourselves to blame. He could have healed us, he would have healed us, but we would not be healed: so that our blood will be upon our own heads.

CHAPTER XV.

In this chapter we have, (1.) Christ's discourse with the scribes and Pharisees concerning human traditions, in which he vindicates his disciples for neglecting them, and condemns those corrupt teachers for preferring such traditions to the precepts of the divine law, 1-9. (2.) His discourse with the multitude and with his disciples concerning the things which

defile a man, 10-20. (3.) His kindly casting the devil out of the woman of Canaan's daughter, after apparently treating her with great neglect, 21-28. (4.) His healing a multitude of diseased persons, to the astonishment of the beholders, 29-31. (5.) His feeding four thousand men with seven loaves and a few small fishes, 32-39

A. M. 4036. **THEN** ^a came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

2 ^b Why do thy disciples transgress ^c the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

4 For God commanded, saying, ^d Honour thy father and mother: and, ^e He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, ^f It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.* Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 ^g Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

8 ^h This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their lips*; but their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain they do worship me, ⁱ teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

10 ¶ ^k And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11 ^l Not that which goeth into the mouth de-

^a Mark vii. 1.—^b Mark vii. 5.—^c Col. ii. 8.—^d Exod. xx. 12; Lev. xix. 3; Deut. v. 16; Prov. xxiii. 22; Eph. vi. 2.—^e Ex. xxi. 17; Lev. xx. 9; Deut. xxvii. 16; Pr. xx. 20; xxx. 17.—^f Mark

vii. 11, 12.—^g Mark vii. 6.—^h Isa. xxix. 13; Ez. xxxiii. 31. ⁱ Isa. xxix. 13; Col. ii. 18, 22; Tit. i. 14.—^k Mark vii. 14. ^l Acts x. 15; Rom. xiv. 14, 17, 20; 1 Tim. iv. 4; Tit. i. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

Verses 1-6. *Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees*—See notes on Mark vii. 1-23, where the facts here spoken of are related more at large. *Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders*—That is, of the principal doctors or teachers among the Jews. *They wash not when they eat bread*—Food in general is termed bread in the Hebrew: so that to eat bread is the same as to make a meal. *But he said, Why do ye also, &c.*—As if he had said, Nay; but I may with much greater reason ask you why you transgress what is infinitely more sacred, even the commandment of God, by your tradition—Your vain and superstitious doctrine, delivered by verbal communication, and handed down from age to age. *For God commanded, Honour thy father and mother*—Which implies the affording them all such relief as they stand in need of: and, *He that curseth father or mother*—Although it be in a sudden transport of passion; *let him die the death*—Let him be put to death without mercy, Exod. xxi. 17; Lev. xx. 9; where see the note. *But ye say*—But what you teach is contradictory to this divine command; and an ungrateful child may justify himself in the neglect of it in consequence of your tradition: for your doctrine is, *Whosoever shall say to his father, It is a gift, &c.*—That is, I have given, or at least I purpose to give, to the treasury of the temple, what you might otherwise have had from me; and *honour not his father and his mother*—Namely, by relieving them in their poverty, or supplying their wants, *he shall be free*—From all blame, or from all obligation of giving them relief. *Thus have ye made the commandment of God*—Even a commandment written with his own finger on the tables of stone: *of none effect by*

your tradition—Have absolutely rendered it useless, and as it were annihilated it.

Verses 7-9. *Ye hypocrites*—To substitute superstitious observances of man's invention, in the place of obedience to God's commands, is downright hypocrisy; it is, however, the prerogative of Him who searches the heart, and knows what is in man, to pronounce who are hypocrites. And as hypocrisy is a sin which only his eye discovers, so it is a sin which above all others he abhors. *Well did Esaias prophesy of you*—That is, the words which Isaiah addressed to your fathers are exactly applicable to you: his description of them is a prophecy with regard to you. Observe, reader, the reproofs of sin and sinners, which we find in the Scriptures, were designed to be applied to similar persons and practices to the end of the world; for they are not of private interpretation, 2 Pet. i. 20. Threatenings directed against others belong to us, if we be guilty of the same sins. *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, &c.*—They make a great profession, and pretend to much devotion and piety; *but their heart is far from me*—They do not sincerely love and obey me. They do not give me their hearts; and, if the heart be not given to God, all outward worship is no better than a mockery of him. *In vain they do worship me*—That is, idly, unprofitably, and to no purpose. Their worship does not attain the end for which divine worship was appointed. It neither pleases God nor profits themselves. For if it be not in spirit, it is not in truth, and so it is all nothing. *Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*—As equal with, nay, superior to, those of God. What can be a more heinous sin?

Verses 10, 11. *And he called the multitude*—Hav-

A. M. 4036. fileth a man; but that which cometh
A. D. 32. out of the mouth, this defileth a
man.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto
him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were
offended after they heard this saying?

= John xv. 2; 1 Cor. iii. 12, &c.—Isa. ix. 16;

ing shown the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and condemned them for the unwarrantable stress which they laid on their vain and precarious traditions, he took this opportunity to undeceive the people, and let them see how insignificant that outward strictness was on which the Pharisees insisted. *And said, Hear and understand*—From these words, and those recorded Mark vii. 16, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*, all spoken to the multitude, it is evident that, in our Lord's judgment, the whole multitude was capable of understanding those things which the Pharisees did not understand, and by which their traditions and those of the elders were overthrown. *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man*—It is not the kind or quality of our food, nor the want of cleanness of hands when we eat it, that affects the soul with any moral pollution. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, Rom. xiv. 17. A man is defiled by that by which guilt is contracted before God, and the man is rendered offensive to him, and unfitted for communion with him. Now what we eat, if we do not eat unseasonably and immoderately, does not produce this effect, for to the pure all things are pure, Titus i. 15. The Pharisees carried their ideas concerning the ceremonial pollutions which arose from eating certain forbidden meats much further than the law intended, and burdened it with additions of their own, which our Saviour witnesses against, intending hereby to pave the way for a repeal of the ceremonial law in that matter. *But that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man*—We are polluted, not by the meat we eat with unwashen hands, but by the words we speak from unsanctified hearts. Christ, in a former discourse, had laid a great stress upon our words, chap. xii. 36, which was intended for reproof and warning to those that cavilled at him. This, here, is intended for reproof and warning to those that cavilled at and censured the disciples. The latter did not defile themselves with what they ate, but the Pharisees defiled themselves with what they spoke spitefully and censoriously of them. Observe, reader, those who charge guilt upon others for transgressing the commandments of men, many times bring greater guilt upon themselves by transgressing the law of God against rash judging. Those most defile themselves who are most forward to censure the defilements of others.

Verses 12, 13. *Then came his disciples*—Namely, when he was come into the house, apart from the multitude; and said unto him, *Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, &c.*—The apostles, it seems, would gladly have conciliated the good-will

13 But he answered and said, = Every A. M. 4036
plant, which my heavenly Father hath A. D. 32.
not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone: = they be blind leaders
of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind,
both shall fall into the ditch.

Mal. ii. 8; Chap. xxiii. 16; Luke vi. 39.

of the Pharisees, thinking it might be of service to their cause; and thought it strange that their Master should say that which he knew would give them so much offence. Surely, they thought, if he had considered how provoking such a saying would be, he would not have uttered it. But he knew what he said, and to whom he said it, and what would be the effect of it; and he hereby teaches us, that though in indifferent things, we must be tender of giving offence, yet we must not, for fear of that, neglect to declare any truth, or enforce any duty. Truth must be owned, and duty must be done; and if any be offended, it is their own fault. Offence is not given, but taken. *But he said, Every plant*—Or rather, *plantation*, as *φύτερα* is more properly rendered. As if he had said, *Be they as angry as they will, you need not be afraid of them, for they and their doctrine shall perish together, being neither of them from God.* Not only the corrupt opinions and superstitious practices of the Pharisees, but their sect, and way, and constitution were plants not of God's planting; the rules of their profession were not his institutions, but owed their original to pride and formality. And the people of the Jews in general, though planted a noble vine, were now become the degenerate plant of a strange vine. God disowned them as not of his planting.

Verse 14. *Let them alone*—Do not trouble or concern yourselves about their censures: neither court their favour nor dread their displeasure, nor much care though they be offended. Seek not to please a generation of men that please not God, 1 Thess. ii. 15; and will be pleased with nothing less than absolute dominion over your consciences. *They be blind leaders of the blind*—Teachers, who foolishly think to lead their disciples to heaven by the observation of precepts wherein there is not the smallest degree of true piety, and will not be convinced of the contrary, being grossly ignorant of divine things, and strangers to the spiritual nature of God's law; and yet so proud, that they think they see better than any others, and therefore undertake to be leaders of others. *And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*—The guides and the guided, the blind leaders and the blind followers, shall perish together. Both will be involved in the general desolation coming upon the Jews, and both will fall into the ditch of eternal destruction. We find, Rev. xxii. 15, that hell is the portion of those that make a lie, and of those that love it when made. The sin and ruin of the deceivers will be no security to those that are deceived by them. "Though the leaders of the people cause

A. M. 4036. 15 ° Then answered Peter and said
A. D. 32. unto him, Declare unto us this para-
ble.

16 And Jesus said, ° Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that ° whatso-
ever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the
belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But ° those things which proceed out of the
mouth come forth from the heart; and they de-
file the man.

19 ° For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,
murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false
witness, blasphemies:

20 These are *the things* which defile a man:
but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a
man.

° Mark vii. 17.—° Chapter xvi. 9; Mark vii. 18.—° 1 Cor.
vi. 13.—° James iii. 6.—° Gen. vi. 5; viii. 21; Prov. vi. 14;
Jer. xvii. 9; Mark vii. 21.—° Mark vii. 24.

them to err, yet they that are led of them are de-
stroyed," Isa. ix. 16; because they shut their eyes
against the light which would have rectified their
mistake. Hence "it follows," says Dr. Whitby,
"that sometimes the multitude neither ought, nor
can, without their utmost peril, follow the guidance
of their ecclesiastical superiors;" or, as he ex-
presses himself afterward, believe, or comply with
their rules, "because it is their duty never to follow
them into the ditch." "Learn here," says Burkit,
"1st, that ignorant, erroneous, and unfaithful mi-
nisters are the heaviest judgment that can befall a
people; 2d, that the following of such teachers and
blind guides will be no excuse to people another
day, much less free them from the danger of eternal
destruction."

Verses 15-20. *Peter said, Declare unto us this
parable*—That is, the sentence, maxim, or proverb,
mentioned verse 11. *Not that which goeth into the
mouth defileth the man, &c.*—A declaration very in-
telligible, and evidently true, and yet appearing to
the disciples obscure, and needing explanation, or
doubtful, and wanting confirmation. The reason is
evident: it did not agree with the notions of reli-
gion which they had formerly imbibed. *And Jesus
said, Are ye also yet without understanding?*—
Are ye so stupid as not to see that what a man eats
or drinks, being of a corporeal nature, cannot defile
the mind, or make a man a sinner in the sight of
God, unless when used immoderately, or in opposi-
tion to the commandment of God, in which case
the pollution arises from the man, and not from the
meat; whereas, that which proceedeth out of a
man's mouth, coming from his heart, really pollutes
his mind. How fair and candid are the sacred his-
torians! Never concealing or excusing their own
blemishes. *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts*
—Or rather, *evil reasonings*, as the words *διαλογισμοι*

21 ¶ ° Then Jesus went thence, and A. M. 4036
departed into the coasts of Tyre and A. D. 32.
Sidon.*

32 And behold a woman of Canaan came out
of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying,
Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David;
my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a word. And
his disciples came and besought him, saying,
Send her away; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, ° I am not sent
but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped him, say-
ing, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet
to take the children's bread and to cast it to
° dogs.

* Second Sunday Lent, gospel, verse 21 to verse 29.—° Ch.
x. 5, 6; Acts iii. 25, 26; xiii. 46; Rom. xv. 8.—° Chap. vii.
6; Phil. iii. 2; Mark vii. 31.

πovνη properly signify. The expression includes
all sinful devices, contrivances, schemes, designs,
and purposes which arise from the thoughts and
imaginings of the mind: *murders*—Including rash
anger, hatred, malice, envy, and revenge, sins
against the sixth commandment: *adulteries, forni-
cations*—Sins against the seventh commandment;
proceeding from unchaste thoughts, wanton looks,
immodest expressions, lascivious actions; *thefts*—
All unjust or dishonest actions, sins against the
eighth commandment; frauds, wrongs, rapines, and
all injurious contracts: *false witness*—An offence
against the ninth commandment; arising generally
from a complication of falsehood and covetousness,
or falsehood and malice in the heart. If truth,
holiness, and love reigned in the heart, as God re-
quires that they should, there would be no bearing
false witness: *blasphemies*—Or *calumnies*, as the
original word may be rendered, which signifies either
speaking evil of God, a violation of the third com-
mandment, or calumniating our neighbor, a breach
of the ninth. *These are the things which defile a
man*—And are therefore the things which we should
carefully avoid, and guard against all approaches to
them; and not lay an undue stress on the washing
of the hands, or on any distinction of meats and
drinks. It is a matter of much lamentation that
our corrupted nature should abound with such poi-
sonous productions as these; let us earnestly pray
that they may be rooted out by divine grace, and
that the Holy Spirit may create in us clean hearts,
and implant therein tempers diametrically opposite
to all these enormities!

Verses 21-28. *Jesus departed into the coasts of
Tyre and Sidon*—Not to those cities which were
to have no share in his mighty works, Matt. xi. 21,
22; but into that part of the land of Israel which
bordered on their coast. *And behold a woman of*

A. M. 4036. 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet
A. D. 32. the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall
from their masters' table.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her,
O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee
even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made
whole from that very hour.

† Mark vii. 31.—† Chap. iv. 18.

Canaan—Or, a *Syrophœnician*, as she is called, Mark vii. 26; Canaan being also called *Syrophœnicia*, as lying between Syria, properly so called, and Phœnicia, by the sea-side. *Came, and cried unto him*—From afar; *Have mercy on me, thou son of David*—Consider my distressed case, and extend thy compassion to me, though a stranger. By addressing him as the son of David, she shows she had some knowledge of the promised Messiah, and that she believed Jesus to be that divine person. *But he answered her not a word*—He did not seem to regard her, intending that the greatness of her faith should be manifested, an end highly worthy of the wisdom of Jesus; because it not only justified his conduct in working a miracle for a heathen, but was a sharp rebuke to the Jews for their infidelity. *Our Lord often tries the faith of his followers in a similar way. His disciples besought him, saying, Send her away*—The disciples, being ignorant of our Lord's design, were uneasy at the woman's importunity, thinking, if she were permitted to follow them, that they would soon be discovered. Desiring, therefore, to get rid of her, they entreat their Master to dismiss her as he was wont to dismiss such petitioners, namely, with the grant of her request. *But he answered, I am not sent*—Not primarily; not yet; *but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*—By the lost sheep of Israel we are to understand the whole nation of the Jews, who, being as sheep dispersed, and having no shepherd, are therefore called *lost sheep*. To them the Messiah was first promised; to them he came; and to them his personal ministry was to be almost wholly confined: and hence he is styled a minister of the circumcision, Rom. xv. 8. Thus at the first Jesus seemed both to refuse this woman's request, and the intercession of the disciples in her behalf. She, however, far from being discouraged by the repulse, drew near and *worshipped him*—That is, fell on her knees before him; *saying, Lord, help me*—Her necessity and distress were great, and she was unwilling to take a denial. *But he said*—What was still more discouraging, and seemed to cut her off from all hope, and would, doubtless, have driven her to despair, if she had not had very strong faith indeed; *It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs*—“The Jews gloried greatly in the honourable title of God's children, because of all nations they alone knew and worshipped the true God. They gave the name of *dogs* to the heathen for their idolatry and other pollutions, by which they had degraded themselves

a

29 ¶ And Jesus departed from A. M. 4036.
thence, and came nigh * unto the sea A. D. 32.
of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and
sat down there.

30 * And great multitudes came unto him,
having with them *those that were lame, blind,
dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast*

* Isa. xxxv. 5, 6; Chap. xi. 5; Luke vii. 22.

from the rank of reasonable creatures: this appellation, therefore, marked the impurity of the Gentiles, and their odiousness in the sight of God; at the same time conveying an idea of the contempt in which they were held by the holy nation. But though, in some respects, it was applicable, it must have been very offensive to the heathen. Nevertheless, this woman neither refused it, nor grudged the Jews the honourable title of *children*. She acknowledged the justness of what Christ said, and by a strong exercise of faith drew an argument from it, which the candour and benevolence of his disposition could not resist.” *She said, Truth, Lord*—It would not be fit to put the dogs and the children on a level; *Yet the dogs eat of the crumbs, &c.*—“Let me have such kindness as the dogs of any family enjoy: from the plenty of miraculous cures which thou bestowest on the Jews, drop the offal of this one to me who am a poor distressed heathen; for by it they will suffer no greater loss than do the children of a family by the crumbs which are cast to the dogs.”—Macknight. *Then Jesus answered, O woman, great is thy faith*—There were several other graces that shone bright in her; wisdom, humility, meekness, patience, perseverance in prayer, but these were the product of her faith, and therefore Christ particularly commends that: because of all graces faith honours Christ most, therefore of all graces Christ honours faith most. This woman's faith was great indeed, considering that she had no promise to rely on, and had suffered so many repulses, joined with such seeming contempt, and yet still she retained a confidence in the mercy, kindness, and power of Jesus. *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt*—Thy request is granted in all its extent. *And her daughter was made whole from that very hour*—Thus the mother's faith prevailed for the daughter's cure, and the patient's being at a distance was no hinderance to the efficacy of Christ's word, *He spake, and it was done*. We learn two important lessons from the success which the suit of this Canaanitish woman met with: 1st, that God is no respecter of persons, but always accepts sincere faith and fervent prayer, proceeding from an humble, penitent heart. 2d, That it is our duty to continue in prayer with earnestness, although the answer thereof should be long deferred.

Verses 29–31. *Jesus came unto the sea of Galilee*—The Jews gave the name of seas to all large lakes. This was one hundred furlongs long, and forty broad. It was called also *the sea of Tiberias*. It

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A. M. 4036. them down at Jesus's feet; and he
A. D. 32. healed them :

31 Inasmuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see : and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 ¶ ^b Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat : and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33 ° And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many

^b Mark viii. 1.—^c 2 Kings iv. 43.—^d Chap. xiv. 19.

lay on the borders of Galilee, and the city of Tiberias stood on its western shore. It was likewise styled the *lake of Gennesaret*; perhaps a corruption of *Cinnereth*, the name by which it was anciently called. See notes on Num. xxxiv. 11, and Matt. iv. 15, 16. *And went up into a mountain and sat down*—Not only to rest himself, but also, and especially, to teach the people, who resorted to him in great multitudes; *having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, &c.*—The dumb were probably deaf also, and the *maimed*, such as had lost one or more limbs, as the word *κωλυος* properly signifies. It is true, it is sometimes applied to those who were only disabled in those parts; we may “reasonably suppose, however, that among the many maimed who were brought on such occasions, there were, at least, some whose *limbs had been cut off*; and I think,” says Dr. Doddridge, “hardly any of the miracles of our Lord were more illustrious and amazing than the recovery of such.” *And many others*—Who had different complaints; *and cast them down at Jesus's feet*—Entreating his compassion, which was so moved at the sight of so many people in distress, that he graciously *healed them all*. On these miracles, Dr. Macknight remarks as follows: “On the dumb, who are commonly deaf also, he not only conferred the faculty of hearing

loaves have ye? And they said, A. M. 4036. Seven, and a few little fishes. A. D. 32.

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And ^d he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and ^e gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled : and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, besides women and children.

39 ^f And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

^e 1 Sam. ix. 13; Luke xxii. 19.—^f Mark viii. 10.

and pronouncing articulate sounds, but conveyed into their minds at once the whole language of their country, making them perfectly acquainted with all the words in it, their significations, and their uses, so as to comprehend the whole distinctly in their memories, and, at the same time, he gave them the habit of speaking it both fluently and copiously. This was a kind of miracle vastly astonishing. The change that was produced in the bodies of the men was but the least part of it; what passed in their minds was the principal thing, being an effect so extensive that nothing inferior to infinite power could produce it. With respect to the *maimed*, that is, persons who had lost their legs and arms, Jesus gave them new members in their stead. But when he thus created such parts of their bodies as were wanting, without having any thing at all, as a subject, to work upon, the spectators could not have been more surprised had they seen him make a whole human body out of the dust of the earth.” Accordingly, on the sight of these miracles, it is here said, *They wondered and glorified the God of Israel*. See also chap. ix. 33; and xii. 22, 23; Mark vii. 37.

Verses 32–39. *Jesus called his disciples, and said, I have compassion, &c.*—For some observations on the contents of these verses, see the notes on Mark viii. 1–9.

CHAPTER XVI.

Here, (1.) *The Pharisees again demand a sign, and Christ upbraids them with hypocrisy in so doing, 1–4.* (2.) *He cautions his disciples against the leaven of their doctrine, and that of the Sadducees, 5–12.* (3.) *He converses with his disciples concerning himself, as the Christ, and concerning his church built upon him, its foundation, 13–20.* (4.) *He foretels his own sufferings, and rebukes Peter for questioning his prediction, 21–23.* (5.) *He inculcates on his disciples the necessity of self-denial, and of a readiness to suffer martyrdom in his cause, in prospect of a future reward, 24–28.*

A. M. 4036. THE ^a Pharisees also with the Sad-
 A. D. 32. ducees came, and, tempting, de-
 sired him that he would show them a sign from
 heaven.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it
 is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather*: for
 the sky is red.

3 And in the morning, *It will be foul weather*
 to-day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye
 hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky;
 but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

4 ^b A wicked and adulterous generation seek-
 eth after a sign; and there shall no sign be

given unto it, but the sign of the ^{A. M. 4036.}
 Prophet Jonas. And he left them, ^{A. D. 32.}
 and departed.

5 ¶ And ^c when his disciples were come to
 the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, ^d Take heed
 and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and
 of the Sadducees.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, say-
 ing, *It is* because we have taken no bread.

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto
 them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among
 yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

^a Chap. xii. 33; Mark viii. 11; Luke xi. 16; xii. 54-56; 1 Cor.

i. 22.—^b Chap. xii. 39.—^c Mark viii. 14.—^d Luke xii. 1.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

Verse 1. *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came*—Notwithstanding the difference of their principles, and the alienation of their affections from each other, they now agreed to join in an attempt upon Christ; his doctrine being equally opposed to the errors and vices of both these sects; see the note on chap. iii. 7: *tempting*, or, *trying him*, as *πειραζοντες* properly signifies; (see note on chapter iv. 1,) that is, making trial, in a crafty and insnaring manner, whether he was able to do what they required: *desired a sign from heaven*—Such a sign as they insinuated Satan could not counterfeit. They pretended they were willing to be convinced that he was the Messiah, could they see sufficient proofs of it: whereas they had already resisted the clearest evidence of it, and now indeed came with no design or desire of being convinced of his divine mission, but in order that, failing in the proof which they required, he might expose himself to general censure and contempt.

Verses 2, 3. *He answered, When it is evening, &c.*—As if he had said, It is evident you ask this out of a desire to cavil rather than to discern the divine will, for in other cases you take up with degrees of evidence far short of those which you here reject: as for instance, you know that a red sky in the evening is a presage of fair weather, and a red and lowering sky in the morning, of foul weather; thus *ye can discern the face of the sky*, and form from thence very probable conjectures concerning the weather; *but can ye not discern the signs of the times*—The signs which evidently show that this is the time of the Messiah? The proofs which Jesus was daily giving them by his wonderful works, his holy and beneficent conduct, and heavenly doctrine, of his divine mission, were more than sufficient to establish it; and, had the Pharisees been possessed of any candour at all, or any inclination to know the truth, they could not have been at a loss to judge in this matter, especially, as in ordinary affairs they showed abundance of acuteness. The truth is, as our Lord here signified, their not acknowledging him as the Messiah was neither owing to want of evidence, nor to want of capacity

to judge of that evidence; but to their self-confidence and pride, and their carnal and worldly spirit.

Verse 4. *A wicked and adulterous generation*—As if he had said, Ye would seek no further sign, did not your wickedness, and your love of the world, which is spiritual adultery, blind your understanding. *There shall no sign be given, but—of the Prophet Jonas*—Or the miracle of Christ's own resurrection, a sign greater than any of those showed by the ancient prophets and messengers of God, and consequently a sign which proved Jesus to be superior unto them all. This sign our Lord had explained on a former occasion. See on Matt. xii. 40.

Verses 5-12. *When his disciples were come to the other side*—Namely, of the sea of Tiberias, see Mark viii. 13; *they had forgotten to take bread*—They had tarried so long in Dalmanutha, or Magdala, that they had consumed the seven baskets of fragments which they had taken up at the late miracle, recorded chap. xv. 32-39, and had no more than one loaf with them in the ship, Mark viii. 14. *Then Jesus said, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*—That is, of their false doctrine; elegantly called *leaven*, for it spreads in the soul, or the church, as leaven does in meal. *And they reasoned among themselves*—What must we do then for bread, since we have taken no bread with us? Thus the slowness of their understanding showed itself on this occasion, as it had done on many others. "As they had forgotten to take bread, and had often heard the doctors prohibit the use of the leaven of heathen and Samaritans, they thought he forbade them to buy bread from bakers of either sect, lest it might be made with impure leaven, and so they looked on the advice as an indirect reproof of their carelessness." *Which when Jesus perceived*—As he knew all the secret workings of their minds; *he said, O ye of little faith, why reason ye?*—Why are ye troubled about this? Why should your neglecting to bring bread with you make you put such an interpretation upon my words? Am I not able, if need so require, to supply you by a word? Observe, reader, to distrust Christ, and disquiet our own minds, when we are in straits and difficulties, is an evidence of the weakness of our faith, which, if it were in exercise as it should be,

A. M. 4036. 9 * Do ye not yet understand, nei-
A. D. 32. ther remember the five loaves of
the five thousand, and how many baskets ye
took up?

10 † Neither the seven loaves of the four thou-
sand, and how many baskets ye took up?

11 How is it that ye do not understand that
I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye
should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees
and of the Sadducees?

* Chap. xiv. 17; John vi. 9.—† Chap. xv. 34.—‡ Mark viii.
27; Luke ix. 18.

would deliver us from the burden of care, by enabling us to cast it on the Lord, *who careth for us*. *Do ye not understand*—After having been so long with me, are ye still ignorant of my power and goodness? *neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets, &c.*—Certainly you are very stupid, if you have forgotten how that with five loaves I fed five thousand men, who, after being fully satisfied, left a great deal more than the quantity that was at first set before me to divide among them. *Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand*—An instance of a merciful and miraculous supply which happened so lately. *How is it that ye do not understand?*—How came ye not to know that he, who on those different occasions fed such multitudes with such a little quantity of food, can never be at a loss to provide a meal for twelve? The experience which they had so lately had of the power and goodness of Christ in providing for them, was a great aggravation of their distrust. Though they had no bread with them, they had *Him* with them who could provide bread for them. God's people may well be ashamed of the slowness and dulness of their apprehensions in divine things; especially when they have long enjoyed the means of grace. As Christ's disciples well deserved the sharp rebuke which their Master gave them on this occasion, so it had the designed effect; for it brought the disciples to understand that he designed to caution them against the corrupt doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees; the pernicious nature and tendency of which may be learned from many instances taken notice of and condemned by Jesus himself, in the course of his ministry.

Verses 13–16. *When Jesus came, &c.*—There was a large interval of time between what has been related already, and what follows. The passages that follow were but a short time before our Lord suffered: *came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi*—“This city, while in the possession of the Canaanites, was called Lesheim, Josh. xix. 47; and Laish, Judges xviii. 27. But when the children of Dan took it, they named it after their progenitor. In latter times it was called Paneas, from the mountain beneath which it stood. The situation of Paneas pleased Philip the tetrarch so exceedingly, that he resolved to make it the seat of his court. For which purpose he enlarged and adorned it with many sumptuous

12 Then understood they how that A. M. 4036.
he bade *them* not beware of the A. D. 32.
leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pha-
risees and of the Sadducees.

13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of
Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying,
* Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?*

14 And they said, ^h Some say that thou art
John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others,
Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

* St. Peter's Day, gospel, verse 13 to verse 20.—^h Chap. xiv.
2; Luke ix. 7–9.

buildings, and called it Cesarea, in honour of the Roman emperor. The tetrarch's own name, however, was commonly added, to distinguish it from the other Cesarea, so often mentioned in the Jewish history, and in the Acts of the Apostles, which was a fine port on the Mediterranean sea, and had been rebuilt by Herod the Great, and named in honour of Augustus Cæsar.”—Macknight. Josephus gives Philip so good a character, that some have thought our Lord retired into his territories for security from the insults of his enemies elsewhere. *He asked his disciples, Who do men* (Luke says, *the people*,) *say that I, the Son of man, am*—Who do they take me to be, who am really a man, born of a woman, and in outward appearance a mere man? Or, as some understand the expression, *Who do men say that I am? the Son of man?* Do they say that I am the Son of man, the Messiah? So Macknight, with some others, thinks the words ought to be placed and pointed, to make them agree with the question which Christ afterward proposed to his disciples, namely, *But who say ye that I am?* words which imply that he had not yet directly assumed the title of the Messiah, at least in their hearing. Dr. Lightfoot, however, conjectures that Christ here inquires, not barely whether the people thought him to be the Christ, but *what kind of person* they thought him to be: the Jews then doubting concerning the original of him who was to be the Messiah, and whether he was to come from the living or the dead. And it must be acknowledged, that the word *τινα, whom*, often relates to the quality of the person spoken of. So John viii. 53, *τινα, whom makest thou thyself?* Christ made this inquiry, not because he was ignorant what the people thought and spoke of him, for their thoughts and words were perfectly known to him, but that he might have, from themselves, a declaration of their faith, and might therefrom take occasion of confirming and strengthening them in it. In answer to the question concerning the people, the disciples reply, *Some say, thou art John the Baptist*—Namely, risen from the dead, and with an additional power of working miracles; *some, Elias*—That thou art Elijah the prophet, come to prepare the way of the Messiah; *and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets*—There was at that time a current tradition among the Jews, that either Jeremiah, or some other of the ancient

A. M. 4036. 15 He saith unto them, But who
A. D. 32. say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said,
Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living
God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him,
Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: ^k for flesh
and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but
^l my Father which is in heaven.

^l Chap. xiv. 33; Mark viii. 29; Luke ix. 20; John vi. 69;
xi. 27; Acts viii. 37; ix. 20; 1 John iv. 15; v. 5; Heb. i. 2, 5.
^k Eph. ii. 8.—^l 1 Cor. ii. 10; Gal. i. 16.

prophets, would rise again before the Messiah came. Most part of the people took Jesus for a different person from what he was, because he had nothing of the outward pomp or grandeur in which they supposed the Messiah was to appear. Therefore, that he might give his disciples, who had long been witnesses of his miracles, and had attended on his ministry, an opportunity of declaring their opinion of him, he proceeded to ask, *But who say ye that I am?* And Peter, who was generally the most forward to speak, replied in the name of the rest, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*—That is, his son in a peculiar sense, and therefore a person of infinitely greater dignity than either John the Baptist, or Elias, or Jeremiah, or any other prophet.

Verse 17. *Jesus answered, Blessed [or happy, as μακάριος signifies] art thou, Simon Bar-jona, (or the son of Jonas,) namely, in being brought thus firmly to believe and confess this most important truth, on believing and confessing which the present and everlasting salvation of mankind depends. For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee—*“Thou hast not learned it by human report, or the unassisted sagacity of thy own mind; but *my Father in heaven* has discovered it to thee, and wrought in thy soul this cordial assent, in the midst of those various prejudices against it which present circumstances might suggest.” Our Lord proceeds, and promises, (alluding to his surname of *Peter*, from *πετρα*, a rock,) that he should have a principal concern in establishing Christ's kingdom. *Thou art Peter*—As if he had said, “Thou art, as thy name signifies, a substantial rock; and as thou hast shown it in this good confession, I assure thee that *upon this rock I will build my church*. Faith in me as the Son of God shall be its great support, and I will use thee as a glorious instrument in raising it: yea, so immovable and firm shall its foundation be, and so secure the superstructure, that though earth and hell unite their assaults against it, and death in its most dreadful forms be armed for its destruction; *the gates of hell*, or the unseen world, shall not finally prevail against it to its ruin: but one generation of Christians shall arise after another, even to the very end of time, to maintain this truth, and to venture their lives and their souls upon it, till at length the whole body of them be redeemed from

18 And I say also unto thee, That ^{A. M. 4036.}
^{A. D. 32.} thou art Peter, and ^o upon this rock
I will build my church: and ^o the gates of
hell shall not prevail against it.

19 ^p And I will give unto thee the keys of the
kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt
bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and
whosoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be
loosed in heaven.

^o John i. 42.—^p Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14.—^o Job xxxviii.
17; Psa. ix. 13; cviii. 18; Isa. xxxviii. 10.—^p Chap. xviii. 18;
John xx. 23.

the power of the grave.” See Doddridge, who further observes, “This is one of those scriptures, the sense of which might be most certainly fixed by the particular tone of voice and gesture with which it was spoken. If our Lord altered his accent, and laid his hand on his breast, it would show that he spoke, not of the *person*, but of the *confession* of Peter, (as most Protestant divines have understood it,) and meant to point out himself as the great foundation.” Compare 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. In confirmation of this sense, it may be observed, that when our Lord says, *Upon this rock*, he does not make use of the word *πετρος*, as if he referred to Peter himself, but *πετρα*, which is an appellative noun, and immediately refers to Peter's confession. “But if, when our Lord uttered these words, he turned to the other apostles, and pointed to Peter, that would show he meant to intimate the honour he would do him, in making him an eminent support to his church. This is the sense which Grotius, Le Clerc, Dr. Whitby, and L'Enfant defend. But to be a foundation in this sense, was not Peter's honour alone; his brethren shared with him in it, (see Ephes. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14,) as they did also in the power of *binding* and *loosing*, Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23.—On the whole, how weak the arguments are which the Papists draw from hence, to support the supremacy of Peter in their wild sense of it, is sufficiently shown by Bishop Burnet *On the Articles*, p. 196; Dr. Barrow *On the Creed*, sermon twenty-eight; Dr. Patrick in his sermon on this text, and many more not necessary to be named. There seems a reference in this expression to the common custom of building citadels upon a rock.” *The gates of hell*—As gates and walls were the strength of cities, and as courts of judicature were held in their gates, this phrase properly signifies the power and policy of Satan and his instruments: *shall not prevail against it*—Not against the church universal, so as to destroy it. And they never did, for there hath been a small remnant in all ages. And they never will, for faithful is he who hath made this promise, and he will certainly fulfil it.

Verse 19. *I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*—This expression is metaphorical. As stewards of great families, especially of the royal household, bore a *key* or *keys* in token of their office, the phrase of giving a person the keys naturally

A. M. 4036. 20 ¶ Then charged he his dis-
A. D. 32. ciples that they should tell no

man that he was Jesus the A. M. 4036.
Christ. A. D. 32.

¶ Chap. xvii. 9; Mark

viii. 30; Luke ix. 21.

grew into use, as an expression significative of *raising him to great authority and power*. See note on Isa. xxii. 22. The meaning of the promise here is, that Christ would give Peter, (but not to him alone, for similar promises are made to all the apostles,) power to open the gospel dispensation, (which he did, both to Jews and Gentiles; see Acts iii. 14; x. 34; being the first who preached the gospel to them;) and to declare authoritatively the laws thereof, and the terms of salvation, as also to exercise discipline in the Christian Church, namely, to refuse admission into it to all those who did not comply with those terms, and to exclude from it all such as should violate those laws. According to this sense of the words, the power of binding and loosing, added to the power of the keys, may be considered as partly expiatory thereof. "It can be no objection," says Dr. Macknight, "against this interpretation, that it connects the idea of *binding* and *loosing* with that of the *keys*, contrary to the exact propriety of the two metaphors; for all who have studied the Scriptures know, that in many passages the ideas and expressions are accommodated to the subject matter, rather than to the precedent metaphor." In further proof that the power of binding and loosing, now conferred on Peter, and afterward on all the apostles, chap. xviii. 18, included a power of declaring the laws of the gospel and the terms of salvation, as well as all those acts of discipline which Peter and his brethren performed as apostles, it may be observed, that "in the Jewish language, to *bind* and *loose* were words made use of by the doctors, to signify the unlawfulness or lawfulness of things, as Seldon, Buxtorf, and Lightfoot have proved. Wherefore our Lord's meaning, at least in part, was, Whatever things thou shalt *bind up from men*, or declare to be forbidden to them, on earth, shall be forbidden by Heaven; and whatever things thou shalt *loose to men*, or permit to be done, shall be lawful and obligatory in the esteem of Heaven. Accordingly the gender made use of in both passages agrees to this interpretation." There are some, however, who by the power of binding and loosing understand the power of actually remitting and retaining men's sins; and in support of their opinion they quote John xx. 22. But it may be justly doubted whether our Lord ever bestowed on his apostles, or any other of his ministers, any other power of remitting or retaining men's sins, than, 1st, the power of declaring with authority the Christian terms of pardon, that is, whose sins are remitted and whose are retained; as is done in the form of absolution contained in the Liturgy: and, 2d, a power of inflicting and remitting ecclesiastical censures, that is, of excluding from and readmitting into a Christian congregation; together with a particular power of remitting and retaining, in certain instances, the temporal punishment of men's sins,

which it is evident from some passages of the Acts and the Epistles, the apostles occasionally exercised. "This high power of declaring the terms of salvation and precepts of the gospel, the apostles did not enjoy in its full extent till the memorable day of pentecost, when they received the Holy Ghost in the plenitude of his gifts. After this their decisions, in points of doctrine and duty, being all given by inspiration, were infallible definitions, and ratified in heaven. Here then was an immense honour conferred on the apostles, and what must yield great consolation to the pious. There is nothing doubtful in the gospel, much less false: but we may safely rest the salvation of our souls on the discoveries there made to us, since they have all come originally from God."

Verse 20. *Then charged he his disciples*—Greek, *διετείλατο*, he strictly charged them: (Luke says, *επιτιμησας αυτοις, παρηγγειλε*, having severely charged, or charged with threats, he commanded to tell this to no one :) that he was Jesus the Christ—The word *Jesus* is omitted here in many MSS., some of which are of great authority and great antiquity, and in several ancient versions, and the omission is approved of by some eminent critics. Certainly the insertion of it is superfluous, and apparently improper: for the context shows, that what our Lord forbade them to tell was simply that he was *the Christ*, that is, *the Messiah*, or, as Luke expresses it, *the Christ of God*. This truth, however important to be known and believed, the disciples were not to announce to the people till the grand proof of it was given, namely, his resurrection. Then they were by office to be his witnesses, and to declare openly and publicly that he was the Christ, because then they could do it, not only without suspicion of confederacy, but with greater advantage and better success, as Christ would then be no longer subject to those humbling circumstances and sufferings, and that death, which could not fail to be a great obstruction to men's receiving him as the Messiah, as well as a great stumbling-block in the way of his disciples, but would have taken possession of his kingdom, and given evidence of it, by sending down upon his followers the Holy Ghost, in his extraordinary gifts and operations, to enable them to confirm this testimony. Whereas, had his own disciples publicly declared him to be the Messiah, *the king of the Jews*, and *the Son of God*, while he was on earth, as this would have looked like a confederacy between them and their Master, so, on the one hand, it would have encouraged the attempt of a part of the Jews to come and take him by force to make him a king, John vi. 15, and, on the other, would have provoked both the Jewish rulers and the Roman government. "Certainly," says Mr. Locke, "the Romans would not have suffered him, if he had gone about preaching that he was the king

A. M. 4036. 21 ¶ From that time forth began
A. D. 32. Jesus † to show unto his disciples,
how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and
suffer many things of the elders, and chief

† Chap. xx. 17; Mark viii. 31; ix. 31: x. 33: Luke

whom the Jews expected; and such an accusation would have been forwardly brought against him by the Jews, if they could have heard it out of his own mouth, and if that had been his public doctrine to his followers, which was openly preached by his apostles after his death. For though the magistrates of this world paid no great regard to the talk of a king who had suffered death, and appeared no longer anywhere; yet if our Lord had openly declared this of himself in his lifetime, with a train of disciples and followers, everywhere owning and crying him up for their king, the Roman governors of Judea could not have forborne to take notice of it, and to make use of their force against it. The Jews well understood this, and therefore they made use of it, as the strongest accusation, and likeliest to prevail with Pilate against him for the taking away his life, it being treason, and an unpardonable offence, which could not escape death from a Roman deputy, without the forfeiture of his own life."

Verse 21. *From that time forth*—When they had made that full confession of Christ that he was the Messiah, the Son of God; *began Jesus to show unto his disciples*—Another most important point, namely, that he must suffer and be put to death, as a malefactor. If they had not been well grounded in their belief of Christ's being the Son of God, it would have been a great shock to their faith to be informed that he must suffer and die. Some hints, indeed, our Lord had already given of his sufferings, as when he said, *Destroy this temple*, and spoke of the Son of man being *lifted up*, and of *eating his flesh and drinking his blood*; but hitherto he had not spoken plainly and expressly of the subject, because the disciples were weak, and could not have borne the notice of a thing so very strange and so very melancholy. But now, as they were more advanced in knowledge and stronger in faith, he began to reveal this to them: for he declares his mind to his people gradually, and lets in light as they can bear it, and are prepared to receive it. *How that he must go unto Jerusalem*—The holy city, the royal city, and suffer there. Though he had lived most of his time in Galilee, he must die at Jerusalem; there all the sacrifices were offered; and there, therefore, He must die who was to be the great sacrifice. Thither he was to go within the short space of a few months, this declaration being made in the last year of his life: and instead of being owned, under the royal character he bore, and submitted to by the princes and people, must *suffer many things from the elders*—The most honourable and experienced men; from the *chief priests*—Accounted the most religious, and the *scribes*—The most learned body of men in the nation. These made up the great sanhedrim, which sat at Jerusa-

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priests, and scribes, and be killed, A. M. 4036.
and be raised again the third day. A. D. 32.

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, ¹Be it far from thee,

ix. 22; xviii. 31; xxiv. 6, 7.—¹ Gr. *Pity thyself.*

lem, and was had in veneration by the people: and these one would have expected to have been the very first to receive him. But instead of this, they were the most bitter in persecuting him! Strange, indeed, that men of knowledge in the Scriptures, who professed to expect the Messiah's coming, and sustained a sacred character, should use him with such contumely and cruelty when he came! It was the Roman power, indeed, that condemned and crucified Christ; but the principal share of the guilt of the whole business lies at the door of the chief priests and scribes, who were the first and principal movers in it. From them he suffered many things, things which manifested their insatiable malice, and his invincible patience, and in the issue was *killed*: for nothing short of his death would either satisfy the malice of his enemies, or render him a proper sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Our Lord, however, while he brought to his disciples these melancholy tidings, added, for their support and encouragement under this gloomy prospect, that *in the third day he should be raised again*. And thus, as all the prophets had done, when he testified *beforehand* his sufferings, he bore witness likewise to the glory that should follow, 1 Peter i. 11. His rising again the third day proved him to be the Son of God, notwithstanding his sufferings, and therefore he mentions it in order that the faith of the disciples might not fail.

Verse 22. *Then Peter took him*—Προσλαβομενος αυτου. What the evangelist meant precisely by this expression, commentators are not agreed. Dr. Doddridge renders it, *taking him by the hand*; Mr. Wesley, *taking hold of him*: others again render it, *embracing him*; and others, *interrupting him*. Dr. Campbell renders it, *taking him aside*, a translation which, he observes, evidently suits the meaning of the verb in other places, and is necessary in Acts xviii. 26, which cannot be interpreted otherwise. *And began to rebuke* [or *reprove*] *him*—So the expression, ηρξατο επιτιμην αυτω, properly signifies. "Some interpreters, indeed, to put the best face on Peter's conduct on this occasion, render the words thus, *Began to expostulate with him*. But when the verb, επιτιμην, relates to any thing past, it always implies a declaration of censure or blame; and if it be thought that this would infer great presumption in Peter, it may be asked, Does not the rebuke which he drew on himself, verse 23, from so mild a Master, evidently infer as much? When we consider the prejudices of the disciples in regard to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, we cannot be much surprised that a declaration, such as that in verse 21, totally subversive of all their hopes, should produce, in a warm temper, a great impropriety of behaviour, such as (admitting the

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A. M. 4036. Lord: this shall not be unto
A. D. 32. thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things

*2 Sam. xix. 22.—† Rom. viii. 7.—‡ Ch. x. 38; Mark viii. 34;

ordinary interpretation of the word) Peter was then chargeable with." *Be it far from thee, Lord*—Or, as *ἰλεως σοι* seems to be more accurately rendered in the margin, *Pity thyself, or be merciful to, or favour, thyself*—"The advice of the world, the flesh, and the devil," says Mr. Wesley, "to every one of our Lord's followers." The common use of this phrase, however, in the LXX., would lead one to understand it as signifying, *absit, God forbid*. In this sense, also, it is used in the Apocrypha, thus, 1 Mac. ii. 21, *ἰλεως ἡμιν καταλιπειν νομον, God forbid that we should forsake the law*. Peter, to whom the power of the keys, or place of high-steward, in the kingdom, as he would understand it, was promised, could not help being very much displeased to hear his Master talk of dying at Jerusalem, immediately after he had been saluted Messiah, and had accepted the title. Therefore he rebuked, or reproved him, as has been just observed.

Verse 23. *But he turned and said unto Peter*—Mark reads, *When he had turned about and looked on his disciples*, (who by the air of their countenances, probably, seemed to approve what they had heard Peter say to him,) *he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan*—That is, out of my sight. "He looked at him," says Baxter, "with displeasure, and said, I say to thee as I did to the devil when he tempted me, *Get thee behind me*, for thou doest the work of Satan, the adversary, in tempting me, for self-preservation, to violate my Father's command, and my undertaking, and to forsake the work of man's redemption and salvation. As thy counsel savoureth not the things that be of God, (namely, his will, work, and glory,) but the things that be of men, (or the love of the body and this present life,) so it signifies what is in thy heart; take heed lest this carnality prevail." Our Lord is not recorded to have given so sharp a reproof to any other of his apostles, on any occasion. He saw it was needful for the pride of Peter's heart, puffed up with the commendation lately given him. Perhaps the term *Satan* may not barely mean, *Thou art my enemy*, while thou fanciest thyself most my friend; but also, *Thou art acting the very part of Satan*, both by endeavouring to hinder the redemption of mankind, and by giving me the most deadly advice that can ever spring from the pit of hell. *Thou savourest not*—Dost not relish or desire. We may learn from hence, 1st, that whosoever says to us in such a case, *Favour thyself*, is acting the part of the devil: 2d, that the proper answer to such an adviser is, *Get thee behind me*: 3d, that otherwise he will be an offence to us, an occasion of our stumbling, if not falling: 4th, that this advice always proceeds

that be of God, but those that be of
men. A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32.

24 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Luke ix. 23; xiv. 27; Acts xiv. 29; 1 Thess. iii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 12.

from the not relishing the things of God, but the things of men. Yea, so far is this advice, *Favour thyself*, from being fit for a Christian either to give or take, that if any man will come after Christ, his very first step is, *To deny or renounce himself*: in the room of his own will, to substitute the will of God, as his one principle of action. We see in this example of Peter, how soon a person favoured with the peculiar approbation of the Lord Jesus may, through pride and self-confidence, fall under his heavy displeasure, and incur a severe rebuke from him. "Our Lord, immediately after pronouncing Peter blessed, on account of his faith and the noble confession which he made of it, and after conferring on him the high dignity before mentioned, did openly, in the hearing of all the disciples, call him Satan, or adversary, and declare that he had then no relish for the divine appointments, but was influenced merely by human views and expectations of worldly interest. If the papists rightly attended to this passage of the history, they would see their fancies about the primacy of Peter, which they build upon it, in a better light than they now seem to do."

Verse 24. *Then said Jesus unto his disciples*—In Mark we read, *When he had called the people unto him, and his disciples also, he said unto them*; and in Luke, *He said to them all, If any man will come after me*—*Εἰ τις θελει, If any man be willing*, no one is forced: but if any will be a Christian, it must be on the following terms. *Let him deny himself*—A rule that can never be too much observed: let him in all things deny his own will, however pleasing, and do the will of God, however painful. *And take up his cross*—Of the origin and meaning of this phrase, see note on chap. x. 38. And we may here further learn, that after having undergone many afflictions and trials, the disciples of Christ may still look for more, which, when laid upon them, they must endeavour, by the grace of God, to sustain with equal patience, following their Master in the footsteps of his sufferings. This, indeed, is a very hard and difficult lesson, but at the same time it is absolutely necessary. Because if we grow impatient under sufferings, and endeavour to avoid the crosses which God is pleased to lay upon us, we shall displease God, grieve his Spirit, and bring ourselves under guilt and condemnation. And should we not consider all crosses, all things grievous to flesh and blood, as what they really are, as opportunities of embracing God's will, at the expense of our own? and consequently as so many steps by which we may advance in holiness? We should make a swift progress in the spiritual life, if we were faithful in this practice. Crosses are so

A. M. 4036. 25 For * whosoever will save his life, A. D. 32. shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

* Luke xvii. 33; John xii. 25.—† Psa. xlix. 7, 8.—‡ Chap. xxvi. 64; Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26.—§ Dan. vii. 10; Zech. xiv. 5; Ch. xxv. 31; Jude 14.—|| Job xxiv. 11; Psa. lxii. 12;

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

Verses 25–27. *Whosoever will save his life*—At the expense of his conscience: whosoever, in the very highest instance, that of life itself, will not renounce himself, shall be lost eternally. But can any man hope he should be able thus to renounce himself, if he cannot do it in the smallest instances? *And whosoever will lose his life, shall find it*—What he loses on earth he shall find in heaven. See note on chap. x. 39, where this sentence is explained more at large. *For what is a man profited, &c.*—“To carry home the argument more closely, he puts them in mind of the method according to which men estimate things. If God should offer the riches of Solomon, the strength of Samson, the policy of Ahithophel, the beauty of Absalom, the eloquence of Apollon, universal monarchy, and all kinds of pleasures, and should say, Take them for one hour, and then die; who is the man that would not immediately reject the proposed condition, and reply, that life is better than them all? But will men forego

27 For * the Son of man shall come A. M. 4036. in the glory of his Father, * with his A. D. 32. angels; † and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

28 Verily I say unto you, † There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Prov. xxiv. 12; Jer. xvii. 10; xxxii. 19; Rom. ii. 6; 1 Cor. iii. 8; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Pet. i. 17; Rev. ii. 23; xxii. 12.—‡ Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27.

every earthly thing for life, the life of the body? and will they not part with them, nay, and with life itself, for their souls? since the longest any one can enjoy this life with its pleasures, is, in comparison of eternity, no longer than he enjoys the good things mentioned, who dies in the same hour he receives them.”—Macknight. *Or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*—Namely, at the day of judgment? *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father*—For you may certainly depend upon it that, howsoever he may be now despised and rejected of men, there is a day appointed when he will come in all the glory of the Godhead, encircled in the most pompous manner with his holy angels: and then shall he convene the whole world before him, that he may determine the final happiness or misery of each, and recompense every man according to his conduct. Thus, “that the argument, by which the necessity of self-denial is so clearly established, might have the greater weight, our Lord speaks more particularly concerning the rewards and punishments of a future state, assuring his disciples that they are all to be distributed by himself, the Father having appointed him the universal Judge, so that his enemies cannot flatter themselves with a hope of escaping condign punishment, nor his friends be in the least afraid of losing their reward.”

Verse 28. *Verily, there be some standing here, &c.*—And that you may not doubt that there shall be a day of judgment, when I shall come clothed with divine majesty, to render unto men according to their actions in this life, let me assure you there are some here present that shall not die till they shall see a faint representation of this, in events which will soon take place, especially in my coming to set up my mediatorial kingdom with great power and glory, in the increase of my church, and the destruction of mine enemies. Accordingly the disciples saw their Master coming in his kingdom, when they were witnesses of his transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension, and the miraculous gifts of his Spirit conferred upon them; and lived to see Jerusalem, with the Jewish state, destroyed, and the gospel propagated through the greatest part of the then known world.

CHAPTER XVII.

Here, (1.) Jesus is transfigured on a high mountain, and discourses with Moses and Elias before Peter, James, and John, 1-8. (2.) He charges them to conceal what they had seen, and shows that John the Baptist was the predicted Elias, 9-13. (3.) He casts an evil spirit out of a child, and reproves the unbelief of the people and of his disciples, 14-21. (4.) He foretells again his sufferings, death, and resurrection, 22, 23. (5.) He pays tribute with money obtained by a miracle, 24-27

A. M. 4036. A. D. 32. **AND** ^aafter six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart,

2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

^a Mark ix. 2;

A. M. 4036. A. D. 32. 3 And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

Luke ix. 28.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

Verses 1, 2. *After six days*—Reckoning exclusively from that in which the discourse recorded in the preceding chapter was delivered, to that on which the transfiguration took place, or, including those two days, *about eight days after*, as Luke has it: *Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother*—The three disciples whom he honoured with a peculiar intimacy, (see Mark v. 37; and Matt. xxvi. 37,) and *bringeth them up into a high mountain apart*—From the people and his other disciples. Jerome tells us, that there was a tradition in his days, handed down from the times of the apostles, that this was mount Tabor, famed in ancient history for the victory which Deborah and Barak gained over Sisera, Judges iv. 14. Dr. Macknight, however, thinks, “the order of the history determines the transfiguration to some mountain not far from Cesarea Philippi, rather than to Tabor, which was situated in the south of Galilee. For after the transfiguration, it is said, Mark ix. 30, that they departed and passed through Galilee, and then came to Capernaum. Now it is not very probable that the evangelist would in this manner have narrated our Lord’s journey from the mount of transfiguration to Capernaum, if that mountain had been in Galilee, the region in which Capernaum stood. Yet upon the faith of the tradition mentioned above, the Christians very early built a monastery and church on the top of Tabor, which church was dedicated to Jesus and his two attendants, Moses and Elias. And from 2 Peter i. 18, they called the mountain itself, *the holy mountain*. And *he was transfigured before them*—Namely, before these three disciples. It was necessary that so remarkable an occurrence should be supported by sufficient witnesses; and hence it was that the three above mentioned were chosen, because so many were required among the Jews to establish a fact, and no more were chosen, because this number was sufficient. The word *μετεμορφωθη*, rendered here, *transfigured*, may either imply that there was a transformation made in the substance of his body, according to the import of the word in Ovid, and other writers; or that the outward appearance only of his body was altered, which seems most probable from the expression used by Luke, who says, *το υδος*

το προσωπν αυτη ετερον, *the appearance of his countenance, or person, was changed*: and this change, according to that evangelist, took place while he was praying, chap. ix. 29. *And his face did shine as the sun*—Became radiant and dazzling, and shone like the sun in its unclouded, meridian clearness; and so was incomparably more glorious than the face of Moses at the giving of the law. *And his raiment was white as the light*—Became, says Mark, *shining exceeding white, as snow, so as no fuller on earth could white it. Was white and glistening*, says Luke, or *white as lightning*, as *λευκος εξαστραπτων* properly signifies. It seems it was bright and sweetly refulgent, but in a degree inferior to the radiancy of his countenance. “The indwelling Deity,” says Mr. Wesley, “darted out its rays through the veil of his flesh: and that with such transcendent splendour, that he no longer bore the *form of a servant*. His face shone with divine majesty, like the sun in its strength; and all his body was so irradiated by it, that his clothes could not conceal his glory, but became white and glistening as the very light, with which he covered himself as with a garment.”

Verses 3, 4. *And behold*—To heighten the grandeur and solemnity of the scene; *there appeared unto them*—That is, unto the disciples as well as Jesus; *Moses and Elias*—Luke says, *two men, which were Moses and Elias*, and Mark, *Elias with Moses*. Moses, the great lawgiver of the Jews, and Elijah, who had been a most zealous restorer and defender of the law, appeared in the glories of immortality, wherewith the blessed above are adorned: *talking with him*—And, according to Luke, the subject of their conversation was, *the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem*, that is, his departure out of the present life, or the sufferings and death whereby he was to atone for sin, and effect the redemption of mankind: a subject the most important of all others, and therefore the most proper to employ the thoughts and tongues of these illustrious personages, the most illustrious, certainly, that had ever met together on earth in one place. But the three disciples were seized with an irresistible drowsiness, and fell into a deep sleep. They awoke, however, time enough to see *Christ’s glory, and that of the two men who stood with him*.

A. M. 4036. 5^b While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, 'This is my beloved Son, ^a in whom I am well pleased: ^a hear ye him.

^b 2 Pet. i. 17.—^c Chap. iii. 17; Mark i. 11; Luke iii. 22.
^a Isa. xlii. 1.

Probably the streams of light which issued from Christ's body, especially his countenance, and the voices of Moses and Elias talking with him, made such an impression on their senses as to awake them. Lifting up their eyes, therefore, they must have been amazed beyond measure when they beheld their Master in the majesty of his transfigured state, and his illustrious attendants, whom they might know to be Moses and Elias by revelation, or by what they said, or by the appellations which Jesus gave them in speaking to them. Peter, particularly, being both afraid and glad at the glorious sight, was in the utmost confusion. Nevertheless, the forwardness of his disposition prompted him to say something, and just as Moses and Elias were departing from Jesus, he said, *Lord, it is good for us to be here*—So doubtless they found it. Both before and after this transfiguration they had many refreshing seasons with their Master, heard many ravishing sermons, and saw many wonderful miracles; yet in no place, and on no occasion but this, were they ever heard to say, *It is good for us to be here*. Peter fancied, doubtless, that Jesus had now assumed his proper dignity; that Elias was come, according to Malachi's prediction; and that the kingdom was at length begun. Wherefore, in the first hurry of his thoughts, he proposed to provide some accommodation for Jesus and his august attendants, intending, perhaps, to bring the rest of the disciples, with the multitude, from the plain below, to behold his matchless glory. He thought this was better for his Master than to be killed at Jerusalem. He said, therefore, *If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles*—He says, *three*, not *six*, because the apostles desired to be with their Master. They were words of rapturous surprise, and, as Mark observes, very improper. But, perhaps, few in such an astonishing circumstance could have been perfectly masters of themselves.

Verses 5-8. *While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them*—Such, probably, as took possession first of the tabernacle, and afterward of Solomon's temple, when those holy places were consecrated. See Exod. xl. 34; 1 Kings viii. 10, 11; where we are told that *the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord*. This, it is well known, used to be termed the shechinah, or visible symbol of the divine presence. A similar cloud, it seems, now overshadowed Jesus and his two glorified attendants, and therefore is termed by Peter, 2d Epistle i. 17, *the excellent glory*. *And behold a voice out of the cloud*—Namely, the voice of God

6^f And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and ^e touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

^e Deut. xviii. 15, 19; Acts iii. 22, 23.—^f 2 Pet. i. 18.
^e Dan. viii. 18; ix. 21; x. 10, 18.

himself; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*—The same testimony which the Father bore to Jesus at his baptism, as recorded chap. iii. 17, where see the note. Thus, for the full confirmation of the disciples' faith in Jesus, Moses, the giver of the law, Elijah, the most zealous of all the prophets, and God speaking from heaven, all bore witness to him. *Hear ye him*—As superior even to Moses and the prophets. This command of the Father plainly alluded to Deut. xviii. 15, and signified that Jesus was the prophet of whom Moses spake in that passage, and concerning whom he enjoined, *Unto him shall ye hearken*. Luke informs us that the three disciples *feared as they* (namely, as Moses and Elias) *entered into the cloud*; but now, at the very moment when they heard the voice coming from the cloud, probably as loud as thunder, (see John xii. 29,) and full of divine majesty, such as mortal ears were unaccustomed to hear, they fell flat to the ground on their faces, being sore afraid; an effect which visions of this kind commonly had on the prophets and other holy men to whom they were given. See Gen. xv. 12; Isa. vi. 5; Ezek. ii. 1; Dan. x. 8; Rev. i. 17. It seems human nature could not of itself support such manifestations of the divine presence. In this condition the three disciples continued till *Jesus came and touched them*, and, raising them up, dispelled their fears. *And when they had lifted up their eyes* (Mark says, *When they had looked round about*) *they saw no man*—*Saw no man any more*, says Mark, *save Jesus only with themselves*. In Luke we read, *When the voice was passed, Jesus was found alone*.

This transfiguration of our Lord was doubtless intended for the following, among several other very important purposes: 1st, To prevent his disciples from being offended at the depth of affliction into which they were soon to see him plunged. For their beholding him clothed with such glory would tend to establish them in the belief of his being the Messiah, notwithstanding the sufferings which he was to pass through; and the conference which he had with Moses and Elias concerning those sufferings, and the death in which they were to terminate, might make them sensible how agreeable it was to the doctrine of Moses and the prophets that the Messiah should be evil-entreated and die before he entered into his glory. 2d, To arm them for, and encourage them under, their own sufferings, by a demonstration of a future state, and a display of the felicity of that state. Here they see Moses, who had died in the land of Moab, and was buried in a valley in that land. Deut. xxxiv. 5,

A. M. 4036. 8 And when they had lifted up their
A. D. 32. eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus
only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain,
^b Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to
no man, until the Son of man be risen again
from the dead.

10 ¶ And his disciples asked him, saying,
¹ Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first
come ?

^b Chap. xvi. 20; Mark viii. 30; ix. 9.—¹ Mal. iv. 5; Ch. xi. 14; Mark ix. 11.—^k Mal. iv. 6; Luke i. 16, 17; Acts iii. 21.

alive in a state of glory. This then was a demonstration to them of the immortality of the soul, for Moses, it is certain, had not been raised from the dead with regard to his body, Christ being the first-fruits from the grave, or the first whose body rose to immortal life, as is evident from 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23; Acts xxvi. 23; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5. Here they also see Elijah, who indeed had not died, but had been translated, that is, as the apostle expresses it, had not been *unclothed* of the body, but *clothed upon* with an immortal body, or whose *mortality had been swallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. v. 4. He was therefore in that state of glory in which the saints will be after the resurrection and the general judgment. The disciples, therefore, had thus full proof, even of a two-fold state of future felicity awaiting the righteous, first, in their souls, immediately after death; and secondly, in both their bodies and souls after the resurrection. And it is remarkable that St. Paul particularly distinguishes these states, 2 Cor. xii. 2-4, speaking of being *caught up both unto paradise*, the state and place of holy souls after death; and also into the *third heaven*, the state and place of the faithful after the resurrection. This discovery, made to the disciples, was of great importance, and very necessary in those times when the opinions of the Sadducees were so prevalent; and it appears from all the epistles in the New Testament, that the apostles derived great support under their sufferings from the prospect of the future glory that awaited them, in their hopes of which this vision must have greatly confirmed them. 3d, To show them the superiority of Christ as a teacher, lawgiver, and mediator, to Moses and Elias, who, though both eminent in their stations, were only servants, whereas this was God's beloved Son; and, of consequence, that he was to be preferred to all that had preceded him, whether patriarchs or prophets, and therefore that the gospel was more excellent than the law, the Christian than the Jewish dispensation. For when Moses and Elias (representing the law and the prophets) were present, the Father from heaven commanded that his Son should be heard in preference to them. 4th, That the preceding dispensations of the law and the prophets were in perfect harmony with Christ and his dispensation, were introductory thereto, and to terminate therein; for when Moses and Elias had disap-

11 And Jesus answered and said A. M. 4036.
unto them, Elias truly shall first come, A. D. 32.
and ^k restore all things :

12 ¹ But I say unto you, That Elias is come
already, and they knew him not, but ^m have
done unto him whatsoever they listed: like-
wise ⁿ shall also the Son of man suffer of
them.

13 ^o Then the disciples understood that he
spake unto them of John the Baptist.

¹ Chap. xi. 14; Mark ix. 12, 13.—^m Chapter xiv. 3, 10.
ⁿ Chap. xvi. 21.—^o Chap. xi. 14.

peared, Jesus remained as the sole teacher of his disciples, and of consequence of his church and people.

Verse 9. *Jesus charged them—Tell the vision to no man*—Not to the rest of the disciples, lest they should be grieved and discouraged because they were not admitted to the sight; nor to any other persons, lest it should enrage some the more, and his approaching sufferings should make others disbelieve it. "He knew," says Macknight, "that the world, and even his own disciples, were not yet capable of comprehending the design of his transfiguration, nor of the appearing of Moses and Elias; and that if this transaction had been published before his resurrection, it might have appeared incredible, because hitherto nothing but afflictions and persecutions had attended him." *Till the Son of man be risen again*—Till the resurrection shall make it credible, and confirm your testimony about it. Accordingly we learn from Mark and Luke, that they kept the matter close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen. They questioned, however, one with another, what the rising from the dead should mean, Mark ix. 10. They had never heard from the doctors that the Messiah was to die, far less that he was to be raised from the dead. On the contrary, they thought he was to abide for ever, John xii. 34, and that there was to be no end of his kingdom; wherefore they were utterly at a loss to understand what their Master meant when he spake of his *rising again*; and being afraid to ask a particular explication of the matter, they disputed much among themselves about it to no purpose.

Verses 10-13. *His disciples asked, &c.*—Being much surprised at the sudden departure of Elias, and at their Master's ordering them to keep his having appeared a secret, they had no sooner finished their dispute about what the *rising from the dead should mean*, than, addressing themselves to Jesus, they said, *Why say the scribes that Elias must first come*—Before the Messiah, if no man must know of his coming? As if he had said, Since Elias has gone away so soon, and since thou orderest us to keep his appearing a secret, how come the scribes to teach, on all occasions, that Elias must appear before the Messiah erects his empire? As they supposed that Elias was to have

A. M. 4036. 14 ¶ P And when they were come
A. D. 32. to the multitude, there came to him
a certain man, kneeling down to him, and
saying,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is
lunatic, and sore vexed: for oft-times he falleth
into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and
they could not cure him.

¶ Mark ix. 14;

an active hand in modelling and settling the Mes-
siah's kingdom, they never doubted that he would
abide a while on earth; and knowing that the scribes
affirmed openly that Elias was to appear, they could
see no reason for concealing the thing. *Jesus an-
swered, Elias truly shall first come, and restore, or
regulate, all things*—Jesus not only acknowledged
the necessity of Elijah's coming before the Messiah,
according to Malachi's prediction, but he assured his
disciples that he was already come, and described
the treatment he had met with from the nation in
such a manner as to make them understand that he
spake of John the Baptist. At the same time he
told them, that though the Baptist's ministry was
excellently calculated to produce all the effects as-
cribed to it by the prophets, they need not be sur-
prised to find that it had not all the success which
might have been expected from it, and that the
Baptist had met with much opposition and persecu-
tion. For, said he, both the person and the preach-
ing of the Messiah himself shall meet with the same
treatment.

Verses 14–18. *And when they were come to the
multitude*—Namely, the day following, Luke ix. 37,
there came a certain man, kneeling down to him—
In great humility before Jesus, and with deep re-
verence for him, and *saying, Lord, have mercy on
my son*—Compassionate his miserable condition, *for
he is lunatic and sore vexed*—With terrible fits.
“This man's disease,” says Dr. Campbell, “we
should, from the symptoms, call *epilepsy*, rather
than *lunacy*. The appellation given it (*σεληνιαζεται*)
shows the general sentiments, at that time, concern-
ing the moon's influence on this sort of malady.”
It appears from Mark ix. 17–20; Luke ix. 39;
(where see the notes,) that the disorder, whatever
it was, was owing to his being possessed by an evil
spirit; he might, nevertheless, be properly said to
be *lunatic*, though his case was chiefly preterna-
tural, as the evil spirit would undoubtedly take ad-
vantage of the influence which the changes of the
moon have on the brain and nerves. *I brought him
to thy disciples*—This he had done in Christ's ab-
sence; and *they could not cure him*—Could not cast
out the evil spirit, as appeared by their having
attempted it without success. Christ gave his dis-
ciples power to cast out devils, when he sent them
forth to teach and preach, Matt. x. 1, 8, and then
they were successful; yet, at this time, they failed
in the operation, though there were nine of them

a

17 Then Jesus answered and said, A. M. 4036.
O faithless and perverse generation, A. D. 32.
how long shall I be with you? how long
shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he de-
parted out of him: and the child was cured
from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart,
and said, Why could not we cast him out?

Luke ix. 37.

together: and Christ permitted this, 1st, to keep them
humble, and to show them their dependance upon
him, and that without him they could do nothing;
2d, to glorify himself and his own power. *Jesus
answered, O faithless and perverse generation*—
In these words our Lord might first intend to re-
prove both the disciples and the father of the child,
for the weakness of their faith. With respect to
the disciples, this appears evident from verse 20;
but the reproof, contained in the words, could not
be designed principally for them: for though their
faith was weak, they were not *faithless*, nor do they
appear to have deserved so sharp a rebuke. It
seems to have been intended for the people, and,
perhaps, especially the scribes, who are mentioned,
Mark ix. 14, as disputing with the disciples, and, it
should seem, insulting over them, as having now met
with a case that was too hard for them; a distemper
which they could not cure, even by the name and
power of their Master. And this conduct of the
scribes, which proceeded from their unbelief, was
highly criminal, since Jesus had already given so
many undeniable demonstrations of his power and
divine mission. Therefore he treated them no
worse than they deserved, in calling them a faith-
less and perverse generation, and in adding, *how
long shall I be with you*—Namely, ere you be con-
vinced? How long shall I suffer you, or bear with
your infidelity? A reproof much more applicable
to the scribes, than either to the disciples or the
father of the child, the weakness of whose faith
proceeded from human infirmity, rather than from
wilful obstinacy and perverseness. After having
thus rebuked the scribes, he turned to the father of
the child, and said, *Bring him hither to me*—And
while he brought him the evil spirit *tore him, and
he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming*, Mark
ix. 20; Luke ix. 42. Doubtless Jesus could easily
have prevented this attack of the devil, but he
wisely permitted it, that the minds of the spectators
might be impressed with a more lively sense of the
young man's distress. He then *rebuked the devil*
—Commanded him to come out of the youth, Mark
ix. 25. *And the child was cured from that very
hour*—The cure was immediate and perfect! Great
encouragement this to parents to bring their chil-
dren, whose souls are under the power of Satan, to
Christ, in the arms of faith and prayer! He is able
to heal them, and as willing as able.

Verses 19, 20. *Then came the disciples to Jesus*

A. M. 4036. 20 And Jesus said unto them, Be-
A. D. 32. cause of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, ^a If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit, this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

22 ¶ And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

24 ¶ And ^b when they were come to Caper-

^a Chap. xxi. 21; Mark xi. 23; Luke xvii. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 9; xiii. 2.—^b Chap. xvi. 21; xx. 17; Mark viii. 31; ix. 30, 31; x. 33; Luke ix. 22, 44; xviii. 31; xxiv. 6, 7.—^c Mark ix. 33.

—Namely, the nine disciples, who had been left with the multitude, when Jesus and the three others went up to the mount. They were silent before the multitude, ashamed, it seems, that they could not cast out this evil spirit, and, perhaps, vexed lest through some fault of their own they had lost the power of working miracles, formerly conferred upon them. But when they came with Jesus to their lodging, they asked the reason why they could not cast out that particular demon? *Jesus said, Because of your unbelief*—Because in this particular you had not faith. You doubted whether I could or would enable you to cast out this evil spirit, and I permitted him to resist your efforts, to reprove the weakness of your faith. *For if ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed*—If ye have the least measure of the faith of miracles; *ye shall say to this mountain, Remove, &c.*—Ye shall, by that faith, be able to accomplish the most difficult things in all cases wherein the glory of God and the good of his church are concerned. It is certain that the faith here spoken of may subsist without saving faith: Judas had it, and so had many, who thereby cast out devils, and yet will, at last, have their portion with them. It is only a supernatural persuasion given a man, that God will work by him in an extraordinary and supernatural way, at that hour. Now, though I have all this faith, so as to *remove mountains*, yet if I have not the faith that *worketh by love, I am nothing*. *To remove mountains*, was a proverbial phrase among the Jews, and is still retained in their writings, to express a thing which is very difficult, and to appearance impossible.

Verse 21. *This kind*—Of devils, *goeth not out but by prayer and fasting*—Joined with an eminent degree of the faith he had been describing. He intended by this to excite them to intercede with God for his more abundant co-operation; and by such extraordinary devotions to endeavour to pre-

naum, they that received ²tribute-
A. M. 4036. money came to Peter, and said, Doth
A. D. 32. not your Master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up: and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find ³a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

² Called in the original, *didrachma*, being in value 15*s.* sterling: Exod. xxx. 13; xxxviii. 26.—³ Or, a *stater*. It is half an ounce of silver, in value, 2*s.* 6*d.* sterling, after 5*s.* the ounce.

pare their souls for his further influences. What a testimony have we here of the efficacy of fasting, when added to fervent prayer! Some kinds of devils the apostles had cast out before this without fasting.

Verses 24–27. *When they were come to Capernaum*—Where our Lord now dwelt. Hence the collectors of the sacred tribute did not ask him for it till he came to this the ordinary place of his residence. *They that received the tribute-money came to Peter*—Whose house was in Capernaum, and probably in his house Jesus now lodged, and therefore he was the most fit to be spoken to as being the house-keeper, and they presumed he knew his Master's mind. *And said, Doth not your Master pay tribute?*—This was a tribute or payment of a peculiar kind, being half a shekel, (that is, about fifteen pence,) which every master of a family used to pay yearly to the service of the temple, to buy salt, and little things not otherwise provided for. It seems to have been a voluntary thing, which custom, rather than any law, had established. *He (Peter) saith, Yes*—My Master pays tribute. It is his practice to pay it, and I doubt not that he will pay it now. *And when he came into the house Jesus prevented him*—Just when Peter was going to ask him for it: *Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom, &c.*—Of whom are they accustomed to take it? *Of their children, &c.*—Of their own families, or of others? *Peter saith*—*Of strangers*—Of persons not belonging to their families. *Jesus saith, Then are the children free*—From any such demand. The sense is, This tribute is paid for the use of the house of God. But I am the Son of God. Therefore I am free from any obligation of paying this to my own Father. *Lest we should offend them*—That is, give them occasion to say that I despise the temple and its service, and teach my disciples so to do; *go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, &c.*—He sends Peter to

the lake with a line and a hook, telling him, that in the mouth of the first fish that came up, he should find a *stater*, (*σάτρη*), a Grecian piece of money so called, equal to two *didrachma*, or one shekel of Jewish money, the sum required for himself and Peter; Peter having a family of his own, and the other apostles being the family of Jesus. How illustrious a degree of knowledge and power did our Lord here discover! Knowledge penetrating into this animal, though beneath the waters; and power, in directing this very fish to Peter's hook, though he himself was at a distance! How must this have encouraged both Peter and his brethren in a firm dependence on Divine Providence! "Jesus chose to provide this tribute-money by a miracle, either be-

cause the disciple who carried the bag was absent, or because he had not as much money as was necessary. Further, he chose to provide it by this particular miracle, rather than any other, because it was of such a kind as to demonstrate that he was the Son of the Great Monarch worshipped in the temple, who rules the universe. Wherefore, in the very manner of his paying this tax, he showed Peter that he was free from all taxes; and at the same time gave his followers this useful lesson, that, in matters which affect their property in a smaller degree, it is better to recede somewhat from their just rights, than, by stubbornly insisting on them, to offend their brethren, or disturb the state."—Macknight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In this chapter (1.) Christ teaches humility by the emblem of a little child, 1-4. (2.) He inculcates attention and affection for his poor despised followers, and warns against giving them offence, or causing them to stumble in the way to the kingdom, 5, 6. (3.) He deploras the misery of mankind, because of offences, whether given or taken, and pronounces a *wo* on that man by whom any offence cometh; and directs rather to part with any object, however useful or pleasant, than retain it when it becomes an occasion of stumbling, 7-9. (4.) Cautions against despising any of God's poor people, whose great dignity he shows, 10, 11. (5.) He illustrates his care of his people by the parable of a lost sheep, 12-14. (6.) Directs how to reprove and reclaim an offending brother, 15-17. (7.) Commits the exercise of discipline in his church to his ministers, and gives special promises of being present with those who meet in his name, and of answering their united prayers, 18-20. (8.) Inculcates perseverance in forgiving injuries, by the parable of a king, and his conduct toward a servant who was deeply indebted to him, 21-35.

A. M. 4036. A. D. 32. **A**T^a the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.
3 And said, Verily I say unto you, ^bExcept

* Mark ix. 33; Luke ix. 46; xxii. 24.—^a St. Michael's Day, gospel, verse 1 to verse 11.

^b Psa. cxxxi. 2; Chap. xix. 14; Mark x. 14; Luke xviii. 16; 1 Cor. xiv. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

Verse 1. *At the same time*—When Jesus had just foretold his own sufferings, death, and resurrection; *came the disciples, saying, Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*—Which of us shall be thy prime minister in the kingdom which thou art about to set up? which they still thought would be a temporal kingdom. That this was their meaning, appears evident from the parallel passages, Mark ix. 33-37; Luke ix. 46-48, (where see the notes.) So that just after the Lord Jesus had predicted that he should be rejected of the Jewish nation, condemned, and crucified, the apostles were entertaining worldly and ambitious views, striving for wealth, honour, and power, and contending with one another which should be greatest! Such is human nature, blind, unfeeling, selfish, ambitious, covetous, contentious about the little, low, perishable things of this present short-enduring world! It is true, our Lord's late prediction concerning his sufferings (chap. xvii. 23) had made the disciples at first *exceeding sorry*; but their sorrow was of short duration: it soon went off, or their ignorance quickly got the better of it.

Verse 2. *And Jesus*—Perceiving the thought of their heart, says Luke, or the dispositions by which they were animated, and their ambitious views and

expectations; in order to check and eradicate all such sinful inclinations and affections, he *called a little child, and set him in the midst of them*—That they might consider him attentively, and learn by the sweetness, docility, and modesty visible in his countenance, what the temper and dispositions of his disciples ought to be, and how dear to him persons of such dispositions are. This little child is said to have been the great Ignatius, whom Trajan the wise, the good Emperor Trajan, condemned to be cast to the wild beasts at Rome! This method of instruction was agreeable to the manner of the eastern doctors and prophets, who, in teaching, impressed the minds of their disciples by symbolical actions, as well as by words. Thus, John xx. 22, Jesus, by *breathing* on his apostles, signified that through the invisible energy of his power he conferred on them the gifts of his Spirit. Thus also, John xxi. 19, he bade Peter *follow him*, to show that he should be his follower in sufferings. And, Rev. xviii. 21, an angel cast a great stone into the sea, to signify the utter destruction of Babylon.

Verses 3, 4. *And said, Verily I say unto you*—What I say is an undoubted and most important truth, a truth which you ought not only firmly to believe, but seriously to lay to heart: *except ye be converted*—

A. M. 4036. ye be converted, and become as little
A. D. 32. children, ye shall not enter into the
kingdom of heaven.

4 ° Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And ^d whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me.

6 ° But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 ¶ Wo unto the world because of offences !

^c Chap. xx. 27 ; xxiii. 11.—^d Chap. x. 42 ; Luke ix. 48.
^e Mark ix. 42 ; Luke xvii. 1, 2.

Turned from these worldly and carnal views and desires; and become like little children—"Free from pride, covetousness, and ambition, and resemble them in humility, sincerity, docility, and disengagement of affection from the things of the present life, which excite the ambition of grown men," ye shall be so far from becoming *the greatest* in my kingdom, that ye shall not so much as enter into it. Observe well, reader, the first step toward entering into the kingdom of grace is to become *as little children*: lowly in heart, knowing ourselves utterly ignorant and helpless, and hanging wholly on our Father who is in heaven, for a supply of all our wants. We may further assert, (though it is doubtful whether this text implies so much,) except we be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God: except we be entirely, inwardly changed, and renewed in the image of God, we cannot enter into the kingdom of glory. Thus must every man be converted in this life, or he can never enter into life eternal. *Whosoever therefore shall humble himself*—He that has the greatest measure of humility, joined with the sister graces of resignation, patience, meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering, shall be the greatest in Christ's kingdom: whosoever rests satisfied with the place, station, and office which God assigns him, whatever it may be, and meekly receives all the divine instructions, and complies with them, though contrary to his own inclinations, and prefers others in honour to himself,—such a person is really great in the kingdom of heaven, or of God.

Verses 5, 6. *And whoso shall receive one such little child*—Whosoever shall entertain or discover an affectionate regard to any one of my humble and meek followers; *receiveth me*—I shall take the kindness as done to myself. As if he had said, And all who are in this sense little children, are unspeakably dear to me. Therefore help them all you can, as if it were myself in person, and see that ye offend them not: that is, that ye turn them not out of the right way, neither hinder them in it. The original expression, *Ὁς δ' ἀν σκανδαλίστην*, is literally, *Whosoever*

for ^f it must needs be that offences ^g come; but ^h wo to that man by whom
A. M. 4036. the offence cometh !
A. D. 32.

8 ^h Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee ; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee : it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire.

10 ¶ Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones : for I say unto you, That in

^f Luke xvii. 1 ; 1 Cor. xi. 19.—^g Chap. xxvi. 24.—^h Chap. v. 29, 30 ; Mark ix. 43, 45.

shall cause to stumble one of these little ones that believe in me—Whosoever shall tempt them to sin, or lay obstructions in their way, and render it rough and difficult, and shall thereby impede their progress in it; *it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck*—Casaubon and Elsner, not to mention others, have shown at large that drowning in the sea was a punishment used among the ancients, and that the persons condemned had sometimes heavy stones tied about their necks, or were rolled up in sheets of lead. It seems to have grown into a proverb for dreadful and inevitable ruin. The term, *μύλος ονίκος*, (as Erasmus, Grotius, Raphelius, and many others observe,) properly signifies a millstone too large to be turned, as some were, by the hand, and requiring the force of asses to move it; as it seems those animals were generally used by the Jews on these occasions.

Verses 7–9. *Wo unto the world because of offences*—That is, unspeakable misery will be in the world through them: *for it must needs be that offences come*—Such is the nature of things, and such the weakness, folly, and wickedness of mankind, that it cannot be but they will come: *but wo to that man*—That is, miserable is that man; *by whom the offence cometh*. *Offences* are all things whereby any one is turned out of or hindered in the way of God. *If thy hand, foot, eye, offend thee*, that is, cause thee to stumble; if the most dear enjoyment, or the most beloved and useful person, turn thee out of or hinder thee in the way. Is not this a hard saying? Yes; if thou take counsel with flesh and blood. For a further elucidation of the words, see notes on chap. v. 29, 30; and Mark ix. 42–50.

Verses 10, 11. *See that ye despise not one of these little ones*—As if they were beneath your notice. Be careful to receive, and not to offend, the very weakest believer in Christ: for, as inconsiderable as some of these may appear to you, the very angels of God have a peculiar charge over them: even those of the highest order, who continually appear at the throne of the Most High. Jerome, and many others of the ancient fathers, considered this as an

A. M. 4036. heaven ⁱ their angels do always ^k be-
A. D. 32. hold the face of my Father which is
in heaven.

11 ^l For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12 ^m How think ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father

^l Psa. xxxiv. 7; Zech. xiii. 7; Heb. i. 14.—^k Esth. i. 14; Luke i. 19.—^m Luke ix. 56; xix. 10; John iii. 17; xii. 47.
ⁿ Luke xv. 4.—^o Lev. xix. 17; Luke xvii. 3.

argument that each pious man has his particular guardian angel: but it may be justly questioned whether this is the meaning of the passage. It seems more probable the sense is, that the angels, who sometimes attend the little ones spoken of, at other times stand in God's immediate presence; and consequently that different angels are at different times employed in this kind office. The general sense is plain: that the highest angels do not disdain, on proper occasions, to perform services of protection and friendship for the meanest Christian. And as all the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth occasionally, at least, to minister to the heirs of salvation, they may in general be properly called their angels. The expression, *They behold the face of my Father*, alludes to the custom of earthly courts, where the great men, those who are highest in office and favour, are most frequently in the prince's palace and presence, and perhaps daily converse with him. The meaning, therefore, of the passage is, that the chief angels are employed in taking care of the saints; and our Lord's reasoning is both strong and beautiful when on this account he cautions us against despising them. "O what men are they," says Baxter, "that read and preach this, and yet not only despise them, but first ignorantly or maliciously slander them, and then by this justify their persecuting and destroying them." But, "what a comfort to the meanest true Christian is it, that angels, who always see God's face in glory, have charge of them!" *For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost*—As if he had said, Another, and yet a stronger reason for your not despising them is, that I myself came into the world to save them: and I, who came to save them, will require it at your hands, if you wrong or persecute them, or hinder them in the way of their salvation.

Verses 12-14. *How think ye*—What do you think would be the conduct of a faithful shepherd? *If a man have a hundred sheep, and but one of them wander from the rest, and go astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine in their pasture or fold, and goeth into the mountains, with the most solici-*

which is in heaven, that one of these A. M. 4036.
little ones should perish. A. D. 32.

15 ¶ Moreover, ^a if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, ^o thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in ^p the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a ^q heathen man and a publican.

^a James v. 20; 1 Pet. iii. 1.—^p Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15; John viii. 17; 2 Cor. xiii. 1; Heb. x. 28.—^q Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14; 2 John 10.

tous care and labour, and seeketh that which is gone astray—With persevering diligence? *And if he find it*—After long and painful seeking; *he rejoiceth more over that sheep*—Which was in such danger of being finally lost; *than over the ninety and nine* which remained in safety. Thus does our Lord display the unspeakable love of our heavenly Father to the souls of men, and the immense care which he takes of them. He therefore adds, *It is not the will of your Father, &c., that one of these little ones should perish*—He loves them certainly infinitely better than the shepherd loves his sheep, and therefore will not fail to watch over them in order to their preservation, and will judge all those that would deter, or drive away from his duty, the meanest believer. Observe, reader, the gradation: the angels, the Son, the Father!

Verses 15-17. *But if thy brother, &c.*—But how can we avoid giving offence to some? or being offended at others? especially suppose they are quite in the wrong? suppose they commit a known sin? Our Lord here teaches us how: he lays down a sure method of avoiding all offences. Whosoever closely observes this three-fold rule will seldom offend others, and never be offended himself. If any do any thing amiss, of which thou art an eye or ear witness, thus saith the Lord, *If thy brother*—Any who is a member of the same religious community; *sin against thee*—1st, *Go and reprove him alone*—If it may be, in person; if that cannot so well be done, by thy messenger; or in writing. Observe, our Lord gives no liberty to omit this, or to exchange it for either of the following steps. If this do not succeed, 2d, *Take with thee one or two more*—Men whom he esteems or loves, who may then confirm and enforce what thou sayest; and afterward, if need require, bear witness of what was spoken. If even this does not succeed, then, and not before, 3d, *Tell it to the elders of the church*—Lay the whole matter open before those who watch over your and his soul. If all this avail not, have no further intercourse with him, only such as thou hast with heathen. Can any thing be plainer? Christ does here as expressly com-

A. M. 4036. 18 Verily I say unto you, ' What-
A. D. 32. soever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

19 ' Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, ' it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him ? ' till seven times ? *

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee,

* Chap. xvi. 19 ; John xx. 23 ; 1 Cor. v. 4. — * Chap. v. 24. ' 1 John iii. 22 ; v. 14. — * Luke xvii. 4. — * Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 21 to the end. — * Chap. vi.

mand all Christians who see a brother do evil, to take this way, not another, and to take these steps, in this order, as he does to honour their father and mother. But if so, in what land do the Christians live ? If we proceed from the private carriage of man to man, to proceedings of a more public nature, in what Christian nation are church censures conformed to this rule ? Is this the form in which ecclesiastical judgments appear in the Popish, or even the Protestant world ? Are these the methods used even by those who boast the most loudly of the authority of Christ to confirm their sentences ? Let us earnestly pray that this dishonour to the Christian name may be wiped away, and that common humanity may not, with such solemn mockery, be destroyed in the name of the Lord ! Let him be unto thee as a heathen—To whom thou still owest earnest goodwill, and all the offices of humanity.

Verses 18–20. *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth*—By excommunication, pronounced in the Spirit and power of Christ ; *whatsoever ye shall loose*—By absolution from that sentence. See note on chap. xvi. 19. In the primitive church, absolution meant no more than a discharge from church censure. *Again I say*—And not only your intercession for the penitent, but all your united prayers, shall be heard. How great then is the power of joint prayer ! *If two of you*—Suppose a man and his wife. *Where two or three are gathered together in my name*—That is, to worship me ; *I am in the midst of them*—By my Spirit, to quicken their prayers, guide their counsels, and answer their petitions.

Verses 21, 22. *Then came Peter*—When Jesus had given this advice for the accommodation of differences among his disciples, Peter, imagining it might be abused by ill-disposed persons, as an encouragement to offer injuries to others, came and said, *Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him ?* Must I go on to do it until he has repeated the injury seven times ? He does not

Until seven times : * but, Until seven- A. M. 4036.
ty times seven. A. D. 32.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand ¹ talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him ' to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and ² worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

14 ; Mark xi. 25 ; Col. iii. 13. — ¹ A talent is 750 ounces of silver, which, after five shillings the ounce, is 187l. 10s. sterling. — ² Neh. v. 8 ; 2 Kings iv. 1. — ² Or, besought him.

mean seven times a day, as Christ said, Luke xvii. 4, but seven times in his life, thinking, if a man had trespassed against him seven times, though that person were never so desirous to be reconciled, he might then lawfully and properly renounce all society with him : *Jesus saith, I say not, Until seven times*—I never intended to limit thee in any such way ; *but, Until seventy times seven*—That is, as often as there is occasion ; a certain number being put for an uncertain : for it is not the number of times in which a person may offend that is to be here regarded, but his true repentance. In short, the precept is unbounded, and you must never be weary of forgiving your brethren, since you are so much more indebted to the divine mercy than your fellow-creatures can be to yours.

Verse 23. *Therefore*—In this respect ; *the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king*—Here our Lord illustrates the excellent morality of the preceding verse by a lively parable ; in which is shown "the necessity of forgiving the greatest injuries in every case where the offending party is sensible of his fault, and promises amendment ; a necessity of the strongest kind, arising from this law of the divine government, that it is the condition on which God forgives our offences against him."—Macknight.

Verses 24–27. *One was brought who owed him ten thousand talents*—That is, according to the lowest computation, about two millions sterling. But it is probable, as the Prussian editors say, that the *ten thousand talents* are here put for an immense sum. Hereby our Lord intimates the vast number and weight of our offences against God, and our utter incapacity of making him any satisfaction. *As he had not to pay*—Was utterly unable to discharge this immense debt ; *his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, &c.*—Such was the power which creditors had over insolvent debtors in several countries of Europe, as well as Asia, in ancient times ; *and payment to be made*—

A. M. 4036. 27 Then the Lord of that servant
A. D. 32. was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him a hundred ³ pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came

³ The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which, after four shillings the ounce, is sevenpence halfpenny sterling, chapter

With the price of them, as far as it would go. *The servant, therefore, fell down and worshipped him*—That is, prostrated himself at his master's feet; *saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all*—The confusion he was in made him say this without consideration; for the debt which he owed was a sum by far too great for any one, who had nothing, ever to think of acquiring. *Then the Lord of that servant*—Being of an exceeding generous and merciful disposition; *was moved with compassion*—Was touched with his distress, and ordered him to be loosed; *and forgave him the debt*—Discharged him from all obligation to pay it, on condition of his future good behaviour.

Verses 28-30. *But the same servant*—Thus graciously freed from such an immense debt; *went out*—From the presence of his master; *and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him a hundred pence*—A hundred Roman denarii, each in value about sevenpence halfpenny sterling, and the whole amounting only to three pounds two shillings and sixpence. *And he took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest*—Thus, by demanding this trifling sum in so rough a manner, and that immediately on coming out of the palace where so much lenity and mercy had been shown him in a matter of far greater importance, he manifested a most base, selfish, unfeeling, and cruel disposition. The word *ἔλαβε*, rendered, *he took him by the throat*, implies that he almost strangled him. *And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet*—As he had done at his lord's feet; *and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, &c.*—Using the very words which he himself had used but just before on the like occasion. *And he would not*—Having so soon forgot, or not considering, the much greater mercy that had been shown to himself so lately, in the like circumstances, by their common master; but, being insolent and inexorable, and resolved not to wait a moment, *he went with him before a magistrate, and cast him into prison*—Protesting he should lie there till he should pay the whole debt.

and told unto their lord all that was done. A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 ^{*} So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

xx. 2.—^{*} Proverbs xxi. 13; chapter vi. 12; Mark xi. 26; James ii. 13.

Verses 31-35. *When his fellow-servants saw what was done*—When they beheld such inhumanity, in such circumstances, and from such a man; *they were very sorry*—Exceedingly grieved at such an instance of unexampled cruelty from a man who had himself experienced such mercy; *and came and told their lord*—Gave their lord the king an exact and faithful account of the whole matter. *Then his lord said, O thou wicked servant*—Hard-hearted and unmerciful; *I forgave thee all that debt*—The vast sums due to me; *because thou desiredst me*—Didst acknowledge the debt, fell down at my feet, and humbly begged me to have patience with thee; *shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant*—Who in like manner acknowledged his debt, and promised payment, showing thee, in his supplication, though thine equal, as much respect as thou showedst to me, thy lord and king? *And his lord was wroth*—Was exceedingly enraged; *and delivered him to the tormentors*—Not only revoked the grant of remission which he had just before made, as forfeited by so vile a behaviour; but put him in prison, commanding him to be there fettered and scourged; *till he should pay all that was due unto him*—That is, without any hope of release, for the immense debt which he owed he could never be able to pay. Instead of *tormentors*, here, Dr. Campbell reads *jailers*, observing that “the word *βασιλευς*, here used, properly denotes *examiner*, particularly one who has it in charge to examine by torture. Hence it came to signify *jailer*, for on such, in those days, was this charge commonly devolved. They were not only allowed, but even commanded, to treat the wretches in their custody with every kind of cruelty, in order to extort payment from them, in case they had concealed any of their effects; or, if they had nothing, to wrest the sum owed from the compassion of their relations and friends, who, to release an unhappy person for whom they had a regard from such extreme misery, might be induced to pay the debt; for the person of the insolvent debtor was absolutely in

the power of the creditor, and at his disposal." But it must be observed that imprisonment is a much severer punishment in the eastern countries than in ours. State criminals especially, when condemned to it, are not only confined to a very mean and scanty allowance, but are frequently loaded with clogs or heavy yokes, so that they can neither lie nor sit at ease; and by frequent scourgings, and sometimes rackings, are brought to an untimely end. How observable is this whole account; as well as the great

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

CHAPTER XIX.

Jesus leaves Galilee and comes into the coasts of Judea, where he is attended by great multitudes, whose sick he heals, 1, 2. He declares against divorces, except in the case of adultery, and discourses with his disciples concerning marriage, 3-12. He kindly receives and blesses some little children that were brought to him, 13-15. He discourses with a rich young man applying to him for direction in the way to eternal life, 16-22. Christ takes occasion from his case to caution his disciples concerning the danger of riches, 23-26; and promises a great reward to those who forsake all to follow him, 27-30.

A. M. 4037. **A**ND it came to pass, ^a that when
A. D. 33. Jesus had finished these sayings,
he departed from Galilee, and came into the
coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan :

2 ^b And great multitudes followed A. M. 4037.
him; and he healed them there. A. D. 33.

3 ¶ The Pharisees also came unto him,
tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it law-

^a Mark x. 1; John x. 40.

^b Chap. xii. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIX.

Verses 1, 2. *When Jesus had finished these sayings*—Had delivered the instructions contained in the preceding chapter, to his disciples at Capernaum; *he departed from Galilee*—Where he had long dwelt, and through which he had made repeated journeys, but in which, from henceforward, he *walked no more; and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan*—"Properly speaking, no part of Judea was on the farther side of Jordan; for though, after the Jews returned from the captivity, the whole of their land was called Judea, especially by foreigners who happened to mention their affairs, it is certain that in the gospels Judea is always spoken of as a particular division of the country. We may therefore reasonably suppose, that Matthew's expression is elliptical; and may supply it from Mark x. 1, thus, *And came into the coasts of Judea, δια τη περαν τη Ιορδανη, through the country beyond Jordan.* See John x. 40. In this journey, our Lord passed through the country beyond Jordan, that the Jews living there might enjoy the benefit of his doctrine and miracles. *And great multitudes followed him*—Namely, from Galilee into Perca, for his fame having become exceeding great, he was everywhere resorted to, and followed by the sick who wished to be healed; by their friends who attended them; by those whose curiosity prompted them to see and examine things so wonderful; by well-disposed persons, who found themselves greatly profited and pleased with his sermons; by enemies who watched all his words and actions with a design to expose

him as a deceiver; lastly, by those who expected that he would set up the kingdom immediately: besides, at this time the multitude may have been greater than ordinary, because, as the passover was at hand, many, going thither, may have chosen to travel in our Lord's train, expecting to see new miracles."—Macknight.

Verse 3. *The Pharisees also*—Who always had a watchful eye on his motions, and attended him with the most malignant designs, being now more especially irritated by the fame of his late miracles, which they had in vain endeavoured to suppress; *came unto him, tempting him*—With what they thought a very artful and insnaring question; *and*—That they might, if possible, find some reason to accuse him, or to discredit him, at least, among the people; *they asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*—That is, for any thing which he dislikes in her. "The school of Hillel taught, that a man might put away his wife for any cause. The son of Sirach saith, 'If she go not as thou wouldest have her, cut her off from thy flesh, give her a bill of divorce, and let her go.' Ecclus. xxv. 26. Josephus saith, The law runs thus: 'He that would be disjoined from his wife, for any cause whatsoever, let him give her a bill of divorce.' And he confesseth, that he himself put away his wife, after she had borne him three children, 'because he was not pleased with her behaviour.' But the school of Shammah determined, on the contrary that the wife was only to be put away for adultery."—Whitby. Christ, it must be observed, "had de-

A. M. 4037. ful for a man to put away his wife
A. D. 33. for every cause ?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, ° that he which made *them* at the beginning, made them male and female,

5 And said, ° For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and ° they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but

° Gen. i. 27; v. 2; Mal. ii. 15.—^d Gen. ii. 24; Mark x. 5-9;

livered his sentiments on this subject twice; once in Galilee, chap. v. 31; and again in Perea, Luke xvi. 18. It is probable, therefore, that they knew his opinion, and solicited him to declare it, hoping it would incense the people, who reckoned the liberty which the law gave them of divorcing their wives, one of their chief privileges. Or if, standing in awe of the people, he should deliver a doctrine different from what he had taught on former occasions, they thought it would be a fit ground for accusing him of dissimulation. But they missed their aim entirely; for Jesus, always consistent with himself, boldly declared the third time against arbitrary divorces, not fearing the popular resentment in the least.—Macknight.

Verses 4-6. *He answered, Have ye not read, &c.*—It is thought by some that the chief design of the Pharisees in putting the fore-mentioned question to our Lord, was to make him contradict Moses. If so, they were much disappointed, for, instead of contradicting him, he confutes them by the very words of Moses. *He who made them at the beginning*—When the human race began to exist; *made them male and female*—Greek, *αρσεν και θηλυ*, which Dr. Campbell renders, *a male and a female*. He finds fault with our version as inaccurate and irrelative to our Lord's argument, and thinks our translators "could not have rendered the clause differently if the original expression had been *αρρενας και θηλειας εποιοσεν αυτους*. Yet it is manifest, that the sense would have been different. All that this declaration would have implied is, that when God created mankind, he made people of both sexes. But what argument could have been drawn from this principle, to show that the tie of marriage was indissoluble? Or how could the conclusion annexed have been supported? *For this cause shall a man leave father and mother*. Besides, it was surely unnecessary to recur to the history of the creation to convince those Pharisees of what all the world knew, that the human race was composed of men and women, and consequently of two sexes. The weight of the argument, therefore," he says, "must lie in this circumstance, that God created at first no more than a single pair, one of each sex, whom he united in the bond of marriage, and, in so doing, exhibited a standard of that union to all generations. The very words, *and these two*, show that it is implied in the historian's declaration, that they were two, one male and one female, and no more. But this is by no

one flesh. What therefore God hath A. M. 4037. joined together, let no man put asunder. A. D. 33.

7 They say unto him, ° Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

Eph. v. 31.—° 1 Cor. vi. 6; vii. 2.—^f Deut. xxiv. 1; Ch. v. 31.

means implied in the common version. It lets us know, indeed, that they were two sexes, but gives us no hint that these were but two persons." *And said*—By the mouth of Adam, who uttered these words, *For this cause*—On account of his engaging in the married state; *shall a man leave father and mother*—When those dear relations of parental and filial tenderness shall take place, *and shall cleave to his wife*—With an affection more strong and steady than he feels even for those from whom, under God, he has derived his being: *and they twain shall be one flesh*—That is, "shall constitute only one person, in respect of the unity of their inclinations and interests, and of the mutual power which they have over each other's bodies, 1 Cor. vi. 16; vii. 4; and as long as they continue faithful to this law, they must remain undivided till death separates them." *Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh*—"From the original institution of marriage, therefore, in paradise, and from the great law thereof, declared by God himself on that occasion, it evidently appears that it is the strongest and tenderest of all friendships, a friendship supported by the divine sanction and approbation, a friendship therefore which ought to be indissoluble till death." *What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder*—By unreasonable divorces. Husbands and wives, being joined together by the ordinance of God, must not be put asunder by any ordinance of man: but the bond of marriage must be esteemed sacred, and incapable of being dissolved by any thing which does not make them cease to be one flesh, by making that of the one common to some third person, that is, by one of the parties committing adultery: for as, by forming at first only one man and one woman, God condemned polygamy, so, by making them *one flesh*, he condemned divorce.

Verses 7-9. *They say, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, &c.*—"If divorce be contrary to the original institution of marriage, as you affirm, how came it that Moses has commanded us to give a bill of divorce? &c. The Pharisees, by calling the law concerning divorce a *command*, insinuated that Moses had been so tender of their happiness that he would not suffer them to live with bad wives, though they themselves had been willing; but peremptorily enjoined, that such should be put away." He saith, *Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts*—Because neither your

A. M. 4037. 9 ^a And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.

10 His disciples say unto him, ^b If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

11 But he said unto them, ^c All *men* cannot

^a Chap. v. 32; Mark x. 11; Luke xvi. 18; 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

fathers nor you could bear the more excellent way; *suffered*, (or *permitted*,) not *commanded*, you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so—And the account which Moses himself gives of the original constitution of things, which has now been referred to, proves it to be an irregularity which must have no place under the gospel dispensation. *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication*—Which is a fundamental breach of the main article of the marriage covenant, by which they are one flesh; and shall marry another, committeth adultery—Against her that was his former wife, and who continues still to be so in the sight of God. As the law of Moses allowed divorce, for the hardness of men's hearts, and the law of Christ forbids it, we learn from hence that Christians being under a dispensation of love and liberty, tenderness of heart may justly be expected among them, and that they should not be hard-hearted like the Jews. Indeed there will be no occasion for divorces if we bear with one another, and forgive one another in love, as those that are and hope to be forgiven of God, and have found him reluctant to put us away, Isa. l. 1. Divorces are unnecessary if husbands love their wives, and wives be obedient to their husbands, and they dwell together as *heirs of the grace of life*. These are the laws of Christ, and such as we find not in all the law of Moses.

Verses 10, 11. *His disciples say, If the case of a man be so with his wife*—If the marriage-bond be thus indissoluble, and a man cannot dismiss his wife unless she break that bond by going astray, but must bear with her, whether she be quarrelsome, petulant, prodigal, foolish, barren, given to drinking, or, in a word, troublesome by numberless vices; *it is not good to marry*—A man had better not marry at all, since by marrying he may entangle himself in an inextricable snare, and involve himself in trials and troubles which may make him miserable all the rest of his days. *But he said, All men cannot receive this saying*—Namely, that it is not expedient to marry; *save they to whom it is given*—As a peculiar gift, to conquer those inclinations toward that state which are found in mankind in general, according to the common constitution of human nature.

Verse 12. *For there are some eunuchs, &c.*—Our

receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and ^k there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

^a Prov. xxi. 19.—¹ 1 Cor. vii. 2, 7, 9, 17.—^k 1 Cor. vii. 32, 34; ix. 5, 15.

Lord here shows that the fore-mentioned gift of continence is given to three sorts of persons: 1st, To some by natural constitution, without their choice. 2d, To some by the violence of men, against their choice: and, 3d, To others by grace, with their choice; who steadily withstand their natural inclinations, that they may *wait upon God without distraction*, and may glorify him in a single life, judging it to be a state more free from worldly cares, and more friendly to devotion, than that of marriage. *He that is able to receive it, let him receive it*—He that has this gift, in any of these ways, whether by natural constitution and disposition; or by the injury of human force used upon him, rendering him incapable of the matrimonial union; or by an ardent desire of promoting the interests of religion, animating him to subdue his natural appetite, and enabling him to live in voluntary chastity, unencumbered with secular concerns; such a person will not sin though he leads a single life. The words, however, *let him receive it*, must not be referred to the clauses immediately preceding them, as if our Lord had meant to say, He that is able to become a eunuch by any of the ways I have mentioned, let him become one; for the second way, namely, through violence offered to men's bodies, is absolutely unlawful: but they must be referred to verse 11, as is plain from the words themselves; and the meaning of them is, He that can receive the saying there mentioned, and live chastely without marriage, may receive it; and, as many commentators understand the words, ought to receive it. "They who have the gift of continency," says Henry, "and are not under any necessity of marrying, do best if they continue single, 1 Cor. vii. 1; for they that are unmarried have opportunity, if they have but a heart, to care more for the things of the Lord, how they may please the Lord, 1 Cor. vii. 32, 34, being less encumbered with the cares of this life, and having greater vacancy of thoughts, and time to mind better things." The word *eunuchs*, from the Greek *ευνουχοι*, *eunouchoi*, means having the care of the bed, or bed-chamber, (from *εως* *εκειν*,) this being the principal employment of eunuchs in the eastern countries, that is, of such as our Lord says were made eunuchs by men, merely for the purpose of attending in the apartments of queens and princesses.

A. M. 4037. 13 ¶¹ Then were there brought
A. D. 33. unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for ^a of such is the kingdom of heaven.

15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

16 ¶^a And behold, one came and said unto him, ° Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou

me good? *there is none good but A. M. 4037. one, that is, God: but if thou wilt A. D. 33. enter into life, keep the commandments.*

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, ^p Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 ° Honour thy father and thy mother: and, ^r Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be per-

¹ Mark x. 13; Luke xviii. 15.—^a Chap. xviii. 3.—[°] Mark x. 17; Luke xviii. 18.—[°] Luke x. 25.—[°] Exodus xx. 13;

Deut. v. 17.—[°] Chap. xv. 4.—[°] Lev. xix. 18; Chap. xxii. 39; Rom. xiii. 9; Gal. v. 14; James ii. 8.

Verses 13–15. *Then were brought unto him little children*—Luke says, *βρεφη, infants*. It is not said by whom they were brought, but probably it was by their parents or guardians: and herein, 1st, they testified their respect for Christ, and the value they set upon his favour and blessing: and, 2d, manifested their love to their children, not doubting but it would be for their benefit in this world and the next to have the blessing and prayers of the Lord Jesus, whom they looked upon at least as an extraordinary person, a holy man, and as a prophet, if not also as the Messiah, and the blessings of such were valued and desired. Observe, reader, they who glorify Christ by coming to him themselves, ought further to glorify him by bringing their children to him likewise, and all upon whom they have influence. *That he should put his hands on them and pray*—It appears to have been customary among the Jews, when one person prayed for another who was present, to lay his hand upon the person's head; and this imposition of hands was a ceremony used in ancient times, especially in paternal blessing: thus Jacob, when he blessed and adopted the sons of Joseph, laid his hands upon their heads, Gen. xlviii. 14–20. *And the disciples rebuked them*—That is, them that brought the children; probably thinking such an employ beneath the dignity of their Master. *But Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me*—Mark says, that when Jesus saw it, that is, observing his disciples rebuking those that brought the children, *he was much displeased*, namely, to find his disciples so defective in benevolence toward objects whose innocence and helplessness entitled them to great affection from persons of riper years. He ordered them therefore to let the children be brought to him; saying, *For of such is the kingdom of heaven*—The Church of God on earth, and his kingdom in heaven, is composed of persons who resemble little children in their dispositions; and children, even in a natural sense, have a right to be admitted into his kingdom, the gospel authorizing the ministers of Christ to admit the children of believing parents into his church by baptism, and those that die in infancy being undoubtedly

heirs of eternal glory. *And he laid his hands on them*, as he was desired to do, *and blessed them*, Mark x. 16; recommended them in a solemn manner to the divine blessing and favour.

Verse 16. *And behold, one came, &c.*—Many of the poor had followed him from the beginning. *One rich man came at last, and came running*, with great earnestness, and *kneeled to him with great humility and reverence*, Mark x. 17, *and said, Good Master*—Manifesting by the appellation both a submissive and teachable disposition; his persuasion that Christ was a divinely-commissioned teacher, and his affection and peculiar respect to him as such. *What good thing shall I do?*—Or, as Mark and Luke express it, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?*—By this question he manifested, 1st, That he believed in a future state; that there was an eternal life that might be inherited; he was therefore no Sadducee: 2d, that he was concerned to ensure that life to himself, and was more desirous of it than of any of the enjoyments of this life: thus he differed from many of his age and quality; for the rich are apt to think it below them to make such an inquiry as this, and young people in general are inclined to defer making it to some future period of their lives: 3d, that something must be done; some evils omitted, some duties performed, or divine injunctions complied with, in order to it: 4th, that he was, or at least thought he was, willing to do what was to be done, or to take the steps necessary to be taken for the obtaining of this eternal life. And surely those that know what it will be to enjoy eternal life, and what to come short of it, will be glad to accept it on any terms.

Verses 17–22. *He said, Why callest thou me good?*—Whom thou regardest merely as a prophet sent from God, and therefore supposest to be only a man; *there is none good*—Supremely, originally, essentially, but God. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*—From a principle of loving faith. Believe, and thence love and obey. And this undoubtedly is the way to eternal life. Our Lord therefore does not answer ironically, which had been utterly beneath his character, but gives a plain, direct,

A. M. 4037. fect, "go *and* sell that thou hast, A. D. 33. and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

* Chap. vi 20; Luke xiii. 33; xvi. 9; Acts ii. 45; iv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.

serious answer to a serious question. *The young man saith, All these have I kept from my childhood*—So he imagined, and perhaps he had, as to the letter, but not as to the spirit, which our Lord immediately shows. *What lack I yet?*—Wherein am I deficient? What is further needful in order to my securing the glorious prize which I am pursuing? In answer to this inquiry, made by one evidently puffed up with a high opinion of his own righteousness, our Lord replies, *If thou wilt be perfect*—That is, a real, thorough Christian, *yet lackest thou one thing*, (Luke,) namely, to be saved from the love of the world; from all undue esteem for, and inordinate affection to, earthly things. Therefore, *go and sell that thou hast*, (Luke, *all that thou hast*,) *and give*—Distribute the money which arises from the sale thereof; *to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven*—Infinitely more excellent and durable than that which thou renouncest on earth. *And come*, (*take up the cross*, Mark,) *and follow me*—Unite thyself to me as my constant attendant, though it should be even at the expense of thy life. He who reads the heart, saw that this young man's bosom sin was the love of his worldly possessions; and that he could not be saved from it but by literally parting with them. To *him*, therefore, he gave this particular direction, which he never designed for a general rule to all his followers. For *him* this was necessary, not only, as some suppose, in order to his giving proof of exalted piety, but in order to his salvation. For *him* literally to sell all, was an absolute duty; for many to do this would be an absolute sin. And yet, though God does not in fact require every man to distribute all his goods to others, and so in effect to become one of the number of the poor relieved out of his own possessions, yet sincere piety and virtue require in all an habitual readiness not only to sacrifice their possessions, but their lives, at the command of God; and Providence has in fact, in all ages, called some out to trials as severe as this. And certainly an entire renunciation of the world, so far at least as to be willing to part with it whenever God should call them to it, was peculiarly necessary for all Christians in the first ages, when the profession of Christianity so generally exposed men to persecution and death. *And when he heard this he went away sorrowful*—Not being willing to have salvation at so high a price; *for he had great possessions*—Which he now plainly showed he valued more than eternal life: and it was with great wisdom that our Lord took this direct and convincing method

23 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That A. M. 4037. A. D. 33. 'a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

† Chapter xiii. 22; Mark x. 24; 1 Corinthians i. 26; 1 Timothy vi. 9, 10.

of manifesting both to himself and others that secret insincerity and carnality of temper which prevailed under all these specious pretences and promising appearances.

Verses 23, 24. *Then said Jesus unto his disciples*—While they had this example before their eyes, and were witnesses of the melancholy fact of a well-educated and well-disposed man voluntarily foregoing all hope of eternal life rather than part with his temporal possessions; that is, relinquishing all prospect of the infinite and everlasting riches and glories of heaven, for the unsatisfying, uncertain, and transitory enjoyments of earth! *Verily I say unto you*—And enjoin you firmly to believe and seriously to consider what I say; *that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*—Either into the kingdom of grace or the kingdom of glory; or be brought to have such an esteem and love for the gospel, with its present and future blessings, as to embrace it at the hazard of losing their worldly property, together with their good name, thereby, or so as to use that property in such a manner as the laws of the gospel require. Our Lord therefore adds, *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, &c.*—A common proverb among the Jews to express the extreme difficulty of a thing. Theophylact observes, that some explain the word, *καμηλον*, as signifying here a *camel*. "A good authority, however, for this signification, though adopted by Castalio, who says, *rudentem*, I," says Dr. Campbell, "have never seen. The frequency of the term among all sorts of writers, for denoting the beast so denominated, is undeniable. Besides, the *camel* being the largest animal they were acquainted with in Judea, its name was become proverbial for denoting any thing remarkably large, and a *camel's passing through a needle's eye* came, by consequence, as appears from some rabbinical writings, to express a thing absolutely impossible." Our Lord, therefore, here represents the salvation of a rich man as being next to an impossibility. It was especially so in those early days, when the profession of the gospel exposed men to so much persecution. And perhaps, as Dr. Macknight observes, these strong expressions, in their strictest sense, must be understood of the state of things at that time subsisting; yet they are also applicable to rich men in all ages. The reason is, "Riches have a woful influence upon piety in two respects. 1st, In the acquisition; for, not to mention the many frauds and other sins that men commit to obtain riches, they occasion an endless variety of

A. M. 4037. 25 When his disciples heard it, they
A. D. 33. were exceedingly amazed, saying,

Who then can be saved ?

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but ⁱⁿ God all things are possible.

27 ¶ * * Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, ^{we} we have forsaken all and fol-

* Gen. xviii. 14; Job xlii. 2; Jer. xxxiii. 17; Zech. viii. 6; Luke i. 37; xviii. 27.—* St. Paul's Day, gospel, verse 27 to the end.

cares and anxieties, which draw the affections away from God. 2d, They are offensive to piety in the possession; because, if they are hoarded, they never fail to beget covetousness, which is the root of all evil; and if they are enjoyed they become strong temptations to luxury, drunkenness, lust, pride, and idleness." But, besides these, riches are a dangerous snare in several other respects. 1st, It is difficult to possess them and not inordinately love them, and put that trust in them which ought to be put only in the living God. For rich men "obtaining all the necessaries and superfluities of life by means of their riches, are apt to consider them as the sources of their happiness, and to depend upon them as such, forgetting altogether their dependance on God. It is otherwise with the poor. They are exposed to manifold afflictions, and labour under the pressure of continual wants. These serve to convince them of the vanity of the world, and to put them in mind of their dependance upon God; at the same time, the unexpected deliverances and supplies which they meet with, rivet the idea more firmly. Wherefore, in the very nature of things, the poor are nearer to the kingdom of God than the rich; and if the latter, yielding to the temptations of their state, trust in their riches, words can scarce be invented strong enough to paint the difficulty of bringing them to that holy temper of mind which would qualify them for the kingdom of God." 2d, It is not easy to possess riches and not think highly of ourselves on account of them, as they certainly give their possessors a consequence which they otherwise could not have, and cause them to be looked up to with respect by all that are round about them. But, 3d, The most difficult thing of all is, to possess them and make a right use of them, even that use which God wills all to make in whose hands he hath lodged them. In other words, To use them as those who are persuaded that, properly speaking, they are not proprietors, but merely stewards of them, and will certainly be called by the great Lord of all to give an account how they have employed every part of them, and what use they have made of the advantages and opportunities for doing and receiving good above others, which riches put in their power.

Verses 25, 26. *When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed*—The disciples, who had followed their Master in expectation of becoming rich and great, were exceedingly astonished when they heard him declare that it was next to impossi-

lowed thee; what shall we have A. M. 4037
therefore? A. D. 33.

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ^{ye} ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

* Mark x. 28; Luke xviii. 28.—† Deut. xxxiii. 9; Chap. iv. 20; Luke v. 11.—‡ Chap. xx. 21; Luke xxii. 28-30; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3; Rev. ii. 26.

ble for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. They thought if the rich and the great could not enter his kingdom, he never could have any kingdom at all; and, therefore, they asked one another with great surprise, *Who then can be saved*—If rich men with all their advantages cannot? "Who? A poor man: a peasant: a beggar:—ten thousand of them," says Mr. Wesley, "sooner than one that is rich." *But Jesus beheld them*—Mark says, *looking upon them*—To compose their hurried spirits. O what a speaking look was there! *Said to them*—With the utmost sweetness; *With men this is impossible*—It is observable, he does not retract what he had said; no, nor soften it in the least degree, but rather strengthens it, by representing the salvation of a rich man as the utmost effort of Omnipotence. The energy of divine grace is able to make a man despise the world, with all that it contains, when no efforts of man, no arguments, eloquence, or persuasions are able to do it.

Verses 27, 28. *Then answered Peter*—With some warmth and confidence; *Behold, we have forsaken all*—We have done what this youth, hopeful as he seemed, had not the resolution to do; for though indeed we had not much, we have left all the little that we had, and have at all adventures *followed thee* with the sincerest zeal and affection. *What shall we have therefore?*—It seems Peter was ready to think that their labour was lost, because they were to have no recompense on earth, and that his stewardship, the office which he supposed his Master had promised him under the metaphor of *the keys of the kingdom*, was likely to be of little service to him. *Jesus said, Ye which have followed me in the regeneration*—During this time and state of things, in which men are to be regenerated and created anew by the gospel, and the earth is to be renewed in righteousness. Mr. Fleming paraphrases the verse thus: "You, my apostles, who have followed me in this new state of the church, which is to be brought to the birth when I am to ascend to heaven, shall be to the whole Christian Church what the twelve heads of the tribes were of old to the whole Jewish nation: my followers shall appeal to your decisions, as the rule of their faith and practice." But, it seems, the expression, *εν τη παλιγγενεσις*, ought rather to be connected with what follows; the sense then will be, *In the renovation*, namely, the final renovation, or *restitution of all things*, Acts iii. 21, *when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory*—

A. M. 4037. 29 ^a And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a

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^a Mark x. 29, 30; Luke xviii. 29, 30.

Exalted above the highest angels of God, and presiding over and judging the assembled world; *ye also shall sit*—In the beginning of the judgment they shall *stand*; (2 Cor. v. 10.) Then, being absolved, they shall *sit* with the Judge: (1 Cor. vi. 2:) *on twelve thrones*—So our Lord promised, without expressing any condition: yet, as absolute as the words are, it is certain there is a condition implied, as in many scriptures where none is expressed. In consequence of this, *these twelve* did not sit on *those twelve thrones*: for the throne of Judas another took, so that he never sat thereon. *Judging the twelve tribes of Israel*—Concurring joyfully with me in the sentence which will then be passed on the Jewish nation, and on all the professed members of my church, as they have been sincere or faithless in their profession, and in the observance of those laws which you, by authority from me, shall have given them.

Verses 29, 30. *And every one*—In every age and country, and not you my apostles only; *that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or wife, or children*—Either by giving any of them up, when they could not be retained with a clear conscience; or by willingly refraining from acquiring them: *shall receive a hundred-fold*—In value, though not in kind, even in the present world, in the inward satisfaction and divine consolation attending real religion; *and inherit everlasting life*—Shall enjoy to all eternity that unspeakable felicity and glory which God has prepared for all his children, and especially for those who have cheerfully made such sacrifices as those, and have given such proofs of their faith in, and love to, their God and Saviour. *But many first*—In the advantages and privileges which they enjoy; *shall*—notwithstanding this, fall short of others, and *be last*—in the great day of accounts; and those who are *the last*, shall prove in this respect the first:

hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 ^b But many *that are first* shall be last, and the last *shall be first*.

^b Chap. xx. 16; xxi. 31, 32; Mark x. 31; Luke xiii. 30.

for some, from whom it might be least expected, shall embrace the gospel, and courageously endure the greatest hardships for it; while others, with far greater advantages, shall reject it, and under much stronger engagements shall desert it. The words thus interpreted may be considered as a prediction that the Gentiles would receive and obey the gospel, while the Jews should reject it. As if he had said, "Though you may imagine that you and your brethren have a peculiar title to the great and substantial blessings of my kingdom, which I have been describing, the Gentiles shall have equal opportunities and advantages for obtaining them; because they shall be admitted to all the privileges of the gospel on the same footing with you Jews; nay, in point of time, they shall be before you; for they shall generally embrace the gospel before your nation is converted, Rom. xi. 25, 26."—Macknight. The words may also be thus interpreted: *Many that are first* in profession, and in the opinion of their fellow-creatures, and their own opinion, for piety and virtue, *shall be last* in my esteem, and in that of my Father, or shall be found wanting, and therefore shall be condemned at the day of judgment: *and the last* in the opinion of men, and in their own opinion, and who are despised and rejected by those that judge according to appearance, *shall be first*—Shall be preferred to others, and be found highest in my favour in that day. The passage has evidently yet another sense, namely, Many of those who were first called *shall be last*, shall have the lowest reward, those who came after them being preferred before them: and yet possibly both the first and the last may be saved, though with different degrees of glory. The doctrine contained in this sentence is illustrated by the parable of the householder, contained in the beginning of the following chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

Here (1,) Christ illustrates the last verse of the preceding chapter by the parable of the labourers hired to work in the vineyard, 1–16. (2,) He again foretels his approaching sufferings and resurrection, 17–19. (3,) He sharply reproves an ambitious petition in favour of James and John, for distinguished honours in his kingdom; and allots them a conformity to him in suffering, 20–28. (4,) He hearkens to the request of two blind men, and opens their eyes, 29–34.

A. M. 4037. FOR the kingdom of heaven is
A. D. 33. like unto a man *that is* a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.*

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a ¹penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third A. M. 4037.
hour, and saw others standing idle in A. D. 33.
the market-place,

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

* Septuagesima Sunday, gospel, verse 1 to verse 17.—¹ The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which, after five shil-

lings the ounce, is sevenpence halfpenny, sterling; Chapter xviii. 28.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

Verse 1. *For the kingdom of heaven, &c.*—The manner in which the following parable is here introduced, (and it is the same in the original,) evidently shows that it was spoken in illustration of the sentence with which the preceding chapter concludes, and from which, therefore, it ought not to have been disjoined. The primary scope of this parable seems to be, to show that many of the Jews would be rejected for their disobedience to the gospel call, and many of the Gentiles accepted in consequence of their obeying it. The secondary, That, of the Gentiles, many who were first converted would be the last and lowest in the kingdom of glory, and many of those who were last converted, would be first and highest therein. The parable seems, also, to have a third intention, namely, to show that those Gentiles who should obey the gospel, whether sooner or later, should be admitted to privileges equal to those conferred on the believing Jews. *The kingdom of heaven is like a householder*—That is, the manner of God's proceeding in his kingdom resembles that of a householder, or master of a family, in the management of his vineyard. *Which went out early in the morning*—Namely, at six, called by the Romans and Jews the first hour. From thence reckoning unto the evening, they called what is nine with us the third hour; twelve, the sixth; three in the afternoon, the ninth; and five, the eleventh. *To hire labourers into his vineyard*—At the time when the vintage was to be gathered in. As the householder here represents Christ, so the vineyard signifies his church, in which, as in a vineyard, much work is to be done, for which labourers are wanted. With respect to the different hours here mentioned, by *early in the morning*, or the *first hour*, some of the ancient fathers understood the ages preceding the flood, in which Adam and Eve, Abel, Enoch, Noah, and probably some others, were called. By the *third hour* they understood the patriarchal ages succeeding the flood; and by the *sixth hour*, the times of Moses and the promulgation of the law, and of the establishment of the Jewish Church; by the *ninth hour*, the times of the prophets; and by the *eleventh*, those of the Messiah and the calling of the Gentiles. But Dr. Whitby justly objects that, as this parable is intended to illustrate the kingdom of heaven, or the gospel dispensation, and the state of things in the gospel church, that exposition of the fathers cannot be the true one. He therefore explains the first call, *early in the morning*, of the earliest days of Christ's preaching, preceded by that of John the Baptist; that of the *third*

hour, as referring to the mission of the apostles, when they were first sent forth to preach in Judea. By the call of the *sixth hour*, he understands their preaching after the ascension of Christ and the descent of the Holy Ghost, when the church was in its meridian glory; by that of the *ninth hour*, the preaching of the same apostles to the dispersed Jews in their synagogues, in different parts of the world; and that of the *eleventh hour*, to the calling of the Gentiles. This exposition, if it do not imply too great a nicety of distinction, seems very plausible, and might probably be intended, partly at least, by our Lord. But others of the ancient fathers, comparing human life to a day, considered the parable as referring also to the several periods of the life of man, namely, to those called and obeying the call in childhood, in youth, in middle age, in declining years, and in old age; and doubtless the parable is capable of, and probably was intended to receive, such an application.

Verses 2-4. *And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day*—"A denarius, or Roman penny, in value about seven and one half pence sterling, which it seems was the usual price of a day's service among the Jews, as Tacitus tells us it was among the Romans, (*Annal.*, i. 17.) It is therefore justly mentioned, Rev. vi. 6, as a proof of the great scarcity of provisions, when a *measure*, or *chanix* of wheat, which was the usual allowance to one man for a day, and was about an English quart, was sold at that price."—Doddridge. *He sent them into his vineyard*—Many obeyed the call given them by John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus at the first introduction of the gospel dispensation, and many have been called in childhood in every age of the church. *He went out about the third hour*, about nine, and *saw others standing idle*—Many were standing idle, and doing nothing either for the glory of God or the salvation of their own souls, in all parts of Judea, when the apostles were first sent forth, during the time of our Lord's personal ministry, to call them to repentance, and to do works meet for repentance. And many young persons in every age and nation have been, and still are, standing idle in the same sense; and that *in the market-place*, as it were, offering themselves to be hired to any master that might be disposed to engage them: and too many have continually been, and still are, hired by Satan; and, like the prodigal in the parable, (who was sent into the fields to feed swine,) are daily employed in the drudgery of sin; or are engaged by the world, and occupied in the pursuits of its vanities; or by the flesh, in the filthy lusts of which

A. M. 4037. 5 Again he went out about the sixth
A. D. 33. and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also

they wallow, as swine in the mire. *And said, Go ye also*—As well as those who have been called before you, or are called at an earlier age: *and whatsoever is right*—*Δικαιον, just, reasonable, I will give you. And they went their way*—To their work, without any further, or more particular agreement, placing an entire confidence in the promise of the householder. Thus many were obedient to the call given by the apostles in their first mission, and to that given by the seventy disciples: for they returned to Jesus, saying, *Lord, the very devils are subject to us through thy name.* And many young persons in former ages have obeyed, and many in the present age now obey, the gospel, wherever it is preached with clearness and power.

Verse 5. *Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour*—At noon, and three in the afternoon; *and did likewise*—Sent others to work on the same general promise of giving them as much as they could reasonably expect. Thus many of the Jews were brought into the Christian Church, the Lord's vineyard, by the preaching of the apostles, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, first in Judea, and afterward in different parts of the world; and many in a state of manhood, and some in declining years, have in former ages obeyed the gospel call, and not a few, at the same periods of human life, obey it in the present age in this country, and in other parts of the earth, where the gospel is preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

Verses 6, 7. *And about the eleventh hour*—About five in the afternoon; *he went and found others standing idle*—Others are hired into the vineyard in old age, when the day of life is almost wholly spent, and there is but one hour of the twelve remaining. "None are hired at the *twelfth hour*: when life is done, opportunity is done; but while there is life, there is hope. There is hope for old sinners; for, if in sincerity they turn to God, they shall doubtless be accepted: true repentance is never too late. And, 2d, There is hope of old sinners, that they may be brought to repentance. Nothing is too hard for Almighty grace to do, that can change the Ethiop's skin and the leopard's spots. A man may be born again when he is old; and the old man which is corrupt may be put off. Yet let none, upon this presumption, put off their repentance till they are old. These were sent into the vineyard, it is true, at the eleventh hour; but nobody had hired them, or offered to hire them before. The Gentiles came in at the *eleventh hour*, but it was because the gospel had not been preached to them. Those that have had gospel offers made them at the third and sixth hour, and have resisted and refused them, will not

into the vineyard; and whatsoever A. M. 4037.
is right, *that shall ye receive.* A. D. 33.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their hire*, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about

have that to say for themselves, at the eleventh hour, which these had, *No man hath hired us*: nor can they be sure that any man will hire them at the ninth or eleventh hour. And therefore, not to discourage any, but to awaken all, be it remembered, that *now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation*: and, if we will hear his voice, it must be *to-day*."—Henry.

Verse 8. *When even was come*—Then, as usual, the day-labourers are called and paid. Faithful labourers shall receive a portion of their reward when they die. It is deferred till then, that they may exercise patience in waiting for it; but no longer. As soon as Paul, that faithful labourer, departs, he is *with Christ*. The general time of reckoning, indeed, and the full payment, will be after the resurrection, in the evening of the world. Then *every one will receive according to the deeds done in the body*. When time ends, and with it the world, then the state of retribution commenceth. Then it will be said, *Call the labourers, and give them their hire*. Observe, reader, ministers call them into the vineyard to do their work; death calls out of it to receive their penny: and to those to whom the call into the vineyard is effectual, the call out of it will be joyful. Observe again, they did not come for their pay till they were called: we must with patience wait God's time for our rest and recompense.

Verse 9. *They that were hired about the eleventh hour*—Either the Gentiles, who were called long after the Jews into the vineyard, the Church of Christ; or those in every age who did not hear, or at least understand and obey, the gospel call, till their day of life was drawing to a period. Some circumstances of the parable seem best to suit the former, some the latter of these senses. All, whether of Jewish or Gentile race, on believing in Jesus, with their *hearts unto righteousness*, are admitted to the same gospel blessings of justification, adoption, regeneration, and communion with God on earth; (which, perhaps, may be first and principally intended by the *penny a day*, given to all that obey the call of God's messengers, and enter the vineyard;) and all that by a *patient continuance in well-doing*, after their justification, *seek for glory, honour, and immortality*, shall undoubtedly obtain eternal life, Rom. ii. 7; not indeed as wages for the value of their work, but as the gift of God. Though there be degrees of glory in heaven, yet it will be to all a complete happiness. They that come from the east and the west, and so come in late, that are taken from the highways and the hedges, yet shall sit down with Abraham, &c., at the same feast, Matt.

A. M. 4037. the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.
A. D. 33.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house,

12 Saying, These last ^a have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

^a Or, *have continued one hour only.*—^b Rom. ix. 21.—^c Deut. xv. 9; Prov. xxiii. 6; Chap. vi. 23.

viii. 11. Every vessel will be full, though every vessel be not alike large and capacious. The giving of a whole day's wages to those that had not done the tenth part of a day's work, is designed to show that God distributes his rewards by grace, and not of debt.

Verses 10-12. *When the first came, they supposed that they should have received more*—The first, here seems to mean the Jews, who always supposed that they should, in every thing, be preferred before the Gentiles, and were provoked to jealousy by the admission of the Gentiles into the gospel church, and to the free enjoyment of the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, which they considered as being confined to their nation. As the elder brother, in the parable of the prodigal, repined at the reception of the younger brother, and complained of his father's generosity to him; so these labourers first called in, found fault with their master, not because they had not enough, but because others were made equal to them. *Thou, say they, hast made them equal to us*—So indeed St. Peter says, Acts xv. 9, *God hath put no difference between us (Jews) and them, (Gentiles), purifying their hearts by faith.* And not only are believing Gentiles admitted to equal privileges with believing Jews in the Christian Church on earth, but those who become equally holy here, whenever they were called, will be equally happy hereafter. *Who have borne the burden, &c.*—Who have long toiled under the grievous yoke of the ceremonial law, obeyed its numerous precepts, and performed the various difficult duties and services required by it: fitly expressed by *bearing the burden and heat of the day.*

Verses 13-15. *And he answered one of them*—Who spoke in the name of the rest; *Friend, I do thee no wrong*—It is most apparent that I do not, in any degree, injure thee or any of thy companions. *Didst thou not agree with me for a penny?*—Didst thou not consent to obey the gospel, to enter the vineyard of the gospel church, and work diligently therein, on condition that thou wast admitted to a share of the blessings of it here, and to eternal life hereafter? If thou hast received what thou didst agree for, thou hast no reason to cry out of wrong. Though God is a debtor to none, yet he is graciously pleased to make himself a debtor by his own pro-

13 But he answered one of them, A. M. 4037. and said, Friend, I do thee no ^{A. D. 33.} wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take *that thine is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15 ^a Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? ^b Is thine eye evil because I am good?

16 ^c So the last shall be first, and the first last: ^d for many be called, but few chosen.

^c Chap. xix. 30.—^d Chap. xxii. 14.

mise; for the benefit of which, through Christ, believers agree with him, and he will stand to his part of the agreement. *Take that thine is, and go thy way*—If we were to understand this of that which is ours by debt or absolute property, it would be a dreadful word; we should be all undone, if we should be put off with that only which we could call our own. The highest creature must go away into nothing, if he must go away with that only which is his own. But understood, as it ought to be, of that which is ours by gift, the free gift of God, it teacheth us to be content with such things as we have; and, instead of repining that we have not more, to take what we have and be thankful. If God be better in any respect to others than to us, yet we have no reason to complain, while he is so much better to us than we deserve, in giving us our penny, though we are *unprofitable servants*. *I will give unto this last*—That is, last called, namely, among the heathen; *even as unto thee*—First called, namely, among the Jews, yea, and unto the last converted publicans and sinners, even as to those who were called long before. Observe, reader, the unchangableness of God's purposes in dispensing his gifts should silence our murmurings. It is not for us to gainsay what he does; *and is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*—Yea, doubtless, to give either to Jew or Gentile a reward infinitely greater than he deserves. But can it be inferred from hence, that it is lawful or possible for the merciful Father of spirits to

“Consign an unborn soul to hell;
Or damn him in his mother's womb!”

Is thine eye evil because I am good?—Art thou envious because I am gracious? Here is an evident reference to that malignant aspect which is generally the attendant of a selfish and envious temper.

Verse 16. *So the last shall be first, and the first last*—The Gentiles last called, and last in advantages and privileges, not having been favoured in that respect as the Jews were, and despised and looked down upon with contempt by the Jews; *shall be first*—Shall more readily, and in far greater numbers, embrace the gospel than the Jews, and shall far exceed them in knowledge and wisdom, holiness and usefulness, and make abundantly greater progress than they in true religion. *And many, whether Jews or*

A. M. 4037. 17 ¶ • And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

18 † Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 † And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

20 ¶ *^h Then came to him the mother of † Zebedee's children, with her sons, worship-

* Mark x. 23; Luke xviii. 31; John xii. 12.—† Chap. xvi. 21. ‡ Chapter xxvii. 2; Mark xv. 1, 16, &c.; Luke xxiii. 1; John xviii. 28, &c.; Acts iii. 13.—* St. James's Day, gospel, verse 20 to verse 29.

Gentiles, that were called long after others, and even late in life, yet being more zealous and diligent in the use of means, and in the exercise of every grace and virtue, and the employment of every talent intrusted with them, shall, in every branch of godliness and righteousness, far excel others who set out in the ways of God long before them. See note on chap. xix. 30. *For many be called*—Even all who hear the gospel, whether Jews or Gentiles; *but few chosen*—Only those who obey it; and even many who do for a time obey it, and that in reality, and are therefore, *ὀ κλητοι, the called of Jesus Christ*, Rom. i. 6; yet not persevering to give diligence to make their *calling and election sure*, by adding to their faith every grace, as directed by St. Peter, 2d Epist. i. 5-10, are not finally chosen to everlasting life, but excluded the marriage-feast for want of a wedding-garment: *for without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, and only he that is *faithful unto death shall receive the crown of life*. It seems necessary, before we dismiss this parable, to caution the reader against concluding, from any part of its contents, that the rewards to be conferred after death, or at the day of judgment, will be equal in all that receive them. For this would be to make the parable contradict a vast variety of the plainest passages of the New Testament, which assure us, in the most positive manner, that when our *Lord cometh, his reward is with him, to give unto every man according as his work shall be*, that is, in proportion to the degree of the inward and outward holiness which he had attained in the days of his flesh, and according to the efforts he had made and the diligence he had used to glorify God, and serve his generation in obedience to the divine will: and according to the sufferings which he had patiently endured. For, *as one star differeth from another star in glory, so shall it be with the saints at the resurrection of the dead*.

Verses 17-19. *Jesus took the twelve disciples apart in the way*—See note on Mark x. 32-34. *And said, The Son of man shall be betrayed, &c.*—This is the sixth time that Jesus foretold his own sufferings; see John ii. 19, 21; Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 12, 22, 23; Luke xvii. 25; and the fifth time that he

ping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons ^k may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of ^l the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the ^m baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, ⁿ Ye shall drink

^h Mark x. 35.—† Chap. iv. 21.—‡ Chap. xix. 28.—§ Chap. xxvi. 39, 42; Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42; John xviii. 11. ^m Luke xii. 50.—* Acts xii. 2; Rom. viii. 17; 2 Cor. i. 7; Rev. i. 9.

foretold his resurrection. And the particular manner in which he signifies how he should suffer; that the Jews should *mock him*, as if he were a fool; *scourge him*, as if he were a knave; *spit upon him*, (Mark x. 34,) to express their abhorrence of him as a blasphemer; and crucify him as a criminal slave, is a "remarkable proof of the extraordinary measure of the prophetic spirit which dwelt in him. For, humanly speaking, it was much more probable that he should have been privately assassinated, or stoned, as was before attempted, by some zealous transport of popular fury, than that he should have been thus solemnly condemned, and delivered up to crucifixion; a Roman punishment, with which we do not find that he had ever been threatened. Indeed, when the Jews condemned him for blasphemy, for which the punishment appointed in the law was stoning; and Pilate, at last, gave them a general permission to take him, and judge him according to their own law, (John xviii. 31; and xix. 7,) it is wonderful they did not choose to stone him; but *all this was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled*."—Doddridge.

Verses 20-23. *Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children*—Instigated, it seems, by them. See Mark x. 35. *With her sons*—James and John; *worshipping him*—That is, falling down before him; and *desiring a certain thing of him, &c.*—Considering what he had just been speaking, was ever any thing more unseasonable? See also chap. xviii. 1; Mark ix. 34; where a similar spirit of ambition manifested itself among the disciples on a similar occasion, Christ having then also just foretold his sufferings. *Grant that these my two sons may sit, &c., in thy kingdom*—Still they expected a temporal kingdom. Jesus answered, *Ye know not what ye ask*—Ye are not aware what is implied in being advanced in my kingdom, and what is necessarily prerequisites in order thereto. All who share in my kingdom must first share in my sufferings. Are you able and willing to do this? Both the expressions here used, the *cup* and the *baptism*, are to be understood of his sufferings and death. The like expressions were common among the Jews.

A. M. 4037. indeed of my cup, and be baptized
A. D. 33.

with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 ^p And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, 'Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but 'whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 ^a And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 ^a Even as the ^a Son of man came not to be ministered unto, ^a but to minister, and ^b to give his life a ransom ^a for many.

^o Chap. xxv. 34.—^p Mark x. 41; Luke xxii. 24, 25.—^q 1 Pet. v. 3.—^r Ch. xxiii. 11; Mark ix. 35; x. 43.—^s Ch. xviii. 4. 'John xiii. 4.—^t Phil. ii. 7.—^u Luke xxii. 27; John xiii. 14.

They say unto him, We are able—Not knowing, it appears, what they said. *And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup*—Accordingly it is observable, that this James was the first of all the apostles who suffered martyrdom for Christ, Acts xii. 2; and John was scourged by the Jews, Acts v. 40; and afterward banished by Domitian into the isle of Patmos, where he speaks of himself as a *companion in Christ's tribulation*: (Rev. i. 9:) not to mention Tertullian's tradition, that at Rome he was plunged into boiling oil; by which, it is said, instead of being destroyed, he was sensibly refreshed; nor what the pretended Prochorus says of the attempts made by some heretics to poison him, which is generally referred to in the pictures of this apostle, where the venom is ridiculously represented as coming out of the cup, in the form of a serpent, to signify, that the poison did not take effect."—Dodridge. *To sit on my right hand, &c., is not mine to give; but it shall be given, &c.*—These words, *but it shall be given*, are not in the original, but are supplied, and that unnecessarily, by our translators. The original words, *ουκ εστιν εμου δενασι, αλλα οις ητοιμασαυ*, should be rendered, *It is not mine to give, unless to them for whom it is prepared of my Father; αλλα* being here put for *ει μιν*, as it is also Mark ix. 8. That is, I can give the chief places in my kingdom to none but to those who, according to the immutable laws of my Father, are capable of occupying them. He applies to the glories of heaven what his disciples were so stupid as to understand of the glories of earth: but he does not deny that these are his to give. They are his to give in the strictest propriety, both as God, and as the Son of man. See John x. 28; Luke xxii. 29. He only asserts, that he gives them to none but

29 ¶ ^a And as they departed from A. M. 4037.
Jericho, a great multitude followed ^a A. D. 33.
him.

30 And behold, ^b two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I should do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

^v Isa. liiii. 10, 11; Dan. ix. 24, 26; John xi. 51, 52; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 19.—^w Chap. xxvi. 28; Rom. v. 15, 19; Heb. ix. 28.—^x Mark x. 46; Luke xviii. 35.—^y Ch. ix. 27.

those for whom they are originally prepared, namely, these glories, to those who endure to the end in *the faith that worketh by love*, and the chief places to them who are most eminent for their graces, according to the unalterable laws of the divine administration.

Verses 24–28. *And when the ten heard it*—It is likely they overheard the conversation; *they were moved with indignation*—Being not only equally desirous, but in their opinion equally deserving of the principal posts, they took it exceedingly amiss that Zebedee's sons should have been so arrogant, and, it seems, expressed their resentment in words. *But Jesus called them unto him, &c.*—Jesus, being solicitous to cure that pride which made some of them ambitious and others jealous, called them unto him, and told them that his kingdom was not, as they imagined, of the same nature with the kingdoms of this world; and that the greatness of his disciples was not like the greatness of secular princes, which consists in reigning over others with absolute and despotic sway; but that the greatness of his disciples would consist in doing men all the good they possibly could by a continued course of humble laborious services, in imitation of their Master, whose greatness consisted, not in being ministered to by men, but in ministering to them as a servant, by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, instructing the ignorant, and laying down his life a ransom for the sins of many. This being the highest dignity in Christ's kingdom, he might well tell the two brothers that they did not know what they were asking, when they begged the honour of filling the highest station in it. See Macknight.

Verse 29. *And as they departed from Jericho—As he went out of Jericho with his disciples, (Mark,)*

behold two blind men—Mark and Luke mention only one of them, *blind Bartimeus*, who, it seems, was far the more eminent of the two, and spoke for both. These blind men, hearing the multitude pass by, asked what it meant, (Luke xviii. 36,) and being told that Jesus of Nazareth passed by, they cried, saying, *Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. The multitude rebuked them, because, &c.—*

The original words in this place, *επετιμασαν αυτοις να σιωπησωσιν*, should rather be rendered, *charged them to hold their peace*—And so they will rebuke and charge all who begin to cry after the son of David: but let all those who feel their need of him, and want help from him, imitate these blind men, and cry the more, otherwise they will fall short of cure.

CHAPTER XXI.

This chapter brings us to the last week of Christ's life. (1.) He enters Jerusalem in triumph, amid the loud acclamations of the people, 1-11. (2.) As the head of the church, he again expels the buyers and sellers from the temple, 12-16. (3.) In causing the barren fig-tree to wither by his word, he showed what would quickly happen to the Jewish Church and nation, 17-22. (4.) He justifies his own authority by appealing to the baptism of John, which his enemies did not dare to say was of human origin, 23-27. (5.) He exposes the infidelity and impence of the chief priests and elders by the repentance of the publicans, illustrated in the parable of the two sons, 28-32. (6.) He foretels the dreadful doom of the Jewish Church, for its unfruitfulness, in the parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, 33-46.

A. M. 4037. AND *a when they drew nigh unto A. D. 33. Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto ^b the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me.

3 And if any man say aught unto A. M. 4037. you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need A. D. 33. of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5 ° Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

* First Sunday Advent, gospel, verse 1 to verse 14.—^a Mark xi. 1; Luke xix. 29.

^b Zechariah xiv. 4.—^c Isaiah lxvii. 11; Zechariah ix. 9; John xii. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXI.

Verses 1-3. *And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem*—Namely, on the first day of the week, five days before his death, for the passover was kept on the fourteenth day of the month, and this was the tenth; on which day the law appointed that the paschal-lamb should be taken up, Exod. xii. 3, and set apart for that service: on that day therefore Christ our passover, who was to be sacrificed for us, was publicly shown. So that this was the prologue to his passion. *And were come to Bethphage*—Mark says, *and Bethany. Then sent Jesus two disciples, saying, Go into the village over against you*—This, as the Arabian geographer informs us, was a little village two miles distant from the mount of Olives, toward the south. *And straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her*—As Mark and Luke say that *the colt was tied*, the words of Matthew contain an ellipsis, which must be supplied thus, *and a colt bound with her*. It must be observed, also, that the other evangelists make mention only of the colt, because our Lord sat on him only. See note on verse 7. Here we have “a wonderful instance of Christ's prescience in very minute matters. He says, 1, You shall find a colt: 2, On which no man ever sat: 3, Bound with his mother: 4, In a place where two ways meet, Mark xi. 4: 5, As you enter into the village: 6, The owners of which shall at first seem unwilling that you should

unbind him: 7, But when they hear the Lord hath need of him, they will let him go.”—Whitby.

Verses 4, 5. *All this was done, &c.*—*να πληρωθη το ρηθεν δια τω προφητη, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled*, that is, not only hereby the words of the prophet were fulfilled, but our Lord directed this to be done, that they might be fulfilled. As the prophets looked forward to him, and all bore witness to him; so he looked back upon them, that all things which were written of the Messiah might be punctually accomplished in him. *Tell ye the daughter of Zion*—That is, Jerusalem, so called from mount Zion, which was in the city, and on which was erected a fortress for its defence. This poetical manner of personifying the cities and countries, to which they addressed themselves, was familiar to the prophets. The first words of the passage are cited from Isa. lxii. 11, the rest from Zech. ix. 9. The ancient Jewish doctors were wont to apply these prophecies to the Messiah. *On an ass*—The Prince of peace did not take a horse, a warlike animal: but he will ride on that by and by, Rev. xix. 11. In the patriarchal ages, illustrious persons thought it no disgrace to make use of this animal: but it by no means appears that this opinion prevailed, or this custom continued, till the reign of Tiberius. Was it a mean attitude wherein our Lord then appeared? mean even to contempt? We grant it: we glory in it: it is for the comfort of our souls, for the

A. M. 4037. 6 ^d And the disciples went, and did
A. D. 33. as Jesus commanded them,

7 And brought the ass and the colt, and ^e put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; ^f others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

^d Mark xi. 4.—^e 2 Kings ix. 13.—^f Lev. xxiii. 40; John xii. 13.—^g Psa. cxviii. 25.—^h Psa. cxviii. 26; Chap. xxiii. 39.

honour of his humility, and for the utter confusion of all worldly pomp and grandeur. *Upon an ass, and a colt, &c.*—"From the other evangelists it would appear that our Lord rode only on the colt; from this passage we should be apt to think that both had been used. But it is not unusual with the sacred authors, when either the nature of the thing spoken of, or the attendant circumstances are sufficient for precluding mistakes, to employ the plural number for the singular."—Campbell.

Verses 6-8. *The disciples went, &c.*—(and found even as he had said unto them, Luke,) found his prediction exactly true. And how convincing must this have been of the divine mission of Jesus, not only to the two disciples that were sent, but to every unprejudiced person in that great multitude who were witnesses to his uttering the prediction, and saw the disciples bring the ass and the colt, and heard their testimony, that they had found every thing as Christ had foretold. This was another remarkable instance, like that recorded chapter xvii. 27; where see the note. *And brought the ass, &c., and put on them their clothes—Ta uvaria, their mantles.*—Campbell. *And set him thereon*—That is, on the clothes, which were spread upon the colt instead of a saddle. For though the creature had never been used in riding before, it was perfectly tame on this occasion. *A very great multitude spread their garments, &c.*—The multitude which attended him on this journey had increased prodigiously as he advanced toward Jerusalem, and he did not now shun them, as he had always done on former occasions. "The people were to honour him with the title of Messiah publicly, that he might have an opportunity of accepting that august name in the most avowed manner, before he ascended into heaven. Moreover, the priests, who had issued out a proclamation against him, (John xi. 57,) were to be awed, at least, for a while, and restrained from offering him violence. For as he had doctrines to teach, rebukes to give, and other things to do, that would not fail to incense those proud rulers, without doubt they would have put him to death prematurely, had not the people appeared on his side." Now, it seems, when this great multitude saw him mounted, they immediately bethought themselves of showing him the honours which kings were wont to receive at their creation; (see 2 Kings ix. 15;) and in their triumphal entries into their capital

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, ^g Hosanna to the son of David: ^h Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

10 ⁱ And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus ^k the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

ⁱ Mark xi. 15; Luke xix. 45; John ii. 13, 15.—^k Chap. ii. 23; Luke vii. 16; John vi. 14; vii. 40; ix. 17.

cities. For as they all firmly believed that he would take the reins of government into his own hands at this passover, they had a mind to make his entry into Jerusalem have the air of a triumph. Accordingly some *spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches of the trees, and strewed them in the way*—Carrying the larger sort on high in procession before the Messiah, as demonstrations of their joy.

Verses 9-11. *And the multitude that went before, and that followed*—In this triumphal procession, *cried, saying*—Probably from a divine impulse; for certainly most of them understood not the words they uttered, *Hosanna—(Lord, save us,)* which was a solemn word in frequent use among the Jews. The meaning is, "We sing Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he, the Messiah, of the Lord. Save, thou that art in the highest heavens." Our Lord restrained all public tokens of honour from the people till now, lest the envy of his enemies should interrupt his preaching before the time. But this reason now ceasing, he suffered their acclamations, that they might be a public testimony against their wickedness, who, in four or five days after, cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. The expressions recorded by the other evangelists are somewhat different from these: but all of them were undoubtedly used by some or others of the multitude. *And all the city was moved*—Was in a great commotion at so uncommon an appearance, *saying, Who is this?*—That comes in all this pomp, and is attended with these high congratulations *And the multitude*—Namely, that came along with him, *said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth*—What a stumbling-block was this! If he was of Nazareth, he could not be the Messiah. But they who earnestly desired to know the truth would not stumble thereat: for, upon inquiry, (which such would not fail to make,) they would find, he was not of Nazareth, but Bethlehem. Thus Sion's king comes to Sion; and the daughter of Sion had notice of his coming long before; and yet he is not attended by the great ones of the country, nor met by the magistrates of the city in their formalities, as might have been expected. The keys of the city are not presented to him, nor is he conducted, as he ought to have been, with all possible ceremony, *to the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David, Psa. cxlii. 5.* Here is nothing of

A. M. 4037. 12 ¶¹ And Jesus went into the temple and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,

and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased, and the seats of them that sold doves,

13 And said unto them, It is written, ^a My house shall be called the house of prayer; ^o but ye have made it a den of thieves.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

15 ¶ And when the chief priests and scribes

A. M. 4037. and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,

16 And said unto him, Hearst thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, ^p Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

17 ¶ And he left them, and went out of the city into ^q Bethany; and he lodged there.

¹ Mark xi. 11; Luke xix. 45; John ii. 15.—^m Deut. xiv. 25.
^a Isa. lvi. 7.

^o Jer. vii. 11; Mark xi. 17; Luke xix. 46.—^p Psa. viii. 2.
^q Mark xi. 11; John xi. 18.

all this: yet he has his attendants; and those a very great multitude. But alas! they are only the common people (the rabble, we should have been apt to call them) that grace the solemnity of Christ's triumph. The chief priests and elders are not among them. We find them afterward, indeed, intermixed with the multitude that reviled him, when he hung on the cross, but none of them are here joining with the multitude that did him honour! Ye see, here, your calling, brethren; *not many mighty, or noble, attend on Christ; but the foolish things of the world, and base things, and things that are despised.* Such is what has been termed *the triumph of Christ!* But what sort of a triumph is it? Not like the triumphs of the potentates and conquerors of the world: but the triumph of humility, self-denial, meekness, and love, over the pride, vain glory, ambition, and selfishness of carnal and worldly-minded men.

Verses 12-14. *And Jesus went into the temple*—He did not go up to the court, or to the palace, though he came in as a king; but to the temple; for his kingdom is spiritual, and not of this world. It is in holy things that he rules, and in the temple of God that he exercises authority. *And cast out them that sold and bought*—Namely, doves and oxen for sacrifice. He had cast them out three years before, (John ii. 14,) bidding them *not make that house a house of merchandise*: upon the repetition of the offence, he uses sharper words; *In the temple*—That is, in the outer court of it, where the Gentiles used to worship. *The money-changers*—The exchangers of foreign money into current coin, which those who came from distant parts might want to offer for the service of the temple. *And said unto them*—As he turned them out, *It is written*—Namely, Isa. lvi. 7, *My house shall be called a house of prayer*—To all nations, Mark xi. 17. That is, a place to which they shall resort for the performance of religious worship: *but ye have made it a den of thieves*—A harbour of wicked men; a place where traffic is carried on by persons of the most infamous character, who live by deceit and oppression, and practise the vilest extortion, even in the house of the most righteous and blessed God. "Let it be observed, that the word rendered temple here,

is *τερον*, not *ναος*. By the latter word was meant properly *the house*, including only the vestibule, the holy place or sanctuary, and the most holy. Whereas the former comprehended all the courts. It was in the outermost court that this sort of traffic was exercised. For want of a name, in European languages, peculiar to each, these two are confounded in most modern translations. To the *ναος*, or temple, strictly so called, none of those people had access, not even our Lord himself, because not of the posterity of Aaron."—Campbell. *And the blind and lame*—Having heard of his arrival in the city, and requested their friends to lead them to the place where he was; *came to him in the temple, and he healed them*—In the presence of all the people. "Many such afflicted persons would, no doubt, be waiting in the several avenues of the temple to ask alms, at a time when there would be such a vast concourse of people: and there seems a peculiar propriety in our Lord's multiplying these astonishing miracles, both to vindicate the extraordinary act of authority he had just been performing, and to make this his last visit to Jerusalem as convincing as possible, that those who would not submit to him might be left so much the more inexcusable."—Doddridge.

Verses 15-17. *When the chief priests, &c., saw the wonderful things he did*—The undeniable and astonishing miracles which he performed, *and the children crying in the temple, and continuing the song which the multitude had begun, Hosanna to the son of David, they were sore displeased*—Inwardly vexed and filled with indignation. The works that Christ did recommended themselves to every man's conscience: if they had any sense, they could not but own the miracle of them; and if any good-nature, they could not but be in love with the mercy of them; yet, because they were resolved to oppose him, even for these works they envied and hated him. *And said, Hearst thou what these (the children) say?*—Insinuating that it was his duty to stop their mouths, by refusing the praises which they offered without understanding what they said. *Jesus saith, Yea; have ye never read*—Are you unacquainted with the Scriptures? You, that want the people to regard you as the great teachers of

A. M. 4037. 18 * Now in the morning, as he re-
A. D. 33. turned into the city, he hungered.

19 * And when he saw ¹ a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.

20 * And when the disciples saw it, they

* Mark xi. 12.—¹ Mark xi. 13.—¹ Gr. *one fig-tree*.
¹ Mark xi. 20.

marvelled, saying, How soon is the A. M. 4037.
fig-tree withered away! A. D. 33.

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, ² If ye have faith, and ² doubt not, ye shall not only do this, *which is done* to the fig-tree, ³ but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

² Chap. xvii. 20; Luke xvii. 6.—² James i. 6.
³ 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

God's law? *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise*—These words are quoted out of the eighth Psalm, and imply that, "though all men should be silent, God has no need of other heralds to proclaim his praise than infants, who hang at their mothers' breasts; because, notwithstanding they be dumb, the admirable providence of God, conspicuous in their preservation, is equal to the loudest and sublimest eloquence. And, by applying these words to the case in hand, Jesus signified that the meanest of God's works are so formed as to declare the greatness of his perfections; that as the Father does not refuse the praise which arises from the least of his creatures, so the Son did not disdain the praise which was offered him by children. In the present instance their praise was peculiarly acceptable, because it implied that his miracles were exceedingly illustrious, inasmuch as they led minds wherein there was nothing but the dawns of reason, to acknowledge his mission. The Messiah's praise, therefore, might, with remarkable propriety, be said, on this occasion, to have been perfected out of the mouths of babes and sucklings."—Macknight. But see the note on Psa. viii. 2; where the psalmist's words, here referred to, are explained at large. *And he left them*—Namely, when the evening was come, both in prudence, lest they should have seized him before his hour was come, and in justice, because they had forfeited the favour of his presence: he left them as incorrigible. *And went out of the city*—Privately, with none to attend him but the twelve; to Bethany—Where the resurrection of Lazarus had procured him friends, among whom he was always in safety.

Verses 18–22. *In the morning, as he returned, he hungered*—For, being a man, he was subject to all the innocent infirmities of our nature, and he had come out from Bethany early without eating any thing: *And when he saw a fig-tree* (Gr. *σκην μων, a single fig-tree*) *in the way*—Having a fine spread of leaves upon it, and therefore appearing to be one of the earlier kind; *he came to it*—In expectation of finding figs thereon, for the season of gathering them was not yet come, Mark xi. 12; *and found nothing but leaves only*—By which it plainly appeared that, though it looked so beautiful, it was a barren tree. Thus Christ's just expectations from flourishing professors are often disappointed; he comes to many seeking fruit, and finds leaves only: they have *a name to live, but are dead*. And he said,

Let no fruit grow on thee for ever—As thou art now fruitless, continue always so. Thus the sin of hypocrites and unfruitful professors is made their punishment; they would not bring forth the fruits of righteousness, and therefore they shall not bring them forth. *And presently the fig-tree withered away*—That is, began to wither away. This, like many other of our Lord's actions, was emblematical. It signified that the curse of God would thus wither and destroy the Jewish nation, which he had before compared to a barren fig-tree; Luke xiii. 6–9. *And when the disciples saw it*—As they went by the next day, Mark xi. 20, *they marvelled, saying, How soon, &c.*—They were astonished to see it withered down to the roots in the space of one day. *Jesus answered, If ye have faith, and doubt not*—So the same word *διακρινομαι* is rendered James i. 6, and so it doubtless frequently signifies; but Dr. Whitby proposes rendering it here, *do not discriminate, or put a difference*: as if our Lord had said, "If you have such a faith as puts no difference between things you can, and things you cannot do, but makes you fully persuaded you can do any thing which tends to the glory of God, and is requisite for the promotion of the Christian faith, you shall be able to perform the most difficult things; which is the meaning of the phrase, *to remove mountains*." Thus we learn that one great end of our Lord in this miracle was, to confirm and increase the faith of his disciples: another was, to warn them against unfruitfulness. *And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer*—All things that God in his word authorizes you to ask, as being for your real profit, or that of others, and for God's glory, and therefore according to his will, 1 John v. 14; *ye shall receive*—"Nothing shall be too hard which God hath promised, and ye by faith and prayer are fit to receive." So Baxter. "Faith is the soul, prayer is the body; both together make a complete man for any service. Faith, if it be right, will excite prayer, and prayer is not right if it do not spring from faith. This is the condition of our receiving; we must ask in prayer, believing: the requests of prayer shall not be denied: the expectations of faith shall not be frustrated. We have many promises to this purpose from the mouth of our Lord Jesus, and all to encourage faith, the principal grace, and prayer, the principal duty of a Christian. It is but, ask and have; believe and receive; and what would we more?" So Henry.

A. M. 4037. 22 And ^a all things, whatsoever ye
A. D. 33. shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

23 ¶ ^a And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and ^b said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say,

From heaven; he will say unto us, A. M. 4037.
Why did ye not then believe him? A. D. 33.

26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people: ^c for all hold John as a prophet.

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 ¶ But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not.

^a Chap. vii. 7; Mark xi. 24; Luke xi. 9; James v. 15; 1 John iii. 22; v. 14.—^b Mark xi. 27; Luke xx. 1.

^b Exod. ii. 14; Acts iv. 7; vii. 27.—^c Chap. xiv. 5; Mark vi. 20; Luke xx. 6.

Verses 23-27. *When he was come into the temple, the chief priests came*—Who thought he violated their right: *And the elders of the people*—Probably, members of the sanhedrim, to whom that title most properly belonged: which is the more probable, as they were the persons under whose cognizance the late action of Christ, in purging the temple, would naturally fall. These, with the chief priests, seem purposely to have appeared in a considerable company, to give the more weight to what they said, and, if need were, to bear a united testimony against him. *As he was teaching*—Which also they supposed he had no authority to do, being neither priest, nor Levite, nor scribe. Some of the priests, (though not as priests,) and all the scribes, were authorized teachers. *By what authority doest thou these things*—Publicly teach the people? And drive out those who had our commission to traffic in the outer court? *Jesus answered, I also will ask you one thing*—Who have asked me many: *The baptism*—That is, the whole ministry; *of John, whence was it?*—Whence had he his commission? *from heaven, or of men?*—Did God or man give him his authority to act and teach? This question reduced the priests and elders to an inextricable dilemma: *and they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven, &c.*—They considered, on the one hand, that if they should acknowledge John's mission to be from God, it would oblige them to acknowledge Christ's authority; John having more than once borne testimony to him as the Messiah. On the other hand, if they denied John's divine mission, they did not know but the people, who stood listening to Jesus, would stone them; for they generally believed John to have been a prophet, many of them had submitted to his baptism, and at present not a few held him in high esteem on Christ's account. Wherefore, as matters stood, they judged it safest to answer that they could not tell whence John's baptism was. *And he said, Neither tell I you*—That is, not again in express terms: he had often told them before,

and they would not believe him. Thus, by the question which he put to them, he obliged them to confess that they had not been able to pass any judgment upon John the Baptist, notwithstanding he claimed the character of a messenger from God, and they had sent to examine his pretensions. This in effect was to acknowledge themselves incapable of judging of any prophet whatsoever. "Ye are come," said he, "to inquire into the proofs of my mission. I agree to submit myself to your examination, on condition that you tell me what your determination was concerning John. Was he a true or a false prophet? You say you do not know. But if you were not able to form a judgment concerning John, how can you take upon you to judge me?" In this light our Lord's question, in answer to theirs, appears to have been formed with the greatest wisdom; because, whether the priests replied in the affirmative or in the negative, or gave no reply at all, they absolutely condemned themselves. See Macknight.

Verses 28-32. *But what think ye*—As if he had said, You have evaded a direct answer to my question concerning the baptism of John, and have acknowledged your ignorance whence it was; but what think you of your own conduct in these circumstances? and of all the high professions you make of an extraordinary reverence for God, and zeal in his service? I will plainly tell you my judgment of it, which is very naturally connected with the present subject. This our Lord does in two parables, in the former of which, by a question which he puts to them, he makes them condemn themselves. *A certain man had two sons*—Signifying two sorts of persons: some that prove better than they promise, represented by the former of these sons; others that promise better than they prove, represented by the latter. *And he came to the first*—Exhibiting the disobedient, profligate, and wicked Jews, and open sinners of all descriptions, who, though they neither professed nor promised to do

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. 31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him:

• Luke vii. 29, 30.—^f Chap. iii. 1, &c.—^g Luke iii. 12, 13.

the will of God, nor gave any reason to hope well concerning them, yet afterward being convinced of sin, and brought to repentance by the preaching of John the Baptist and Christ, turned from their sins, and sincerely embraced the gospel. The spirit and conduct of the second son was an exact picture of the temper and behaviour of the Pharisees; for in their prayers and praises they gave God the most honourable titles, and professed the greatest readiness and zeal in his service: but it was a bare profession, contradicted by all their actions. They said, *I go, sir, to work in thy vineyard, but went not.* Jesus having finished his parable, asked, *Whether of them twain did the will of his Father?*—Without hesitation, they replied, *The first*—Not perceiving that by this answer they condemned themselves, till Jesus, making a direct application of the parable, gave them that sharp but just rebuke; *Verily I say unto you*—Even the most abandoned sinners of the age, such as the publicans and harlots, go into the kingdom of God before you—Are much more open to conviction, and more readily obey the gospel than you. *For John came unto you in the way of righteousness*—Walking in it as well as teaching it, and gave evident proofs of his mission from God; *and ye believed him not*—Gave no credit to the testimony which he bare to me, nor received his doctrine, and consequently would not enter the vineyard: *but the publicans and harlots*—The most notorious sinners; *believed him*—Were reformed, and obeyed the gospel, though at first they said, *I will not.* *And ye, when ye had seen it*—And could not deny that an amazing change had been wrought in them, and that persons of the most abandoned characters had been reformed by his sermons, which doubtless was a strong proof of his mission from God; *yet repented not afterward*—Of your opposition to that holy man, nor of your disobedience to his instructions; *That ye might believe him*—And therefore I solemnly warn you, (for so his words imply,) that your condition will hereafter be worse than theirs; and that you shall see those whom you now despise and abhor, entering into the glory from which you shall be excluded.

Verse 33. *Hear another parable*—In which you are very nearly concerned, as your own consciences must quickly tell you. In the preceding parable of the two sons, our Lord convicted the Pharisees, the chief priests, and elders, of absolute dis-

and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

33 ¶ Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

^h Psa. lxxx. 9; Cant. viii. 11; Isa. v. 1; Jer. ii. 21; Mark xii. 1; Luke xx. 9.—ⁱ Chap. xxv. 14, 15.

obedience to God, their heavenly Father, notwithstanding all their fair speeches and smooth promises: here he rises upon them, and shows them, as in a glass, the high privileges they enjoyed; and their exceeding great ingratitude, that, if possible, he might awaken their souls, and disarm them of the horrid purpose they had already conceived of murdering him, the true heir of the vineyard whereof they were such unfaithful husbandmen. And indeed they must have proceeded to great lengths in iniquity, and have hardened their hearts above measure, who could go on in their black design of destroying Jesus, after he had thus plainly shown them his knowledge of their design, and laid open their devices, and the dreadful consequences thereof to themselves, to the justice of which they had subscribed with their own lips. *There was a certain householder*—Or, *master of a family*, representing God, the proprietor of all; *which planted a vineyard*—The Jewish Church planted in Canaan, represented also as a vineyard, Isa. v. 1-4, in a parable on which this of our Lord seems to be founded; see the notes there. There could not be a more natural emblem of the church, or one more familiar and obvious for the prophets and our Lord to use in Judea, than that of a vineyard; as that country abounded with vineyards, and so gave the people constant occasion, by having them always before their eyes, to recollect and apply the spiritual instructions drawn from them. And the comparison was not only obvious, but natural: and the particulars, whereof our Lord and the prophets speak, as they are essential to a vineyard, so do they beautifully correspond to the essential blessings vouchsafed of God to the Jewish Church. 1st, It is necessary that a vineyard should be planted, for vines are not anywhere the natural produce of the soil. Our Lord, therefore, mentions this particular first. 2d, Vines being tender plants, and vineyards subject to the incursions of beasts and enemies, it is necessary they should be enclosed. Therefore it is here observed that this vineyard was hedged round about; namely, by the divine protection, which was as a wall of fire round the Jewish Church and people, whereby he enclosed and defended them from all their enemies. But a hedge is not only for defence, but for the distinction and separation of property; and so God distinguished and separated his church by the fence of circumcision, and the ceremonial

A. M. 4037. 34 And when the time of the fruit
A. D. 33. drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, ^kthat they might receive the fruits of it.

35 ^lAnd the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

^k Cant. viii. 11, 12.—^l 2 Chron. xxiv. 21; xxxvi. 16; Neh. ix. 26; Chap. v. 12; xxiii. 34, 37; Acts vii. 52; 1 Thess. ii. 15; Heb. xi. 36, 37.—^m Psa. ii. 8; Heb. i. 2.

law, which were what St. Paul calls the partition wall, which was broken down and taken away in Christ, who yet has appointed a gospel order and discipline to be the hedge round about his church. 3d, A vineyard, being thus *planted* and *fenced*, must be provided with a place for the cultivator's reception and dwelling; and for the gathering in and receiving of the fruit. Accordingly this householder *built a tower* for the former purpose, and prepared a *wine-press* for the latter. So God provided for his ancient church a tabernacle first, and then a temple, wherein the cultivators of his vineyard might dwell and watch continually, (for the priests are the Lord's watchmen,) where also he himself promised to dwell, and give them the tokens of his presence among them, and pleasure in them: and in this temple he set up his holy altar, which, as the wine-press flowed with the blood of the grape, was to flow continually with the blood of the sacrifices, the fruits of their obedience, the testimonies of their faith, and then truly acceptable when offered up in faith of the great Sacrifice, whose blood all the blood shed in sacrifices prefigured, and who was himself trodden in the *wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*. The next clause, *And let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country*, signifies no more than that God, having established and provided his vineyard with all things necessary to render it fruitful to his praise, committed the care and cultivation of it to the priests and elders, the ecclesiastical and civil rulers, by whose ministry the people were to be instructed and governed, without expecting such extraordinary marks of God's constant presence and immediate direction as appeared at his forming them into a church.

Verses 34-39. *And when the time of fruit drew near*—And a return was to be made to the proprietor from the profits of the vineyard, which was only let out to these husbandmen, that they might render to him duly the fruits agreed on, namely, those of gratitude, love, and obedience; *he sent his servants*—His extraordinary messengers, the prophets, to demand and receive those fruits; to instruct, exhort, and, when necessary, to reprove these occupiers of the vineyard. *And the husbandmen*—Far from rendering their Lord his due, *took his servants, beat one, killed another, &c.*—See notes on Mark xii. 3-5, where this branch of the parable is given more fully.

37 But last of all he sent unto ^{A. M. 4037.} them his son, saying, They will re- ^{A. D. 33.} verence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, ^mThis is the heir; ⁿcome, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 ^oAnd they caught *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

^a Psa. ii. 2; Chap. xxvi. 3; xxvii. 1; John xi. 53; Acts iv. 27. ^o Chap. xxvi. 50, &c.; Mark xiv. 16, &c.; Luke xxii. 54, &c.; John xviii. 12, &c.; Acts ii. 23.

The meaning is, that the Jewish priests and rulers, extremely irritated at the prophets for the freedom which they used in reproving their sins and exhorting them to a holy life, persecuted and slew them with unrelenting fury. *Again he sent other servants*—Though his servants were thus indignantly treated, the good lord of the vineyard being very long-suffering toward these husbandmen, and desirous of bringing them to a sense of their duty, instead of immediately punishing them for their ungrateful and rebellious proceedings, he sent other extraordinary messengers, *more in number than the first*. This seems to refer to the latter prophets and John the Baptist. But these met with no better treatment than the former from these ungrateful husbandmen. *They did unto them likewise*—Beat, stoned, and killed them. Who would wonder now if his patience and forbearance had been utterly wearied out, and if he had sent to destroy and remove these wicked husbandmen? But more abundant kindness still remained to be shown on his part, to aggravate their ingratitude, and to render this perverseness and cruelty utterly without excuse. *Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son*—Surely they must needs have some respect for him, and will not presume to offer him any injury. This is spoken after the manner of men: it does not mean that God supposed they would reverence him, but was mistaken. For numberless predictions in the Old and New Testaments plainly show that God foresaw, and therefore foretold how they would use him. But it implies that it might have been reasonably expected they would have revered him, considering the benevolent design on which he came, and the undeniable proofs which he gave of his divine mission, by his astonishing miracles, his heavenly doctrine, and most holy life. But alas! far from reverencing him, so inveterate in guilt and hardened in their crimes were they, that *when they saw him, they said, This is the heir, let us kill him*—And their impious combinations were attended with immediate resolves, and a speedy execution: *They caught him*—Gr. λαβοτες αυτον, *having seized him, they cast him out of the vineyard*—Utterly rejected his claim of being either the Messiah, or even a divine messenger, *and slew him*—In a most ignominious and cruel manner; thus filling up the measure of their

A. M. 4037. 40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

¶ Luke xx. 16.—^a Luke xxi. 24; Heb. ii. 3.—^b Acts xiii. 46; xv. 7; xviii. 6; xxviii. 28; Rom. ix. x; xi.—^c Psa. cxviii. 22; Isa. xxviii. 16; Mark xii. 10; Luke xx. 17; Acts iv. 11; Eph.

transgressions, and declaring themselves very monsters of iniquity. Thus, as in a glass, our Lord set forth the great ingratitude of the Jewish nation, and especially of the chief priests and rulers, and the long-suffering of God toward them, with whom he had intrusted his vineyard, and from whom he expected the fruits thereof. It is justly observed by Dr. Doddridge here, that if their saying, *This is the heir, come, let us kill him, &c.*, "would have been the height of folly, as well as wickedness in these husbandmen, it was so much the more proper to represent the part the Jewish rulers acted in the murder of Christ, which they were now projecting, and which they accomplished within three days. The admonition was most graciously given; but served only in an astonishing manner to illustrate that degree of hardness to which a sinful heart is capable of arriving." But some of these circumstances, like that of *seizing on the inheritance*, may have been added for the sake of completing the parable, without any design of expressing by them any particular part of the conduct of the Jews toward Christ.

Verses 40, 41. *When the Lord cometh*—Armed with a power which they will be utterly unable to resist, *What will he do unto these husbandmen*—Who had been so treacherous and cruel? With a view to their stronger conviction, he refers it to themselves to judge in this case. For God's proceedings are so unexceptionable, there needs only an appeal to sinners themselves concerning the equity of them. *They say*, (for how could they with any decency say otherwise?) *He will miserably destroy these wicked men*—*Κακῶς κακῶς ἀπολεσεῖ αὐτοῦς*, he will put those wretches to a wretched death: (So Campbell:) *and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen*. Thus, before they were aware, they condemned themselves, and signified that their privileges and blessings would be taken from them, the governors of their church and commonwealth destroyed, and the Gentiles taken to be God's people in their stead: an interpretation of the parable which our Lord immediately confirmed, Luke xx.

43 Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7.—^a Chap. viii. 12.—^b Isa. viii. 14, 15; Zech. xii. 3; Luke xx. 18; Rom. ix. 33; 1 Pet. ii. 8.—^c Isa. lx. 12; Dan. ii. 44.—^d Ver. 11; Luke vii. 16; John vii. 40.

16; when they replied with apparent seriousness, *God forbid*.

Verses 42, 43. *Jesus saith unto them*—Luke says, *εμβλέψας αὐτοῖς, εἶπε*, having looked on them, namely, with great compassion and solemnity in his countenance, he said, *Did ye never read*, or never reflect upon this remarkable passage in the Scriptures, *The stone which the builders refused, &c.*?—As if he had said, If the vineyard is not to be taken from you and given to others, what is the meaning of these words? Do they not plainly foretel that the Messiah shall be rejected by the Jewish great men, their teachers and rulers, the builders of their church and commonwealth, and that, though they put him to death, he shall become the head of the corner, or the head of the church? Now, what else is this but that he shall be believed on by the Gentiles, and unite them to the Church of God, as a head cornerstone unites the two sides of a building? *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous, &c.*—The rejection of the Messiah by the Jews, his reception among the Gentiles, and their admission into the church, are all very wonderful events, brought to pass by the singular providence of God. *Therefore*, because God himself has long ago expressly foretold that this judgment will happen to you; and because it is a most righteous and equitable judgment, I tell you plainly, *the kingdom of God*—Which you have thus vilely and ungratefully contemned and abused, *shall be taken from you, and given to a nation, &c.*—That is, the gospel of Christ shall be taken from you, and carried to the Gentiles, who will have more regard to the favour shown them, and improve it much better than you have done. It is justly observed by Dr. Campbell, "that this is one of the clearest predictions of the rejection of the Jews and of the call of the Gentiles, which we have in this history."

Verses 44–46. *Whosoever shall fall on this stone*—Which the builders have rejected, but which God will make the head of the corner; that is, whosoever shall stumble at me and my doctrine, while I am here on earth in this humble form; *shall be*

broken—Shall receive much damage. This is spoken in allusion to a person stumbling on a stone, thrown aside as useless; *but on whomsoever it shall fall*—When raised up to the head of the corner; *it will grind him to powder*—Like a brittle potsherd, crushed by the weight of some huge stone falling upon it from on high. So whosoever shall oppose me, after my exaltation to glory, and the outpouring of my Spirit, for the full revelation of my gospel, and proof of my mission, he will bring upon himself aggravated guilt, and dreadful, unavoidable destruction. Dr. Whitby thinks, that there is an allusion in these words to the two different ways of stoning among the Jews; the former by throwing a person down

upon a great stone, and the other by letting a stone fall upon him. But it seems more probable that the allusion is to Daniel ii. 34; where the destruction of all the opposers of the Messiah's kingdom is described in terms partly similar. See the notes there. "The chief priests, perceiving the drift of our Lord's parables, were highly incensed, and would gladly have apprehended him to punish him that moment, but they durst not. It is true, they were not afraid of God, who is the avenger of such crimes, but they were afraid of the people, who constantly crowded around Jesus in the temple, and had openly acknowledged him as their Messiah."—Macknight.

CHAPTER XXII.

Here, (1,) in the parable of the marriage-feast, is further set forth the unreasonable obstinacy and wickedness of the Jews in rejecting the gospel and persecuting God's messengers, and the destruction awaiting them, 1-7. (2,) The calling of the Gentiles, and their obeying the call, 8-10. (3,) The necessity of holiness in all that embrace the gospel, represented by the doom of the guest that had not on a wedding-garment, 11-14. (4,) Christ confounds the Pharisees and Herodians, who hoped to have insnared him by a question respecting the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cesar, 15-22. (5,) He proves the resurrection in opposition to the Sadducees, whose foolish objection against it he answers, 23-33. (6,) Discourses with a Pharisee concerning the first and great command of the law, 34-40. (7,) Questions the Pharisees concerning the Messiah's relation to David, 41-46.

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

AND * Jesus answered * and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

* Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 1 to

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXII.

Verse 1. *Jesus spake unto them again by parables*—That is, spake with reference to what had just passed: for this parable is closely connected with that of the vineyard, delivered at the close of the preceding chapter. And as our Lord had in that foretold the approaching ruin of the Jewish place and nation, he goes on in this to vindicate God's mercy and justice in the rejection of that people and the calling of the Gentiles; admonishing the latter, at the same time, of the necessity of holiness, and showing that if they remained destitute of it, they would meet with the same severity of judgment which had befallen the disobedient Jews.

Verses 2, 3. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king*—That is, the dispensation of the gospel may be well illustrated by that which happened in the case of a king; *who made a marriage for his son*—Our Lord is frequently represented in Scripture under the character of a bridegroom. The marriage-feast here spoken of is intended to signify the blessings of the gospel, which are set forth under the emblem of a feast in divers passages of Scripture, especially Isa. xxv. 6; and lv. 1, 2; Luke xiv. 16; where see the notes. *And sent forth his ser-*

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have

verse 15.—* Luke xiv. 16; Rev. xix. 7, 9.

vants—John the Baptist and the twelve, and the seventy sent forth during our Lord's lifetime; *to call them that were bidden*—Τες κεκλημεναι, *that had been before invited*—Namely, the Jews, who had been invited from the times of Moses, by the law and the prophets, to this long-expected marriage of the *Desire of all nations*; and to whom the first offers of grace and salvation through Christ were made, *to the wedding, or nuptial banquet*, as γαμος here properly signifies. *And they would not come*—They were so rude and foolish as to refuse complying with the invitation. By this their refusal, and by the reasons assigned for it, stated here and Luke xiv. 18, 19, is shown the rejection of the gospel by the Jews, and the carnal causes, not only of their, but of all men's, refusing to come unto the gospel-feast.

Verses 4, 5. *Again, he sent forth other servants*—The apostles and others, on whom the Holy Ghost descended on the day of pentecost, and who thereby received a fresh commission to call the Jews to repentance; *saying, Tell them which were bidden, I have prepared my dinner, &c.*—After Christ's resurrection and ascension, the apostles were sent forth to inform the Jews that the divine mission of Christ

A. M. 4037. prepared my dinner : ^b my oxen and
A. D. 33. *my fatlings are killed, and all things*
are ready : come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their
ways, one to his farm, another to his mer-
chandise :

6 And the remnant took his servants, and

^b Prov. ix. 2. -

was confirmed by his resurrection ; that sin was expiated by his death, and justification, peace with God, the influences of his Spirit, and all the other blessings of the gospel, procured for all who would accept them in the way of repentance, faith, and new obedience. *But they made light of it*—Namely, of the invitation to the marriage-feast, and of the feast itself to which they were invited ; that is, the privileges and blessings of the gospel of Christ. They viewed them as unimportant, and treated them with indifference and neglect. And yet they who did so were members of God's visible church, and professors of the true religion : they had been intrusted for ages with his oracles, which foretold the coming of the Messiah, described his character and office, his marriage with his church, and the marriage-feast. And they professed to believe in these oracles, and to expect and desire his coming. Observe, reader, making light of Christ, and of the salvation wrought out by him, is the chief cause of the ruin of many professors of religion. Multitudes perish eternally through mere carelessness, who have not any direct aversion to, or enmity against spiritual things, but a prevailing indifference and unconcern about them. *And went their ways, one to his farm, &c.*—Here we have the reason why they made light of the marriage-feast : they had other things to mind, in which they took more delight, and which they thought it more concerned them to mind. Thus it is still ; the business and profit of worldly employments prove with many a great hinderance to their embracing the blessings of the gospel. One must mind what he has ; another gain what he wants. The country people have their farms to look after, and the town's people must attend to their shops and trade, and must buy and sell and get gain. And it must be granted that both farmers and tradesfolk must be diligent in business ; but not so as to be thereby prevented from making religion their main business. *Licitis perimus omnes*, said the ancients. *We all perish by lawful things*, namely, when unlawfully used ; when we are so careful and troubled about many things, as to neglect the one thing needful.

Verse 6. *And the remnant*—Or the rest of them, who did not go to farms or merchandise, who were neither husbandmen nor tradesmen, but ecclesiastics ; namely, the scribes and Pharisees, and chief priests ; took [Gr. *καραναρες*, *laying hold on*] *his servants, entreated them spitefully* [or rather, *shamefully*,] *and slew them*—If it be objected that these circumstances of the parable are improbable,

entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was
wroth : and he sent forth ^o his armies, and de-
stroyed those murderers, and burned up their
city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wed-

^o Dan. ix. 36 ; Luke xix. 27.

as it was never known in the world that subjects refused the invitation of their sovereign to the marriage of his son ; and much less that any persons were ever so rude and barbarous as to treat with ignominy and slay the servants of a king, or of any superior, who came to invite them to a feast, it must be observed that, allowing this to be so, it only places the crime of the Jews in a more aggravated point of view, with respect to whom all this was literally true. They whose feet should have been beautiful, because they brought glad tidings of peace and salvation, were treated as *the offscouring of all things*, 1 Cor. iv. 13. The prophets, and John the Baptist, had been thus abused already, and the apostles and other ministers of Christ were to lay their account with being treated in the same manner. The Jews were, either directly or indirectly, agents in most of the persecutions of the first preachers of the gospel : witness the history of the Acts, and the Epistles of the apostles.

Verse 7. *And when the king heard thereof, he was wroth*—Inasmuch as “the invitation to the marriage-feast of his son, sent by this king to his supposed friends, was the highest expression of his regard for them, and the greatest honour that could be done to them ; therefore, when they refused it for such trifling reasons, and were so savagely ungrateful as to beat, and wound, and kill the servants who had come with it, it was justly viewed as a most outrageous affront, an injury that deserved the severest punishment.” Accordingly the king resented it exceedingly, *and sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, &c.*—This branch of the parable plainly predicted the destruction of the Jews by the Roman armies, called God's armies, because they were appointed by him to execute vengeance upon that once favourite, but now rebellious people. It is justly observed here by Dr. Doddridge, that “this clause must be supposed to come in by way of prolepsis, or anticipation ; for it is plain there could not be time before the feast already prepared was served up, to attempt an execution of this kind.”

Verses 8-10. *Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready*—That is, the marriage-feast is prepared ; *but they which were bidden were not worthy*—Were not disposed to receive the gospel, not willing to repent and believe, and behave kindly to the preachers of it : which is the description Christ gives to his apostles of those whom they were to account *αξιοι*, *worthy*, chap. x. 11-14. These here spoken of were *αμελησαντες*, (ver. 5.) slights, despisers of the spiritual banquet, out of love to their

A. M. 4037. ding is ready, but they which were
A. D. 33. bidden were not ^d worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and * gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good : and the wedding was furnished with guests.

⁴ Ch. x. 11, 13 ; Acts xiii. 46.—Ch. xiii. 38, 47.—^f 2 Cor.

secular interests ; they loved other things more than Christ and the blessings of his kingdom ; which he that doth, says Christ, *is not worthy of me*, because he will not take up his cross and follow me, chap. x. 37, 38. *Go ye therefore, &c.*—As if he had said, Yet let not the provisions I have made be lost ; but go into the highways, Gr. διεξόδους των οδων, the *byways*, or *turnings of the road* : or, as others interpret the expression, *the ways most frequented*, or the places where several streets and roads meet. As this is intended of the calling of the Gentiles, it intimates, that the Gentiles had as little reason to expect the call of the gospel, as common passengers and travellers to expect an invitation to a royal banquet. The offer of Christ and salvation to them, was, 1st, unlooked for ; for they had had no previous notice of any such thing being intended : whereas the Jews had had notice of the gospel long before, and expected the Messiah and his kingdom. See Isaiah lxxv. 1, 2. 2d, It was universal, and undistinguishing ; go and bid as many as you find, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, young and old, Jew and Gentile ; tell them all they shall be welcome to gospel privileges upon gospel terms ; *whoever will, let him come*, without exception. *So those servants went out*—As their Lord had commanded them, and gathered as many as they found, good and bad—Giving a free invitation to all, whatever their character had formerly been. Thus, when the gospel was rejected by the Jews, the apostles, in obedience to Christ's command, went into all parts of the world, and preached it to every creature that was willing to hear it ; preached repentance and remission of sins in Christ's name among all nations, Mark xvi. 16 ; Luke xxiv. 47. *And the wedding was furnished with guests*—Great multitudes were gathered into the gospel church.

Verse 11. *And when the king came in to see the guests*—The members of the visible church ; he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment—To explain this, it must be observed, it was usual in the eastern countries to present the guests at marriages, and other solemnities, with garments wherein they were to appear, and the number of them was esteemed an evidence of the wealth and magnificence of the giver. This king, therefore, having invited so many from the lanes, and hedges, and highways, who could never have provided themselves with proper raiment in which to make their appearance at this marriage-feast, according to the custom of the country, must be supposed to have

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man ^{A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.} which had not on a wedding-garment :

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment ? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and

v. 3 ; Eph. iv. 24 ; Col. iii. 10, 12 ; Rev. iii. 4 ; xvi. 15 ; xix. 8.

ordered each, on his applying to the ruler of the feast, to be presented with a proper garment, that they might all be clothed in a manner becoming the magnificence of the solemnity. But this man either neglected to apply, or refused to accept and put on, the garment offered him, which was the circumstance that rendered his conduct inexcusable. "That persons making an entertainment sometimes furnished the habits in which the guests should appear, is evident from what Homer (*Odys.*, lib. viii. verse 402) says of Ulysses, being thus furnished by the Phæacians." See also *Odys.*, lib. iv. verses 47-51, where Homer tells us, that Telemachus and Pisistratus, happening to arrive at Menelaus's house in Lacedæmon, while he was solemnizing the nuptials of his son and daughter, the maids of the house washed the strangers, anointed them, dressed them, and set them down by their master at table. "It is manifest also, from the account which Diodorus gives of the great hospitality of Gellias the Sicilian, who readily received all strangers, and at once supplied five hundred horsemen with clothes, who, by a violent storm, were driven to take shelter with him ; (*Diod. Sic.*, lib. xiii., p. 375, edit. Steph.)—Now it was usual, more especially at marriage-feasts, for persons to appear in a sumptuous dress, adorned, as some writers tell us, with florid embroidery, (see *Dr. Hammond*,) though many times white garments seem to have been used on such occasions : (compare *Rev.* xix. 8, 9.) We must therefore conclude, not only from the magnificence of the preparations, to which we must suppose the wardrobe of the prince corresponded, but likewise from the following circumstance of resentment against this guest, that a robe was offered but refused by him. And this is a circumstance, which, as Calvin observes, is admirably suited to the method of God's dealing with us ; who indeed requires holiness in order to our receiving the benefits of the gospel ; but is graciously pleased to work it in us by his Holy Spirit ; and therefore may justly resent and punish our neglect of so great a favour."—Doddridge.

Verses 12, 13. *Friend, how camest thou in hither*—How camest thou to presume to enter into my church, by taking upon thee a profession of my religion, and to sit down among the guests, or associate thyself with my disciples ; *not having on a wedding-garment ?*—Not having put off the old man and put on the new, not being made a new creature, not having put on the Lord Jesus Christ in holy graces and moral virtues. "It is needless to dispute," says

A. M. 4037. cast him [†] into outer darkness: there
A. D. 33. shall be weeping and gnashing of
teeth.

14 ^b For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

15 ¶ ⁱ Then went the Pharisees, and took

counsel how they might entangle him A. M. 4037.
in his talk. A. D. 33.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any

† Ch. viii. 12.—^b Ch. xx. 16.—ⁱ Twenty-third Sunday after

Trinity, gospel, verse 15 to 23.—ⁱ Mark xii. 13; Luke xx. 20.

Calvin, "about the wedding-garment, whether it be faith, or a pious, holy life. For neither can faith be separated from good works, nor can good works proceed except from faith. Christ's meaning is only that we are called in order that we may be renewed in our minds after his image. And therefore, that we may remain always in his house, the old man, with his filthiness, must be put off, and a new life designed, that our attire may be such as is suitable to so honourable an invitation." *And he was speechless*—Gr. *ἐφίμοθη*, he was struck speechless. "This is the true import of the original word, which is rendered very improperly in our translation, *he was speechless*; as from hence the English reader is led to conceive that the man was dumb, and so could not speak; whereas he was made dumb only by self-condemnation and conviction, even as Christ made dumb—*ἐφίμοσε*,—or put to silence, the Sadducees, verse 34; and as Peter would have us to make *speechless*, or put to silence, (*φίμωσι*), the ignorance of foolish men." See Gerhard's Continuation. *Then saith the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, &c.*—Thus, 1st, Christ commands the ministers of his gospel, to whom the exercise of discipline in his church is committed, to exclude from the society of the faithful all who, by walking disorderly, bring a reproach upon the gospel, and to leave them to *outer darkness*, or the darkness without the pale of the church; that is, heathenish darkness. In other words, as is expressed chap. xviii. 17, to let such be unto them *as heathen and as publicans*. But, 2d, This clause of the sentence is to be chiefly referred to the last judgment, when Christ will command his angels to *gather out of his kingdom not only all things that offend, but them which do iniquity*, and to cast them into the *darkness* which is without the heavenly city, namely, into the *darkness* of hell, where there is *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. The mention of *outer darkness* in the parable, in the connection in which it stands, "would incline one to think, either that the word *ἀριζων*, rendered *dinner*, verse 4, may signify *supper* as well as *dinner*; or that the king is represented as visiting the guests in the evening. But not to insist on this, which is of little moment, it is well known that banquets of this kind were generally celebrated in rooms richly adorned: and considering how splendid and magnificent the entertainments of the eastern princes were, it cannot be thought an unnatural circumstance, that such an affront as this, offered to the king, his son, his bride, and the rest of the company, should be punished with such bonds and thrown into a dungeon."

a

Verse 14. *For many are called*—Nor imagine, (as if our Lord had said,) that this will be the case of one alone; for though it be a dreadful truth, yet I must say, that even the greatest part of those to whom the gospel is offered, will either openly reject or secretly disobey it; and while indeed *many are called* to the gospel-feast, it will be manifest by their disregarding it, there are but few chosen in such a sense as finally to partake of its blessings. In short, many hear, few believe: many are members of the visible, but few of the invisible church.

Verses 15–17. *Then went the Pharisees*—Greatly incensed by the two last parables delivered by our Lord; and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk—Gr. *παγιδευσωσιν ἐν λόγῳ*, might *entrap him in his discourse*, so as to find something on which they might ground an accusation against him, and effect his destruction. *And they sent out their disciples*—Persons who had imbibed their spirit of hostility against him, and entered fully into their designs; *with the Herodians*—"Probably," says Dr. Campbell, "partisans of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, who were for the continuance of the royal power in the descendants of Herod the Great, an object which, it appears, the greater part of the nation, especially the Pharisees, did not favour. They considered that family not indeed as idolaters, but as great conformists to the idolatrous customs of both Greeks and Romans, whose favour they spared no means to secure. The notion adopted by some, that the Herodians were those who believed Herod to be the Messiah, hardly deserves to be mentioned, as there is no evidence that such an opinion was maintained by any body." On account of their zeal for Herod's family, they were of course also zealous for the authority of the Romans, by whose means Herod was made and continued king. Their views and designs being therefore diametrically opposite to those of the Pharisees, there had long existed the most bitter enmity between the two sects. So that the conjunction of their counsels against Christ is a very memorable proof of the keenness of that malice which could thus cause them to forget so deep a quarrel with each other. In order to insnare Christ, they came to him, *feigning themselves just men*, (Luke xx. 20,) men who had a great veneration for the divine law, and a dread of doing any thing inconsistent with it; and, under that mask, accosted Christ with an air of great respect, and flattering expressions of the highest esteem, *saying, Master, we know that thou art true*—A person of the greatest uprightness and integrity; *and teachest the way of God in truth*—Dearest

A. M. 4037. *man*: for thou regardest not the
A. D. 33. person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou?
Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and
said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19 Show me the tribute-money. And they
brought unto him a ¹penny.

20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this
image, and ²superscription?

¹ In value sevenpence halfpenny sterling: Chap. xx. 2.

² Or, inscription.

his will with perfect impartiality and fidelity; *neither carest thou for the censure or applause of any man; for thou regardest not the person of men*—Thou favourest no man for his riches or greatness, nor art influenced by complaisance or fear, or any private view whatever, to deviate from the strictest integrity and veracity. *Tell us, therefore, Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar?*—In asking this question they imagined that it was not in Christ's power to decide the point, without making himself obnoxious to one or other of the parties which had divided upon it. If he should say, it was lawful; they believed the people, in whose hearing the question was proposed, would be incensed against him, not only as a base pretender, who, on being attacked, publicly renounced the character of the Messiah, which he had assumed among his friends; (it being, as they supposed, a principal office of the Messiah to deliver them from a foreign yoke;) but as a flatterer of princes also, and a betrayer of the liberties of his country. But if he should affirm that it was unlawful to pay, the Herodians resolved to inform the governor of it, who they hoped would punish him as a fomenter of sedition. Highly elated therefore with their project, they came and proposed their question.

Verses 18-22. *But Jesus perceived their wickedness, (and craftiness, Luke,) in this their address, however pious and respectful it appeared; and said, Why tempt ye me?*—That is, *Why do ye try me* by such an insnaring question, and seek to draw me into danger by it? *Ye hypocrites*—Making conscience and a pure regard to the divine will your pretence for asking the question, while your design is to bring about my destruction. *Show me the tribute-money*—Which is demanded of you. It seems the Romans chose to receive this tribute in their own coin. *And they brought unto him a penny*—A denarius, stamped with the head of Cesar. *He saith, Whose is this image*—Which is struck upon the coin? *They say unto him, Cesar's*—Plainly acknowledging, by their having received his coin, that they were under his government. And indeed this is a standing rule. The current coin of every nation shows who is the supreme governor of it. *Render therefore, ye Pharisees, to Cesar, the things which ye yourselves acknowledge to be Cesar's; and, ye Herodians, while ye are zealous for Cesar,*

21 They say unto him, Cesar's. A. M. 4037
Then saith he unto them, ¹Render
A. D. 33. therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

23 ¶ ¹The same day came to him the Sadducees, ²which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

¹ Chap. xvii. 25; Rom. xiii. 7.—¹ Mark xii. 18; Luke xx. 27.—² Acts xxii. 8.

see that ye render to God the things that are God's. When they had heard, &c., they marvelled and left him—"So unexpected an answer, in which Jesus clearly confuted them on their own principles, and showed that the rights of God and the magistrate do not interfere in the least, (because magistrates are God's deputies, and rule by his authority,) quite disconcerted and silenced those crafty enemies. They were astonished at his having perceived their design, as well as at the wisdom by which he avoided the snare, and went off inwardly vexed and not a little ashamed."—Macknight.

Verse 23. *The same day came to him the Sadducees*—Concerning whose doctrines and conduct see note on chapter iii. 7; *which say, there is no resurrection*—Nor indeed any future life at all, as the word *αναστασις*, here rendered *resurrection*, is considered by many learned men as signifying; their doctrine being, that when the body dies the soul dies with it, and that there is no state of rewards or punishments after death, and no judgment to come. "The word *αναστασις*," says Dr. Campbell, "is indeed the common term by which the resurrection, properly so called, is denominated in the New Testament; yet this is neither the only nor the primitive import of it. When applied to the dead, the word denotes properly no more than a *renewal of life* to them, in whatever manner this happens. The Pharisees themselves did not universally mean by this term the reunion of soul and body, as is evident from the account which the Jewish historian gives of their doctrine, as well as from some passages in the gospels. To say, therefore, in English, that *they deny the resurrection*, is to give a very defective account of their sentiments on this topic, for they denied the existence of angels and all separate spirits; in which they went much further than [many of] the pagans, who, though they denied what Christians call the resurrection of the body, yet acknowledged a state after death wherein the souls of the deceased exist, and receive the reward or punishment of their actions." The doctor therefore renders the clause, *Who say there is no future life*, which version, he observes, not only gives a juster representation of the Sadducean hypothesis, but is the only version which makes our Lord's argument appear pertinent, and levelled against the doctrine which he wanted to refute. In the common version they are said to

A. M. 4037. 24 Saying, Master, ^a Moses said, If
A. D. 33. a man die, having no children, his
brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed
unto his brother.

25 Now, there were with us seven brethren :
and the first, when he had married a wife, de-
ceased ; and, having no issue, left his wife unto
his brother.

26 Likewise the second also, and the third,
unto the ³ seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife

shall she be of the seven? for they ^{A. M. 4037.}
all had her. ^{A. D. 33.}

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye
do err, ^b not knowing the Scriptures, nor the
power of God.

30 For in the resurrection, they neither marry,
nor are given in marriage, but ^c are as the an-
gels of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the
dead, have ye not read that which was spoken
unto you by God, saying,

32 ^d I am the God of Abraham, and the God

^a Deut. xxv. 5.—² Gr. seven.—³ John xx. 9.
⁴ 1 John iii. 2.

^b Exod. iii. 6, 16; Mark xii. 26; Luke xx. 37; Acts vii. 32;
Heb. xi. 16.

deny the *resurrection*, that is, that the soul and
the body of man shall hereafter be reunited; and
our Lord brings an argument from the Pentateuch
to prove—What? Not that they shall be reunited,
(to this it has not even the most distant relation,) but
that the soul subsists after the body is dissolved.
This many would have admitted, who denied the re-
surrection; yet so evidently did his argument strike
at the root of the scheme of the Sadducees, that they
were silenced by it, and, to the conviction of the
hearers, confuted. Now this could not have hap-
pened, if the fundamental error of the Sadducees
had been barely the denial of the resurrection of
the body, and not the denial of the immortality of
the soul, or of its actual subsistence after death. If
possible, the words, Luke xx. 38, *παντες αυτω ζωουν*,
all live to him, (namely, the patriarchs and all the
faithful dead,) make it still more evident that our
Lord considered this, namely, the proving that the
soul still continued to live after a person's natural
death, was all that was incumbent on one who would
confute the Sadducees. Now if this was the sub-
version of Sadducism, Sadducism must have con-
sisted in denying that the soul continues to live af-
ter the body dies. Certainly our Lord's answer
here, and much of St. Paul's reasoning, 1 Cor. xv.,
proceeds on the supposition of such a denial. Thus,
2 Mac. xii. 42–44, the author proves that Judas be-
lieved a *resurrection*, from his offering sacrifices for
the souls of the slain, which shows that by a resur-
rection he meant a future state.

Verses 24–28. *Master, Moses said, If a man die,*
&c.—“The argument by which the Sadducees en-
deavoured to confute the notion of a future state
was taken from the Jewish law of marriage, which,
to give their objection the better colour, they obser-
ved was God's law, delivered by Moses. As they
believed the soul to be nothing but a more refined
kind of matter, they thought if there was any fu-
ture state, it must resemble the present; and, that
men being in that state material and mortal, the
numan race could not be continued, nor the indivi-
duals made happy, without the pleasures and con-
veniences of marriage. Hence they affirmed it to
be a necessary consequence of the doctrine of the

resurrection, or future state, that every man's wife
should be restored to him.”—Macknight.

Verses 29, 30. *Jesus answered, Ye do err, not
knowing the Scriptures*—Which plainly assert a fu-
ture state; *nor the power of God*—Who created spi-
rit as well as matter, and can preserve it in existence
when the body is dissolved, and can also raise the
body from the dust and render it immortal; and who
can make the whole man completely happy in the
knowledge, love, and enjoyment of himself, without
any of the pleasures or objects of this visible and
temporal world. *For in the resurrection they nei-
ther marry, &c.*—Our Lord proceeds to observe
further, that they entirely mistook the nature of the
life to be enjoyed in a future state: that those who
attained it being as the angels of God, incorruptible
and immortal, marriage and the procreation of an
offspring were no longer necessary to continue the
species, or maintain the population of the spiritual
world.

Verses 31, 32. *But as touching the resurrection
of the dead*—Or the future state, (see on verse 23,) *have
ye not read that which was spoken by God*—
Namely, in the books of Moses, for which the Sad-
ducees had a peculiar value; but which Christ here
shows they did not understand; but were as igno-
rant of them as they were of the power of God.
They had drawn their objection to a future state
from the writings of Moses; and from those writ-
ings Christ demonstrates the certainty of a future
state! *I am the God of Abraham, &c.*—The argu-
ment runs thus: God is not the God of the dead,
but of the living: (for that expression, *Thy God*,
implies both benefit from God to man, and duty from
man to God;) but he is the God of Abraham, Isaac,
and Jacob: therefore Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
are not dead, but living. Therefore the soul does not
die with the body. So indeed the Sadducees sup-
posed, and it was on this ground that they denied
the resurrection and a future state. It cannot be
objected to this interpretation, that it lays too much
stress on the words, *I am*, which are not in the He-
brew. For our Lord's application of the citation in
the present tense, (*εγω εστιν ο θεος θεος νεκρων*, *God is
not the God of the dead*,) plainly implies that no

A. M. 4037. of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?
A. D. 33. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

34 ¶ But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

* Chap. vii. 28.—* Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 34 to the end.

other tense of the verb can be supplied. Accordingly the words are so rendered by the LXX., *Εγω εμι ο θεος τῶ πατρός σου, θεος Αβρααμ, &c.*, *I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, &c.*; Exod. iii. 6. In a similar way Dr. Campbell states the argument: "When God appeared to Moses in the bush, (which was long after the death of the patriarchs,) he said unto him, *I am the God of Abraham, &c.*; now God is not the God of the dead, of those who, being destitute of life, and consequently of sensibility, can neither know nor honour him: he is the God of those only who love and adore him, and are by consequence alive. These patriarchs, therefore, though dead in respect to us, who enjoy their presence here no longer, are alive in respect of God, whom they still serve and worship." Others, however, choose to explain the argument thus: To be the God of any person is to be his exceeding great reward, Gen. xv. 1. Wherefore, as the patriarchs died without having obtained the promises, Heb. xi. 39, they must exist in another state to enjoy them, that the veracity of God may remain sure. Besides, the apostle tells us that God is *not ashamed to be called their God, because he has prepared for them a city*, Heb. xi. 16, which implies, that he would have reckoned it infinitely beneath him to own his relation, as God, to any one for whom he had not provided a state of permanent happiness. The argument, taken either way, is conclusive; for which cause we may suppose that both the senses of it were intended, to render it full of demonstration.

With what satisfaction should we read this vindication of so important an article of our faith and hope! How easily did our Lord unravel and expose the boasted argument of the Sadducees, and cover with just confusion all the pride of those bold wits, who valued themselves so much on that imaginary penetration, which laid men almost on a level with brutes. Indeed, objections against the resurrection and a future state, much more plausible than this of theirs, may be answered in that one saying of our Lord's: *Ye know not the Scriptures nor the power of God.* Were the Scripture doctrine on this subject considered on the one hand, and the omnipotence of the Creator on the other, it could not seem incredible to any that God should preserve the soul in immortality, or raise the dead. Acts xxvi. 8.

Verse 33. *And when the multitude*—Which was present in the temple at the time; *heard this*—This unthought-of, and yet convincing argument, together

35 Then one of them *which was* A. M. 4037
"a lawyer, asked *him a question,* A. D. 33
tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

* Mark xii. 29.—* Luke x. 25.—* Deut. vi. 5; x. 12; xxx. 6; Luke x. 27.

with so complete an answer to a cavil in which the Sadducees were wont to triumph as invincible; *they were astonished at his doctrine*—At the clearness and solidity of his reasoning, and the manifest confutation of a sect whose principles they considered as fundamentally erroneous, and subversive of all piety and virtue.

Verses 34–36. *When the Pharisees heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence*—Gr. *οτι εφημοσ*, that he had *stopped their mouths*, or so confuted that he had *confounded* them, and rendered them unable to make any reply; *they were gathered together*—It is not said with what design: but it is probable from verses 15, 16, with a malicious one, namely, to try, though the Sadducees had been baffled in their attempt upon him, as they themselves had also been, when they united with the Herodians, if they could yet any way expose him to the people. *Then one of them, a lawyer*—Or *teacher of the law*, (namely, of Moses,) as the word *νομικος* always means in the New Testament, that is, a scribe, *asked him a question, tempting, or trying him*—Not, it seems, with any ill design, but barely to make further trial of that wisdom which he had shown in silencing the Sadducees. For, according to Mark, it was in consequence of his *perceiving* that our Lord had answered the Sadducees well, that this person asked the question here mentioned. *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?*—This was a famous question among the Jews. "Some of their doctors declared that the law of sacrifices was the great commandment, because sacrifices were both the expiations of sin and thanksgivings for mercies; others bestowed this honour on the law of circumcision, because it was the sign of the covenant established between God and the nation; a third sort yielded to the law of the sabbath, because, by that appointment, both the knowledge and practice of the institutions of Moses were preserved; and to name no more, there were some who affirmed the law of meats and washings to be of the greatest importance, because thereby the people of God were effectually separated from the company and conversations of the heathen." But Jesus, with much better reason, decided in favour of a command inclusive of the whole of piety, and leading to every holy temper, word, and work.

Verses 37–40. *Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*—Concerning this first and great commandment, and the words where with Moses prefaced it, see note on Deut. vi. 5; and

A. M. 4037. 38 This is the first and great com-
A. D. 33. mandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, ⁊ Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 * On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

41 ¶ * While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son of David.*

⁊ Lev. xix. 18; Chap. xix. 19; Mark xii. 31; Luke x. 27; Rom. xiii. 9; Gal. v. 14; James ii. 8.—* Chap. vii. 12; 1 Tim. i. 5. * Mark xii. 35; Luke xx. 41.

for the elucidation of this whole paragraph, see the notes on Mark xii. 28-34, where the conversation which our Lord had with this scribe is related more at large. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets—That is, they contain the substance or abridgment of all the religious and moral duties contained in the law and the prophets, which therefore may be all said to hang or depend on them. The expression, says Dr. Whitby, is a metaphor taken from a custom mentioned by Tertullian of hanging up their laws in a public place to be seen of all men; and it imports that in these precepts is compendiously contained all that the law and prophets require, in reference to our duty to God and man; for though there be some precepts of temperance which we owe to ourselves, yet are they such as we may be moved to perform from the true love of God and of our neighbour; whom if we truly love we cannot be wanting in them. For the love of God will make us humble and contented with our lot; it will preserve us from all intemperance, impatience, and unholy desires; it will make us watchful over ourselves, that we may keep a good conscience, and solicitous for our eternal welfare. And the love of our neighbour will free us from all angry passions, envy, malice, revenge, and other unkind tempers: so that both taken together will introduce into us the whole mind that was in Christ, and cause us to walk as he walked.

Verses 41-46. *While the Pharisees were gathered, &c.*—That is, during this conference, expecting to have found an opportunity to insnare him, as he was still teaching the people in the temple; *Jesus asked them*—“The Pharisees, having in the course of our Lord's ministry proposed many difficult questions to him, with a view to try his prophetic gifts, he, in his turn, now that a body of them was gathered together, thought fit to make trial of their skill in the sacred writings. For this purpose he publicly asked their opinion of a difficulty concerning the Messiah's pedigree, arising from Psa. cx.: *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?—Whose son do you expect the Messiah to be, who was promised to the fathers? They say unto him, The son of David*—This was the common title of the Messiah in that day, which the scribes taught

43 He saith unto them, How then A. M. 4037.
doth David in spirit ^b call him Lord, A. D. 33.
saying,

44 * The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

45 If David then called him Lord, how is he his son?

46 ^d And no man was able to answer him a word, * neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask him any more questions.

^b Acts ii. 34.—^c Psa. cx. 1; Acts ii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Heb. i. 13; x. 12, 13.—^d Luke xiv. 6.—* Mark xii. 34; Luke xx. 40.

them to give him, from Psa. lxxxix. 35, 36; and Isa. xi. 1.” *He saith, How then doth David in spirit, rather, by the Spirit; that is, by inspiration; call him Lord*—If he be merely the son, or descendant of David? if he be, as you suppose, the son of man, a mere man? “The doctors, it seems, did not look for any thing in their Messiah more excellent than the most exalted perfections of human nature; for, though they called him the Son of God, they had no notion that he was God, and so could offer no solution of the difficulty. Yet the latter question might have shown them their error. For if the Messiah was to be only a secular prince, as they supposed, ruling the men of his own time, he never could have been called *Lord* by persons who died before he was born; far less would so mighty a king as David, who also was his progenitor, have called him *Lord*. Wherefore, since he rules over, not the vulgar dead only of former ages, but even over the kings from whom he was himself descended, and his kingdom comprehends the men of all countries and times, past, present, and to come, the doctors, if they had thought accurately upon the subject, should have expected in their Messiah a king different from all other kings whatever. Besides, he is to sit at God's right hand *till his enemies are made the footstool of his feet*; made thoroughly subject unto him. Numbers of Christ's enemies are subjected to him in this life; and they who will not bow to him willingly, shall, like the rebellious subjects of other kingdoms, be reduced by punishment. Being constituted universal judge, all, whether friends or enemies, shall appear before his tribunal, where, by the highest exercise of kingly power, he shall doom each to his unchangeable state.” *And no man was able to answer him a word*—None of them could offer the least shadow of a solution to the difficulty which he had proposed. *Neither durst any man ask him any more questions*—“The repeated proofs which he had given of the prodigious depth of his understanding, had impressed them with such an opinion of his wisdom, that they judged it impossible to insnare him in his discourse. For which reason they left off attempting it, and from that day forth troubled him no more with their insidious questions.”—Macknight.

CHAPTER XXIII.

In the preceding chapter we had an account of several discourses of Christ with the scribes and Pharisees; here we have his discourse concerning them. (1.) He allows their office, 2, 3. (2.) He warns his disciples against imitating their hypocrisy and pride, 4-12. (3.) He denounces divers woes on them for their blindness, hypocrisy, and iniquity, 13-33. (4.) He passes sentence upon Jerusalem, and foretels the destruction of the city and temple, especially for the sin of persecution, 34-39.

A. M. 4037. **THEN** spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

A. D. 33. 2 Saying, *The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses's seat:

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do: but do not ye after their works: for ^bthey say, and do not.

4 ° For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders;

but they *themselves* will not move ^{A. M. 4037.} them with one of their fingers. ^{A. D. 33.}

5 But ^dall their works they do for to be seen of men: ° they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

6 ^fAnd love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, rabbi.

^a Neh. viii. 4, 8; Mal. ii. 7; Mark xii. 38; Luke xx. 45. ^b Rom. ii. 19, &c.—^c Luke xi. 46; Acts xv. 10; Gal. vi. 13.

^d Chap. vi. 1, 2, 5, 16.—^e Num. xv. 38; Deut. vi. 8; xxii. 12; Prov. iii. 3.—^f Mark xii. 38, 39; Luke xi. 43; xx. 46; 3 John 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIII.

Verses 1-3. *Then spake Jesus to the multitude*—Leaving all converse with his adversaries; whom he now gave up to the hardness of their hearts. *The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's seat*—Or, *chair*—That is, read and expound the law of Moses, and are the appointed teachers of the people. The Jewish doctors, as is well known, always taught sitting. The name *Pharisees* being the appellation of a sect, it cannot be supposed that our Lord meant to say of all the party that they sat in Moses's chair. Such a character was applicable to none but the doctors of the sect; for which reason we must suppose that the name *scribes* and *Pharisees* is a Hebraism for the *Pharisean scribes*. *All therefore they bid you observe, &c.*—That is, all that they read out of the law, and enforce on the manifest authority thereof, *that observe and do*—Readily and cheerfully: “*All,*” says Theophylact, “that they require, *εκ των Μωσειως βιβλων, απο τε θεου νομου, from the law of God out of the books of Moses.*” An interpretation which must be allowed of. Because Christ elsewhere requires his disciples to *beware of the leaven*, that is, the doctrine, *of the scribes and Pharisees*; because *they taught for doctrines the commandments of men*, and *by their traditions made void the law of God*; and *were blind leaders of the blind*. *But do not ye after their works*—By no means imitate their practices; *for they say and do not*—They give many precepts to their disciples, which they do not perform themselves. As we must not receive corrupt doctrines for the sake of any laudable practices of those that teach them; so we must not imitate bad examples for the sake of the plausible doctrines of those that give them.

Verse 4. *For they bind heavy burdens*—Not only insisting upon the most minute circumstances of the ceremonial law, called a *yoke*, Acts xv. 10; and pressing the observation of them with more strictness and severity than God himself did; but by adding to his word, and imposing their own inven-

tions and traditions under the highest penalties: witness their many additions to the law of the sabbath, by which they made that day a burden, which was designed to be a joy and delight: *but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers*—They press upon the people a strictness in religion which they themselves will not be bound by, but secretly transgress their own traditions, which they publicly enforce.

Verses 5-7. *All their works they do to be seen of men*—They have the praise of men in view in all their actions. Hence they are constant and abundant in those duties of religion which come under the observation of men; but with respect to those that are of a more spiritual nature, and lie between God and their own souls, or should be performed in the retirements of their closets, they desire to be excused. As the mere form of godliness will procure them a name to live, which is all they aim at; they therefore trouble not themselves about the power of it, which is essential to being alive indeed. *They make broad their phylacteries*—The Jews understanding those words literally, *It shall be as a token upon thy hand, and as frontlets between thine eyes*, (Exod. xiii. 16;) *And thou shalt bind these words for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes*, (Deut. vi. 8,) used to wear little scrolls of paper or parchment bound on their wrists and foreheads, on which several texts of Scripture were written. These they supposed, as a kind of charm, would preserve them from danger. And hence they seemed to have been called *phylacteries*, or preservatives. See the notes on these passages. *And enlarge the borders (or fringes) of their garments*—Which God had enjoined them to wear, to remind them of *doing all the commandments*, Num. xv. 38. These, as well as their phylacteries, the Pharisees affected to wear broader and larger than other men. *And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, &c.*—In which guests of the first quality were used to sit; *and the chief seats in the*

A. M. 4037. 8 ¶ But be not ye called rabbi: for
A. D. 33. one is your Master, *even* Christ; and
all ye are brethren.

9 And call no *man* your father upon the
earth; ^h for one is your Father which is in
heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is
your Master, *even* Christ.

¶ James iii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 24; 1 Pet. v. 3.—^h Mal. i. 6.
¹ Chap. xx. 26, 27.

synagogues—"There showing their pride, where they ought to have taught others humility."—*Theophylact. And greetings, or salutations, in the markets*—And other places of common concourse. *And to be called of men, Rabbi, rabbi*—A title of honour, which they were fond of having repeated at every sentence. "The word *rabbi* properly signifies *great*, and was prefixed to the names of those doctors who had rendered themselves remarkable by the extent of their learning, or who were the authors of new schemes in divinity; heads of sects, whose fame had gained them many followers. This title the Jewish doctors were particularly fond of, because it was a high compliment paid to their understanding, gave them vast authority with their disciples, and made them look big in the eyes of the world. It was the very next thing to infallible."

Verses 8-10. *Be not ye called rabbi*—Do not affect those titles of reverence and respect which give too much honour or authority to man. The Jewish doctors were called *rabbis, fathers, and masters*, by their several disciples, whom they required both to believe implicitly what they affirmed, without asking any further reason, and to obey unreservedly what they enjoined, without seeking for any further authority. But our Lord here teaches his apostles, and their successors in the ministry of the gospel, that they were to be very different from these Jewish teachers. They were to decline being called *rabbi*, because the thing signified by the term belonged solely to their Master, in whom the whole treasures of divine knowledge and wisdom are hid; and who, for that reason, is the only infallible teacher of his church; and also, because they owed none of their knowledge to themselves, but derived it entirely from him, in which respect they were all *brethren*, and on a level. *And they were to call no man father upon earth*—To consider no man as the father of their religion, that is, the founder, author, or director of it; to look up to no man with the reverence wherewith a child should regard a father, or so as to yield an absolute subjection to his will and pleasure, or be absolutely swayed and governed thereby; because *one was their Father* who is in heaven, the source, as of their being, so of all their blessings, and especially of their religion; the fountain and founder of it; the life and Lord of it. Our Lord adds, *Neither be ye called masters*—Gr. καθ' ἑαυτά, *leaders, or guides*. That is, of the judgments and consciences of men, because, says he, *one is*

11 But ⁱ he that is greatest among
you, shall be your servant. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

12 ^k And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

13 ¶ But ^l wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in

^k Job xxii. 29; Prov. xv. 33; xxix. 23; Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14; James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5.—^l Luke xi. 52.

your Master, even Christ—The infallible instructor and guide of his church in all matters of faith and practice; commissioned by his Father to reveal his will, and teach all that is needful to be known, believed, or done, in order to salvation; whose apostles even were only to be regarded as his ministers and ambassadors, and only to be credited because, by their gifts and miraculous powers derived from him, they manifested that they taught men those things which he had commanded, and by his Spirit had revealed to them. Thus our Lord, the more effectually to enforce this warning against an unlimited veneration for the judgments and decisions of men, as a most important lesson, puts it in a variety of lights, and prohibits them from regarding any man with an implicit and blind partiality as *teacher, father, or guide*. Upon the whole, the things forbidden are, 1st, a vain-glorious affectation of such titles as these, the ambitious seeking of them, and glorying in them; 2d, that authority and dominion over the consciences of men, which the Pharisaical doctors had usurped; telling the people that they ought to believe all their doctrines, and practise all their injunctions, as the commands of the living God.

Verses 11, 12. *But he that is greatest among you, &c.*—If any one among you would in reality be greater than another, let him be the more condescending, kind, and ready cheerfully to serve others in love. The words may either imply, 1st, a promise that such should be accounted greatest, and stand highest in the favour of God, who should be most humble, submissive, and serviceable: or, 2d, a precept enjoining the person who should be advanced to any place of dignity, trust, or honour in the church, to consider himself as peculiarly called thereby, not to be a lord, but a minister, and to serve others in love. Thus Paul, who knew his privilege as well as duty, though *free from all*, yet made himself *servant of all*, 1 Cor. ix. 19. And our Lord frequently pressed it upon his disciples to be humble and self-denying, mild and condescending, and to abound in all the offices of Christian love, though mean, and to the meanest; and of this he set a continual example. *Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be humbled, &c.*—It is observable that no one sentence of our Lord's is so often repeated as this: it occurs with scarcely any variation at least ten times in the evangelists.

Verses 13-15. *But wo to you, scribes, &c.*—Our Lord pronounced eight blessings upon the mount

A. M. 4037. *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them
A. D. 33. that are entering to go in.

14 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ^mfor ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Wo unto you, ⁿye blind guides! which say, ^oWhosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor.

17 Ye fools, and blind! for whether is greater,

^m Mark xii. 40; Luke xx. 47; 2 Tim. iii. 6; Tit. i. 11.
ⁿ Chap. xv. 14; verse 24.—^o Chapter v. 33, 34.—^p Exod. xxx. 29.

he pronounces eight woes here, not as imprecations, but solemn, compassionate declarations of the misery which these stubborn sinners were bringing upon themselves. The reasons of his denouncing these woes are set forth in this and the subsequent verses. The first is here given: *For you shut the kingdom of heaven against men*—Namely, by the prejudices you are so zealous to propagate among the people, and by taking away, as it is expressed Luke xi. 52, the key of knowledge, or the right interpretation of the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah, by your example and authority; for they both rejected Jesus themselves and excommunicated those who received him. In short, they did all they could to hinder the people from repenting of their sins, and believing in the gospel. *Wo unto you, for ye devour widows' houses, &c.*—Here we have the second reason of these woes. They were covetous, rapacious, and committed the grossest iniquities under a cloak of religion; making long prayers in order to hide their villany. *Ye compass sea and land*—In these words we have the reason of the third wo. They manifested the greatest zeal imaginable in making proselytes, compassing sea and land, that is, making long journeys and voyages, and leaving no means untried to accomplish that end, while their intention in all this was not the glory of God and the salvation of men's souls, but their own honour and profit; that they might have the credit of making men proselytes, and the advantage of making a prey of them when they were made. *Ye make him two-fold more the child of hell*—In the heathen countries these interested, worldly-minded zealots accommodated religion to the humours of men, placing it, not in the eternal and immutable rules of righteousness, but in ceremonial observances; the effect of which was, either that their proselytes became more superstitious, more immoral, and more presumptuous than their teachers; or that, taking them for impostors, they relapsed again

the gold, ^p or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

18 And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is ^q guilty.

19 Ye fools, and blind! for whether ^ris greater, the gift, or ^sthe altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by ^thim that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by ^uthe throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

^q Or, debtor, or, bound.—^r Exod. xxix. 37.—^s 1 Kings viii. 13; 2 Chron. vi. 2; Psa. xxvi. 8; cxxxii. 14.—^t Chap. v. 34; Psa. xi. 4; Acts vii. 49.

into their old state of heathenism; and in both cases became two-fold more the children of hell than even the Pharisees themselves, that is, more openly and unlimitedly wicked than they.

Verses 16–22. *Wo unto you, ye blind guides*—Before he had styled them *hypocrites*, from their personal character; now he gives them another title respecting their false doctrine and influence upon others. Both these appellations are severely put together in verses 23–25: and this severity rises to the height in verse 33. Here we have the fourth reason of the woes denounced. *Which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing*—It constitutes no obligation to tell the truth or to perform one's oath. *But whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple*—That is, by the treasure kept there, *he is a debtor*—Gr. *οφειλει*, he oweth, that is, is obliged to perform his oath. "It seems," says Dr. Doddridge, "the Pharisees taught, that oaths by the creatures might be used on trifling occasions, and violated without any great guilt. But they excepted oaths by the corban, (the gift,) and by sacrifices; in which it is plain that, without any regard to common sense or decency, they were influenced merely by a view to their own interest; and therefore represented these to the people as things of more eminent sanctity than even the temple or altar itself." *Whoso shall swear by the altar, sweareth by all things thereon*—Not only by the altar, but by the holy fire and the sacrifices, and above all by that God to whom they belonged; inasmuch as every oath by a creature, if it has any meaning, is an implicit appeal to the Creator himself. *Whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by him that dwelleth therein*—Consequently, the oath is a solemn wishing that he, who dwells in the temple, may hinder him from ever worshipping there, if he be telling a falsehood or neglect his vow. *He that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, &c.*—And therefore his oath is a solemn wishing that God, who dwells

A. M. 4037. 23 Wo unto you, scribes and Phari-
A. D. 33.

sees, hypocrites! 'for ye pay tithe of mint, and 'anise, and cummin, and ' have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! * for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that

¹ Luke xi. 42.—² Gr. ἀνθρώπων, *dill*.—³ 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 8; Chap. ix. 13; xii. 7.

in heaven, may exclude him out of that blessed place for ever, if he falsify his oath. For a further explanation of the subject of oaths, see the note on chap. v. 33-37.

Verses 23, 24. *Wo unto you, for ye pay tithe, &c.*—Here we have the fifth wo, which is denounced for their superstition. They observed the ceremonial precepts of the law with all possible exactness, while they utterly neglected the eternal, immutable, indispensable rules of righteousness. *Judgment*—That is, justice; *mercy*—Charity, or compassion toward the poor; *faith*—*Fidelity*. "The word *πίστις* has undoubtedly this signification in many places; (compare Tit. ii. 10; Gal. v. 22; Rom. iii. 3.) But there are many more in which it signifies, *the confidence reposed in another*; and it is of great importance to observe this. See Col. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 21." *Ye blind guides, which strain at* [or rather, *strain out*] *a gnat*—Namely, from the liquor you are going to drink, lest it should choke you. "In those hot countries, as Serrarius well observes, gnats were apt to fall into wine, if it were not carefully covered; and passing the liquor through a strainer that no gnat, or part of one, might remain, grew into a proverb for exactness about little matters." *And swallow a camel*—"The expression is proverbial, and was made use of by our Lord on this occasion to signify that the Pharisees pretended to be exceedingly afraid of the smallest faults, as if sin had been bitter to them like death, while they indulged themselves secretly in the unrestrained commission of the grossest immoralities."—See Doddridge and Macknight.

Verses 25, 26. *Wo unto you, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup, &c.*—This is the sixth wo. They were at great pains to appear virtuous, and to have a decent external conduct, while they neglected to beautify their inward man with true holiness, and a conformity to the divine goodness, or with the graces of God's Holy Spirit, which in the sight of God are ornaments of great price, and render men dear and valuable to all who know what true religion and virtue are. *But within they*—Namely, the cup and platter; *are full of extortion*

which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ' for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 * Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the

* Mark vii. 4; Luke xi. 39.—⁷ Luke xi. 44; Acts xxiii. 3.
⁸ Luke xi. 47.

and excess—Which ye swallow down without the least scruple. Gr. ἀπραγῆς καὶ ἀκρασίας, *rapine and intemperance*. The censure is double, (taking intemperance in the vulgar sense.) These miserable men procured unjustly what they used intemperately. No wonder tables so furnished prove a snare, as many find by sad experience. Thus luxury punishes fraud, while it feeds disease with the fruits of injustice. But intemperance, in the full sense, takes in not only all kinds of outward intemperance, particularly in eating and drinking, but all intemperate or immoderate desires, whether of honour, gain, or sensual pleasure. It must be observed, however that instead of ἀκρασίας, *intemperance*, very many manuscripts and ancient versions have the word ἀδικίας, which, says Dr. Campbell, "suits much better with all the accounts we have in other places of the character of the Pharisees, who are never accused of intemperance, though often of injustice. The former vice is rarely found with those who, like the Pharisees, make great pretensions to religion." *Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup, &c.*—And is not so much exposed to view. Cleanse first thy mind, thy inward man, from evil dispositions and affections, and of course thy outward behaviour will be righteous and good.

Verse 27. *Wo unto you, for you are like whited sepulchres*—Here we have the seventh wo. Dr. Shaw, (*Trav.*, p. 285,) gives a general description of the different sorts of tombs and sepulchres in the East—concluding with this paragraph—"Now all these, with the very walls of the enclosure, being always kept clean, white-washed, and beautified; continue to this day to be an excellent comment upon Matt. xxiii. 27." The scribes and Pharisees, like fine whited sepulchres, looked very beautiful without, but within were full of all uncleanness, and defiled every one who touched them. This was a sore rebuke to men who would not keep company with publicans and sinners for fear they should have been polluted by them!

Verse 29-31. *Wo unto you, because ye build the tombs of the prophets*—Here we have the eighth and last wo. "By the pains they took in adorning the

A. M. 4037. prophets, and garnish the sepulchres
A. D. 33. of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ^aye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 ^bFill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye ^cgeneration of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 ¶ ^dWherefore, behold, I send unto you

^a Acts vii. 51, 52; 1 Thess. ii. 15.—^b Gen. xv. 16; 1 Thess. ii. 16.—^c Chap. iii. 7; xii. 34.—^d Chap. xxi. 34, 35; Luke xi. 49.

sepulchres of their prophets, they pretended a great veneration for their memory; and, as often as they happened to be mentioned, condemned their fathers who had killed them, declaring that if they had lived in the days of their fathers, they would have opposed their wickedness; while, in the mean time, they still cherished the spirit of their fathers, persecuting the messengers of God, particularly his only Son, on whose destruction they were resolutely bent." *Ye build the tombs of the prophets*—And that is all, for ye neither observe their sayings nor imitate their actions. *And say, We would not have been partakers, &c.*—Ye make fair professions, as did your fathers. *Wherefore ye be witnesses, &c.*—By affirming that if you had lived in the days of your fathers you would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets, ye acknowledge that ye are the children of them who murdered the prophets. But I must tell you, that you are their children in another sense than by natural generation; for though you pretend to be more holy than they were, you are like them in all respects; particularly in that you possess their wicked, persecuting spirit, and cover it by smooth words, thus imitating them, who, while they killed the prophets of their own times, professed the utmost veneration for those of past ages.

Verses 32-36. *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers' wickedness*—Ye may now be as wicked as they: a word of permission, not of command: as if he had said, I contend with you no longer: I leave you to yourselves: you have conquered: now ye may follow the devices of your own hearts. *Ye serpents*—Our Lord having now given up all hope of reclaiming them, speaks thus to deter others from the like sins. *Wherefore*—That it may appear you are the true children of those murderers, and have a right to have their iniquities visited on you: *behold, I send*—Is not this speaking as one having authority? *Prophets*—Men with supernatural credentials; *Wise men*—Such as have both natural abilities and experience; and *scribes*—Men of learning: but all will not avail. *That upon you may come all the righteous blood*—The consequence of which will be, that upon you will come the punishment of the

prophets, and wise men, and scribes; A. M. 4037. and ^esome of them ye shall kill and ^fscourge
A. D. 33. crucify, and ^gsome of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

35 ^hThat upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, ⁱfrom the blood of righteous Abel, unto ^jthe blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

^e Acts v. 40; vii. 58, 59; xxiii. 19.—^f Chap. x. 17; 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25.—^g Rev. xviii. 24.—^h Gen. iv. 8; 1 John iii. 12. ⁱ 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

blood of all the righteous men; *shed upon the earth*—Temporal punishment must be intended, because in the life to come men shall not be punished for the sins of others to which they were not accessory. From the blood of righteous *Abel*—The first prophet and preacher of righteousness, unto the *blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias*—Most commentators think that Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, mentioned 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, (where see the note,) is here meant: and that either the words, *son of Barachias*, are the officious addition of some early transcriber of this gospel, (who might confound this martyr with *Zechariah*, one of the twelve minor prophets,) or that *Jehoiada* was also called *Barachiah*, having, as was not then uncommon, two names, both which, it may be observed, signify nearly the same thing: the latter word signifying *one that blesses the Lord*, and *Jehoiada* *one that confesses him*. Dr. Blayney, however, is confident that *Zechariah*, the minor prophet, is here intended, and that he was actually murdered, as is here said, though the Scriptures of the Old Testament are silent concerning the barbarous action. See the argument to my notes on *Zechariah*. *Whom ye slew*—So he says, because by imitating their fathers' conduct, they made the murder, committed by them, their own; *between the temple*—That is, the house properly called the temple; and *the altar*—Which stood in the outer court. Our Lord seems to refer to this instance, rather than to any other, because he was the last of the prophets that was slain by the Jews for reproving their wickedness; and we may add, (supposing *Zechariah* the son of *Jehoiada* to be meant,) because God's requiring his blood, as well as that of *Abel*, is particularly taken notice of in Scripture, that holy man's last words being, *The Lord look upon it, and require it*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. *All these things*—The punishment of all these murders; *shall come upon this generation*—This Jesus foreknew would be the case; and that though every possible method would be tried in order to their conversion, they would make light of all, and by so doing pull down upon themselves such terrible vengeance, as should be a standing monument of the divine displeasure against all the murders

A. M. 4037. 37 ¹O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou*
A. D. 33. that killest the prophets, ¹and stonest
them which are sent unto thee, how often
would ^mI have gathered thy children together,
even as a hen gathereth her chickens ⁿunder
her wings, and ye would not!

^{*}Luke xiii. 34.—¹2 Chron. xxiv. 21.—^mDeut. xxxii. 11, 12.

committed on the face of the earth from the beginning of time.

Verse 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*—The Lord Jesus having thus laid before the Pharisees and the Jewish nation their heinous guilt and impending ruin, was exceedingly moved at the thought of the calamities coming upon them. A day or two before he had wept over Jerusalem; now he bewails it in the most mournful accents of pity and commiseration. Jerusalem, *the vision of peace*, as the word signifies, must now be made the seat of war and confusion: Jerusalem, that had been the joy of the whole earth, must now be a hissing, and an astonishment, and a by-word among all nations: Jerusalem, that had been a city *compact together*, was now to be shattered and ruined by its own intestine broils: Jerusalem, the place that God had chosen to put his name there, must now be abandoned to spoilers and robbers. For, 1st, As its inhabitants had their hands more deeply imbrued in the blood of the prophets than those of other places, they were to drink more deeply than others in the punishment of such crimes: *Thou that killest the prophets, &c.* And, 2d, Jerusalem especially had rejected, and would persist in rejecting the Lord's Christ, and the offers of salvation made through him, and would persecute his servants divinely commissioned to make them these offers. The former was a sin without remedy; this a sin against the remedy. *How often would I have gathered thy children, &c.*—See the wonderful grace, condescension, and kindness of the Lord Jesus toward those who he foresaw would in two or three days maliciously and cruelly imbrue their hands in his blood! What a strong idea do these tender exclamations of our Lord, which can hardly be read without tears, give us of his unparalleled love to that ungrateful and impenitent nation! He would have taken the whole body of them, if they would have consented to be so taken, into his church, and have gathered them all, (as the Jews used to speak of proselytes,) under the wings of the divine majesty. The words, *how often would I have gathered, &c.*,

38 Behold, your house is left unto ^{A. M. 4037.}
you desolate. ^{A. D. 33.}

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, ^oBlessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

^aPsa. xvii. 8; xci. 4.—^oPsa. cxviii. 26; Chap. xxi. 9.

mark his unwearied endeavours to protect and cherish them from the time they were first called to be his people, and the following words, declarative of the opposition between his will and theirs, *but ye would not*, very emphatically show their unconquerable obstinacy in resisting the most winning and most substantial expressions of the divine goodness. Thus does the Lord Jesus still call and invite perishing sinners. But alas! the obstinacy of their own perverse and rebellious wills too generally withstands all the overtures of his grace: so that eternal desolation becomes their portion, and they in vain wish for a repetition of those calls when it is for ever too late.

Verses 38, 39. *Behold, your house*—The temple, which is now your house, not God's; *is left unto you desolate*—Forsaken of God and his Christ, and sentenced to utter destruction. Our Lord spake this as he was going out of it for the last time. *For I say unto you*—Ye Jews in general, ye men of Jerusalem in particular; *shall not see me henceforth*—*Απ' αρι, hereafter*, as the words signify, chap. xxvi. 64; *till*—After a long interval of desolation and misery, *Ye shall say, Blessed, &c.*—Till ye receive me with joyful and thankful hearts; that is, till your nation is converted: for the state of the nation, and not of a few individuals, is here spoken of, as it is also in the parables of the vineyard and marriage-supper. *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, was the cry of the believing multitude when Jesus made his public entry into Jerusalem a few days before. Hence, in predicting their future conversion, he very properly alluded to that exclamation by which so many had expressed their faith in him as the Messiah. This was the last discourse Jesus pronounced in public, and with it his ministry ended. From that moment he abandoned the Jewish nation, gave them over to walk in their own counsels, and devoted them to destruction. Nor were they ever after to be the objects of his care, till the period of their conversion to Christianity should come, which he now foretold, and which also shall be accomplished in its season.

CHAPTER XXIV.

In this chapter we have a prophetic discourse concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, for their many and great crimes, and especially for their rejecting and crucifying the Son of God; which calamity came upon them about forty years after. Here is (1.) The occasion of this discourse, 1-3. (2.) The discourse itself, in which is contained the preceding signs of the awful event—the appearance of false Christs, 5: wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes 6-8:

the persecution of the apostles and others of Christ's followers, 9: the apostacy of many from the truth, 10-13: preaching of the gospel to all nations, 14: the approach of the Roman armies to the city, and their besieging it, 15-18: the miseries of that period, 19-22. A caution against being deceived by false Christs and false prophets, 23-26. That these calamities should come suddenly and unexpectedly, and effect the total destruction of the Jewish Church and commonwealth, and be a type and figure of the consummation of all things, 27-31. An illustration of the whole by a parable, 32, 33. The certainty of the events, and the application of the prophecy, for the awakening of his disciples, that they might prepare for them, 34-51.

A. M. 4037. **AND** ^a Jesus went out, and de-
A. D. 33. parted from the temple: and his
disciples came to him for to show him the
buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all
these things? verily I say unto you, ^b There
shall not be left here one stone upon another,
that shall not be thrown down.

^a Mark xiii. 1; Luke xxi. 5.—^b 1 Kings ix. 7; Jer. xxvi. 18;
Mic. iii. 12; Lu. xix. 44.—^c Mark xiii. 3.—^d 1 Thess. v. 1.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIV.

Verse 1. *And Jesus went out*—For the last time; and departed from the temple—Which he never entered afterward; and his disciples came to him—As he was going away; to show him the buildings of the temple—To call his attention to the splendid buildings and sumptuous decorations of the place, saying, according to Mark, *Master, see what manner of stones and buildings are here!* intending to intimate, probably, what a pitiable calamity they thought it that such a grand structure should be destroyed. Indeed, as the whole temple was built with the greatest cost and magnificence, so nothing was more stupendous than the uncommon measure of the stones, some of which, particularly those employed in the foundations, were in magnitude forty cubits, that is, above 60 feet; and the superstructure was worthy of such foundations. And some of the stones were of the whitest marble, forty-five cubits long, five cubits high, and six broad. Indeed, the marble of the temple was so white that, according to Josephus, it appeared at a distance like a mountain of snow; while the gilding of several of its external parts, especially when the sun shone upon it, rendered it a most splendid and beautiful spectacle. See Bishop Newton, from whose admirable work on the prophecies most of the notes on this chapter are extracted.

Verse 2. *Jesus said—There shall not be left one stone upon another*—A proverbial and figurative expression to denote an utter destruction; and the prophecy would have been amply fulfilled, if the city and temple had been utterly ruined, though every single stone had not been overturned. But it happened that the words were almost literally fulfilled: for after the temple was burned, Titus, the Roman general, ordered the very foundations of it to be dug up; after which the ground on which it stood was ploughed up by Turnus Rufus. It is true, Titus was very desirous of preserving it, and the city too, and sent Josephus and other Jews again and again to persuade them to a surrender, but one greater than Titus had determined it otherwise. The Jews

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount ^{A. M. 4037.}
of Olives, ^a the disciples came unto ^{A. D. 33.}
him privately, saying, ^d Tell us, when shall
these things be? and what shall be the sign of
thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them,
^e Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For ^f many shall come in my name, saying,

^e Eph. v. 6; Col. ii. 8, 18; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 John iv. 1.—^f Jer.
xiv. 14; xxiii. 21, 25; verse 24; John v. 43.

themselves first set fire to the porticoes of the temple, and then the Romans. One of the soldiers, neither waiting for any command, nor trembling at such an attempt, but urged by a certain divine impulse, says Josephus, mounted the shoulder of his companion, thrust a burning brand in at the golden window, and thereby set fire to the building of the temple itself. Titus ran immediately to the temple, and commanded the soldiers to extinguish the flame; but neither exhortations nor threatenings could restrain their violence; they either could not, or would not hear, those behind encouraging those before to set fire to the temple. Titus was still for preserving the holy place, and commanded his soldiers to be beaten for disobeying him. But their anger and hatred of the Jews, and a certain warlike and vehement fury, overcame their reverence for their general, and their dread of his commands. A soldier, in the dark, set fire to the doors; and thus, as Josephus says, the temple was burned against the will of Cesar. The city also shared the same fate, and was burned and destroyed, as well as the temple. The Romans burned the extremest parts of the city, and demolished the walls; three towers only and some part of the wall were left standing, for the better encampment of the soldiers, and to show to posterity what a city, and how fortified, the valour of the Romans had taken. All the rest of the city was so demolished and levelled with the ground, that they who came to see it could not believe it had ever been inhabited.

Verses 3-5. *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him*—The disciples were desirous to know more of these events, when they should be, and how they should be; but thought it not proper to ask him at present, the multitude probably still crowding about him, and therefore they take an opportunity of coming unto him privately, as he was sitting upon the mount of Olives, from whence they had a full view of the city and temple, and there they prefer their request to him. *Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the*

A. M. 4037. I am Christ; ^a and shall deceive
A. D. 33. many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours
of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all

^a Verse 11.—^b 2 Chron. xv. 6; Isa.

world?—These seem to be only different expressions to denote the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem, the disciples supposing, that when the destruction of Jerusalem should take place, then would be the coming of Christ and the end of the world, or, the conclusion of the age, as *συντελεια τῷ αἰωνοῦ* should rather be translated here, and often signifies. See especially Heb. ix. 36; and 1 Cor. x. 11. Accordingly, in the parallel place of Mark xiii. 4, their question is expressed thus, *When shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?* And in that of Luke, chap. xxi. 7, thus, *When shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?* The disciples therefore inquire concerning two things; 1st, the time of the destruction of Jerusalem; and, 2d, the signs of it. The latter part of the question our Lord answers first, and treats of the signs of his coming from the 4th to the 31st verse, inclusive; and then passes on to the other part of the question, concerning the time of his coming. *Jesus answered, Take heed that no man deceive you*—The caution was more particularly designed for the succeeding Christians, whom the apostles then represented. *For many shall come in my name*—That is, as Doctor Campbell renders it, *many will assume my character*; a reading which expresses our Lord's meaning more precisely than ours. For to come in any one's name signifies more properly with us, to come by one's authority or order, real or pretended; in which sense the Messiah came in the name of God, the apostles came in the name of Christ. But this is far from being the sense of the phrase in this passage; where it plainly signifies that many would usurp his title, make pretensions to his office and character, and thereby lead their followers into the most fatal delusion, *saying, I am Christ*—Our Lord begins with this, according to all the evangelists, and they all represent him as using almost the same words: only in Luke, xxi. 8, he adds, *the time draweth near*; and indeed within a very little time this part of the prophecy began to be fulfilled. Very soon after our Saviour's decease appeared *Simon Magus*, who boasted himself among the Jews as the *Son of God*, and gave out among the Samaritans, that he was *some great one*, Acts viii. 9, 10. Of the same stamp and character was *Dositheus*, the Samaritan, who pretended that he was the Christ foretold by Moses. In the reign of Claudius, about twelve years after the death of our Saviour, when Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, an impostor, named *Theudas*, persuaded a great multitude to follow him, with their best effects, to the river Jordan, for he said that he was a prophet, and promised to divide the river for their passage; and saying these things, he deceived many, says Josephus. But Fadus sent a

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these things must come to pass, but A. M. 4037.
the end is not yet. A. D. 33.

7 For ^b nation shall rise against nation, and
kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be

xix. 2; Hag. ii. 22; Zech. xiv. 13.

troop of horse against them, who, falling unexpectedly upon them, killed many, and made many prisoners; and having taken Theudas himself alive, they cut off his head and brought it to Jerusalem. A few years afterward, in the reign of Nero, when Felix was procurator of Judea, such a number of these impostors made their appearance, that many of them were apprehended and killed every day. They seduced great numbers of the people still expecting the Messiah. Our Saviour might well, therefore, caution his disciples against them.

Verses 6-8. *And ye shall hear of wars, &c.*—This is the second sign. That there were wars and rumours of wars, appears by all the historians of those times, and above all by Josephus. To relate the particulars would be to transcribe a great part of his history of the Jewish wars. There were more especially *rumours of wars* when Caligula, the Roman emperor, ordered his statue to be set up in the temple at Jerusalem, which the Jews refused to suffer, and persisted in their refusal: and having therefore reason to apprehend a war from the Romans, were in such a consternation, that they omitted even the tilling of their lands. But this storm was soon blown over, and their fear dissipated by the timely death of that emperor. *For nation shall rise against nation, &c.*—Here Christ declares that greater disturbances than those which happened under Caligula, should fall out in the latter times of Claudius, and in the reign of Nero. The rising of *nation against nation* portended the dissensions, insurrections, and mutual slaughters of the Jews, and those of other nations, who dwelt in the same cities together; as particularly at Cesarea, where the Jews and Syrians contended about the right of the city, which contention at length proceeded so far that above twenty thousand Jews were slain, and the city was cleared of the Jewish inhabitants. At this blow the whole nation of the Jews was exasperated; and, dividing themselves into parties, they burned and plundered the neighbouring cities and villages of the Syrians, and made an immense slaughter of the people. The Syrians, in revenge, destroyed not a less number of Jews, and every city was divided into two armies. At Scythopolis the inhabitants compelled the Jews who resided among them to fight against their own countrymen, and, after the victory, basely setting upon them by night, murdered above thirteen thousand of them, and spoiled their goods. At Ascalon they killed two thousand five hundred; at Ptolemais two thousand, and made not a few prisoners. The Tyrians put many to death, and imprisoned more. The people of Gadara did likewise; and all the other cities of Syria, in proportion as they hated or feared the Jews. At Alexandria the old enmity was revived between the

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a

A. M. 4037. famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. A. D. 33.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 ⁱ Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

ⁱ Chap. x. 17; Mark xiii. 9; Luke xxi. 12; John xv. 20; xvi. 2; Acts iv. 2, 3; vii. 59; xii. 1, &c.; 1 Pet. iv. 16; Rev. ii. 10, 13.

Jews and heathen, and many fell on both sides, but of the Jews to the number of fifty thousand. The people of Damascus, too, conspired against the Jews of the same city, and, assaulting them unarmed, killed ten thousand of them. The rising of *kingdom against kingdom* portended the open wars of different tetrarchies and provinces against one another: as that of the Jews who dwelt in Peræa against the people of Philadelphia, concerning their bounds, while Cuspius Fadus was procurator; and that of the Jews and Galileans against the Samaritans, for the murder of some Galileans going up to the feast at Jerusalem, while Cumanus was procurator; and that of the whole nation of the Jews against the Romans and Agrippa, and other allies of the Roman empire. But there was not only sedition and civil war throughout Judea, but likewise in Italy, Otho and Vitellius contending for the empire. *There shall be famines and pestilences*—The third sign. There were famines, as particularly that prophesied of by Agabus, and mentioned Acts xi. 28; and by Suetonius, and other profane historians referred to by Eusebius, *which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar*, and was so severe at Jerusalem, that many perished for want of victuals—*And pestilences*, the usual attendants upon famine. Scarcity and badness of provisions almost always end in some epidemical distemper. Many died by reason of the famine in the reign of Claudius: and when Niger was killed by the Jewish zealots, he imprecated, besides other calamities, famine and pestilence upon them, (*λιμοντε και λοιμον*, the very words used by the evangelist,) all which, says Josephus, God ratified and brought to pass against the ungodly—*And earthquakes in divers places*—The fourth sign. In the time of Claudius and Nero there were great earthquakes at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Ladoicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse; in Crete also and Campania, and one at Rome in the reign of Galba. In Judea, likewise, there were judgments of the same kind. For Josephus tells us, *Bell.*, iv. cap. 4, "There happened a most terrible tempest and violent winds, with the most vehement showers, and continual lightnings, and horrid thunderings, and prodigious bellowings of the shaken earth;" so that many were led to believe that these things portended no common calamity. St. Luke mentions a fifth sign, namely, *Fearful sights and great signs from heaven*, chapter xxi. 11; where see the notes, as also on Isa. lxvi. 6. *All these are the beginning of sorrows*—Gr. *ωδινων*, a word which is properly

10 And then shall many ^k be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

11 And ^l many false prophets shall rise, and ^m shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

^k Chap. xi. 6; xiii. 57; 2 Tim. i. 15; iv. 10, 16.—^l Chap. vii. 15; Acts xx. 29; 2 Pet. ii. 1.—^m 1 Tim. iv. 1; Ver. 5, 24.

used of the pains of travailing women. As if he had said, All these are only the first pangs and throes; and are nothing to that hard labour that shall follow.

Verse 9. *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, &c.*—From the calamities of the nation in general, he passes to those of the Christians in particular: and indeed the former were in a great measure the occasion of the latter; famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and the like calamities, being reckoned judgments for the sins of the Christians, and the poor Christians being often maltreated and persecuted on that account, as we learn from some of the earliest apologies for the Christian religion. Now the calamities which were to befall the Christians were cruel persecutions, and we need look no further than the Acts of the Apostles for the completion of this prediction. But if we would look further, we have still a more melancholy proof of the truth of it in the persecutions under Nero, in which, not to mention numberless other Christians, those two great champions of the Christian faith, Peter and Paul, fell. Indeed, as Tertullian calls it, it was *no-minis prælium*, a war against the very name. For though a man was possessed of every human virtue, it was crime enough if he was a Christian; so true were our Saviour's words, that they should be *hated of all nations for his name's sake*.

Verses 10–13. *Then shall many be offended*—That is, shall stumble and fall, or shall be turned out of the right way. By reason of persecution, many apostatized from the faith, particularly those mentioned by Paul, 2 Tim. i. 15; and iv. 10. *And shall betray one another*—To illustrate this, it is sufficient to cite one sentence out of Tacitus. Speaking of the persecution under Nero, he says, "At first several were seized, who confessed, and then by their discovery a great multitude of others were convicted and barbarously executed." *And many false prophets shall rise*—Or false teachers, namely, in the Christian Church. Such were Simon Magus, and his followers, the Gnostics, who were very numerous. Such also were the Judaizing teachers, termed by Paul, 2 Cor. xi. 13, *false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ*. Such likewise were Hymeneus and Philetus, 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. *And the love of many shall wax cold*—Because of these trials and persecutions from without, and these apostacies and false teachers from within the church, the love of many to Christ and his doctrine, and to one another, shall

A. M. 4037. 13 ^a But he that shall endure unto
A. D. 33. the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this ^o gospel of the kingdom ^p shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 ^q When ye, therefore, shall see the abo-

^a Chap. x. 22; Mark xiii. 13; Heb. iii. 6, 14; Rev. ii. 10.
^o Chap. iv. 23; ix. 35.

war cold. Some shall openly desert the faith, as verse 10; others corrupt it, as verse 11; and others grow indifferent about it, as verse 12. *But he that shall endure unto the end*—He who shall not be terrified by these trials and persecutions; who shall neither apostatize from the faith himself, nor seduce nor be seduced by others; he who shall not be ashamed to profess his faith in Christ, and his love to the brethren, nor be deterred therefrom: *the same shall be saved*—Both here and hereafter. It is very remarkable, and was certainly a most signal act of Providence, that none of the Christians perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. See on verse 16. So true and prophetic also was that assertion of St. Peter upon this same occasion, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*, 2 Pet. ii. 9.

Verse 14. *This gospel of the kingdom*—Namely, of the kingdom of God; *shall be preached in all the world*—Not universally; this is not yet done; but in general, through the several parts of the world, and not only in Judea. And this was done by St. Paul and the other apostles, before Jerusalem was destroyed; for a witness to all nations that I am the Christ. *And then shall the end come*—Of the city and temple: that is, when all nations shall, or may be convinced, by the preaching of the gospel, of the crying sin of the Jews in crucifying the Lord of glory; then shall the justice of God bring these dreadful judgments upon that people. The Acts of the Apostles, it must be observed, contain only a small part of the history of a small number of the apostles, and yet even in that history we see the gospel was widely disseminated, and had taken root in the most considerable parts of the Roman empire. As early as in the reign of Nero, as we learn from Tacitus, (*Annal.*, l. xv.) the Christians were grown so numerous at Rome as to raise the jealousy of the government, and the first general persecution was commenced against them, under pretence of their having set fire to the city, of which the emperor himself was really guilty, but wished to transfer the blame and odium of the action on the poor innocent Christians. Clement, who was contemporary and a fellow-labourer with Paul, says of him, (see his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians,) that he was a preacher both in the *east* and *west*, and that he taught the whole world righteousness. And if such were the labours of one apostle, though the chief of them, what were the united labours of them all? It appears indeed from the writers of the history of the church, that before the destruction of Jerusalem the gospel was not only preached in the Lesser Asia, Greece, and Italy, the great theatres of action then

mination of desolation, spoken of by A. M. 4037.
^r Daniel the prophet, stand in the ^{A. D. 33.}
holy place, (^swhoso readeth, let him understand,)

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:

^p Rom. x. 18; Col. i. 6, 23.—^q Mark xiii. 14; Luke xxi. 20.
^r Dan. ix. 27; xii. 11.—^s Dan. ix. 23, 25.

in the world; but likewise propagated as far *north* as Scythia; as far *south* as Ethiopia; as far *east* as Parthia and India; as far *west* as Spain and Britain.

Verse 15. *When ye shall see, &c.*—The preceding verses foretold the signs of the destruction of Jerusalem, that is, the circumstances which were to be the forerunners and attendants of that great event: we now proceed to those verses which respect what happened during the siege, and after it. Never was a prophecy more punctually fulfilled: and it will tend to confirm our faith in the gospel to trace the particulars. *The abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel*—Daniel's expression is, *The abomination that maketh desolate*. By which term is intended the desolating Roman armies with their standards. To every legion was a golden eagle with expanded wings, grasping a thunderbolt. These eagles, with the standards of the cohorts, ten in each legion, were objects of worship among the Romans, and therefore were an abomination to the Jews. We learn from Josephus, that after the city was taken, the Romans brought their ensigns into the temple, and placed them over against the eastern gate, and there sacrificed to them. See the note on Dan. ix. 27. *Stand in the holy place*—Or, as it is in Mark, *standing where it ought not*—That is, when ye shall see these armies encamped in the territory near Jerusalem: for, as the city was called the *holy city*, several furlongs of land round about it were accounted *holy*, particularly the mount on which our Lord now sat, and on which afterward the Romans placed their ensigns: *whoso readeth, let him understand*—As if he had said, Let him who reads that remarkable prophecy of Daniel's, pause seriously upon it, and weigh well its meaning, for it contains one of the most eminent predictions which can anywhere be found of the time, purposes, and consequences of my appearing; or, the sense may be, Let him understand that the end of the city and sanctuary, with the ceasing of the sacrifice and oblation there predicted, is come, and of consequence, the end of the age mentioned in the preceding verse. This interpretation of the clause supposes it to be uttered by our Lord as a part of his discourse, in which light it is considered by most commentators. But, "after the strictest examination," says Dr. Campbell, (following Bengelius,) "I cannot help concluding, that they are not the words of our Lord, and consequently make no part of this memorable discourse, but the words of the evangelist, calling the attention of his readers to a very important warning and precept of his Master, which he was then writing, (namely, that immediately following.)"

A. M. 4037. 17 Let him which is on the house-
A. D. 33. top not come down to take any thing
out of his house :

18 Neither let him which is in the field
return back to take his clothes.

19 And 'wo unto them that are with child,
and to them that give suck in those days !

¹ Luke xxiii. 29.

and of which many of them would live to see the utility, when the completion of these predictions should begin to take place." The doctor, therefore, renders the words, *Reader, attend ! Let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains—Let them flee as fast as they can from the fortified cities and populous towns into the wilderness, where they will be secure.* This important advice the Christians remembered and wisely followed, and were preserved. It is remarkable, that after the Romans, under Cestius Gallus, made their first advance toward Jerusalem, they suddenly withdrew again, in a most unexpected and impolitic manner. "This conduct of the Roman general," says Macknight, "so contrary to all the rules of prudence, was doubtless brought to pass by the providence of God, who interposed in this manner for the deliverance of the disciples of his Son." For, at this juncture, the Christians, considering it as a signal to retire, left Jerusalem, and removed to Pella and other places beyond the river Jordan, so that they all marvellously escaped the general ruin of their country, and we do not read anywhere that so much as one of them perished. Of such signal service was this caution of our Lord to his followers !

Verses 17-19. *Let him who is on the house-top not come down*—It is well known that the houses of the Jews, as well as those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, were flat on the top, for them to walk upon, and had usually stairs on the outside, by which they might ascend and descend without coming into the house. In the walled cities, these flat-roofed houses usually formed continued terraces from one end of the city to the other, which terraces terminated at the gates. The meaning therefore here is, *Let not him who is walking on the house-top come down to take any thing out of his house ; but let him instantly pursue his course along the tops of houses, and escape out of the city gate as fast as he possibly can.* *Neither let him which is in the field, &c.*—Our Saviour makes use of these expressions to intimate, that their flight must be as sudden and hasty as Lot's was out of Sodom. And the Christians escaping just as they did was the more providential, because afterward all egress from the city was prevented. *And wo unto them that are with child, &c.*—For such will not be in a condition to flee, neither will they be well able to endure the distress and hardships of the siege. This wo was sufficiently fulfilled in the cruel slaughters which were made both of the women and children, and particularly in that grievous famine which so miserably afflicted Jerusalem during the siege. See notes on Deut. xxviii. 53-57.

20 But pray ye that your flight be
not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day :

21 For "then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be short-

² Dan. ix. 26 ; xii. 1 ; Joel ii. 2.

Verses 20, 21. *But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter*—For the inclemency of the season, the badness of the roads, the shortness of the days, will all be great impediments to your flight: *neither on the sabbath day*—That you may not raise the indignation of the Jews by travelling on that day, and so meet with that death out of the city which you had endeavoured to escape by removing from it. Besides, many of them would have scrupled to travel far on that day ; the Jews thinking it unlawful to walk above two thousand paces, (two miles,) on the sabbath day. In the parallel place in Mark, this latter clause, about the sabbath day, is not mentioned. *For then shall be great tribulation*—Never had words a more sad or full accomplishment than these: for the miseries which befell this people about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, were such as no history can parallel. Within the city the fury of the opposite factions was so great that they filled all places, and even the temple itself, with continual slaughters. Nay, to such a pitch did their madness arise, that they destroyed the very granaries of corn which should have sustained them, and burned the magazines of arms which should have defended them. By these means, when the siege had lasted but two months, the famine began to rage, and at length reduced them to such straits, that the barbarities which they practised are not to be imagined ; see Josephus, *Bell.*, vi. 11. Even the mothers ate their own children, *ibid.*, vii. 8. In short, from the beginning of the siege to the taking of the city, there were slain by faction, by famine, by pestilence, and by the enemy, no less than one million one hundred thousand in Jerusalem. So that, as Josephus himself observes, in his preface to his history of this war : "If all the calamities which the world, from the beginning, hath seen, were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear inferior." And again, in another place he says, "To speak in brief, no other city ever suffered such things, as no generation from the beginning of the world was ever more fruitful of wickedness." And that the peculiar hand of Providence was visible in this destruction of the nation, the same author affirms. For, having described the vast multitudes of people that were in Jerusalem when it was besieged, he says, *Bell.*, vii. 17, "This multitude was assembled together from other places, and was there, by the providence of God, shut up, as it were, in a prison." Besides, he tells us that Titus himself took notice that the Jews were urged on by God himself to their destruction.

Verse 22. *Except those days should be shortened,*

A. M. 4037. ened, there should no flesh be saved :
A. D. 33. * but for the elect's sake those days
shall be shortened.

23 ¶ Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo,
here is Christ, or there : believe it not.

* Isa. lrv. 8, 9 ; Zech. xiv. 2, 3.—¶ Mark xiii. 21 ; Luke
xvii. 23 ; xxi. 8.

&c.—If these wars and desolations were to continue for any length of time, none of the Jews would escape destruction; they would all be cut off, root and branch. For the calamities will be so severe that, like fire, they would soon consume all, and leave nothing for themselves to prey on. *But for the elect's sake*—For the sake of those Jews that shall embrace the gospel; *those days shall be shortened*—*The elect*, is a well-known appellation in Scripture and antiquity for the Christians; and the Christian Jews, partly through the fury of the Zealots on the one hand, and the hatred of the Romans on the other; and partly through the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains without houses or provisions; would in all probability have been almost all destroyed, either by sword or by the famine, if the days had not been shortened. But providentially the days were shortened. Titus himself was desirous of putting a speedy end to the siege, having Rome, and the riches and pleasures there, before his eyes. Some of his officers proposed to him to turn the siege into a blockade, and since they could not take the city by storm, to starve it into a surrender; but he thought it not becoming to sit still with so great an army; he feared lest the length of the time should diminish the glory of his success. The besieged, too, helped to shorten the days, by their divisions and mutual slaughters; by burning their provisions, which would have sufficed for many years, and fatally deserting their strongest holds, where they could never have been taken by force, but by famine alone. Indeed, Jerusalem was so well fortified, and so well fitted to sustain a longer siege, that it could not have been taken in so short a time by the enemy *without*, had it not been for the factions and seditious *within*. Titus himself could not but ascribe the success to God, as he was viewing the fortifications after the city was taken. His words to his friends were very remarkable. “We have fought,” said he, “with God on our side, ο θεος ην ο των δε ερματων Ισδαιους καθελων, it is God who hath pulled the Jews out of these strong holds; for what could the hands of men, or machines, do against these towers?” God, therefore, in the opinion of Titus, as well as of the evangelist, *shortened these days*. After the destruction of Jerusalem too, God inclined the heart of Titus to take some pity upon the remnant of the Jews, and to restrain the nations from exercising the cruelty that they would have exercised against them. At Antioch, particularly, the senate importuned him to expel the Jews from the city: but he answered that their country being laid waste, there was no place to receive them. They then requested him to deprive the Jews of their former privileges; but those he per-

24 For * there shall arise false A. M. 4037.
Christs, and false prophets, and shall A. D. 33.
show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if
* it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.
25 Behold, I have told you before.

* Deut. xiii. 1 ; Ver. 5, 11 ; 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10, 11 ; Rev. xiii. 13
* John vi. 37 ; x. 28, 29 ; Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30 ; 2 Tim. ii. 19

mitted them to enjoy as before. Thus, *for the elect's sake those days of persecution were shortened*.

Verses 23–26. *If any man say, Lo, here is Christ, or there*—During the terrible calamities here foretold, the expectations of the nation were all turned toward their Messiah; for they thought if ever he was to appear, it would be then, to deliver them from the impending destruction. Hence many arose, pretending to be the Messiah, and boasting that they would deliver the nation; the effect of which was, that the multitude, giving credit to these deceivers, became obstinate in their opposition to the Romans, whereby their destruction was rendered both the more severe and the more inevitable. Our Lord, it must be observed, had cautioned his disciples against false Christs and false prophets before, (see verse 5,) but what he here says is not to be considered as a repetition of that, but relates to those impostors who should appear during the time of the siege. And, in fact, many such impostors did arise about that time, as we learn from Josephus, (lib. vi. cap. 5, § 2,) and promised deliverance from God, being suborned by the tyrants or governors, to prevent the people and soldiers from deserting to the Romans; and the lower the Jews were reduced, the more disposed were they to listen to these deceptions, and the more ready to follow the deceivers. Hegeppus also, quoted by Eusebius, mentions the coming of false Christs and false prophets about the same time. *And shall show great signs*—As it was to little purpose for a man to take upon him the character of the Christ, or even of a prophet, without miracles to vouch his mission; so it was the common artifice and pretence of these impostors to show signs and wonders, σημεια και τερατα, the very words used by Christ in this prophecy, and by Josephus in his history. *Behold, I have told you before*—Behold, I have given you sufficient warning. *If they shall say, He is in the desert*—It is surprising that our Lord should not only foretel the appearance of these impostors, but also the manner and circumstances of their conduct. For some he mentions as appearing in the desert, and some in the *secret chambers*; and the event, in all points, answered to the prediction. Josephus says (*Antiq.*, lib. xx. cap. 7, and *Bell. Jud.*, lib. ii. cap. 13,) that “many impostors and cheats persuaded the people to follow them into the desert, where they promised to show manifest wonders and signs done by the providence of God; and many, being persuaded, suffered the punishment of their folly.” And he mentions an Egyptian false prophet, *Antiq.*, xx. 7, (spoken of also Acts xxi. 38.) who *led out into the desert four thousand men who were murderers*; and who were all taken or destroyed by

A. M. 4037. 26 Wherefore, if they shall say unto
A. D. 33. you, Behold, he is in the desert; go
not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret cham-
bers; believe *it* not.

27 ^b For as the lightning cometh out of the
east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall
also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 ^o For wheresoever the carcass is, there
will the eagles be gathered together.

29 ^d Immediately after the tribulation of those

^b Luke xvii. 24.—^c Job xxxix. 30; Luke xvii. 37.—^d Dan.
vii. 11, 12.—^e Isa. xiii. 10; Ez. xxxii. 7; Joel ii. 10, 31; iii. 15;
Amos v. 20; viii. 9; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxi. 25; Acts ii. 20;

Felix: another impostor is also mentioned by the same author, who promised deliverance to the people if they would follow him into the desert, but Festus sent horse and foot against him, and destroyed both him and his followers. These things happened before the destruction of Jerusalem; and a little after, one Jonathan, a weaver, persuaded many to follow him into the desert, most or all of whom were slain or made prisoners, and he himself taken and burned alive, by order of Vespasian. As several of these impostors thus conducted their followers into the desert, so did others into the *secret chambers*, or places of security. One of these (according to Josephus, *Bell.*, vi. 5) declared to the people in the city, that God commanded them to go up into the temple, and there they should receive the signs of deliverance. A multitude of men, women, and children went up accordingly; but, instead of deliverance, the place was set on fire by the Romans, and six thousand perished miserably in the flames, by throwing themselves down to escape them. Our Saviour therefore might well caution his disciples both against the former and the latter sort of these deceivers.

Verses 27, 28. *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, &c.*—The coming of the Son of man shall be in a very different manner, and for very different ends from what you are imagining. It shall be like lightning, swift, unexpected, and destructive. His appearance will be as distinguishable from that of every false Christ, as lightning, which shines all round the hemisphere, is from a blaze of straw. What Bishop Pearce observes from Josephus is very memorable, that “the Roman army entered into Judea on the east side of it, and carried on their conquests westward, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the very route which the army would take, was intended in the comparison of the lightning coming out of the east, and shining even unto the west.” *For wheresoever the carcass is, &c.*—For though the coming of the Son of man shall be like lightning, swift, spreading, and destructive, yet he will not come personally; his servants only shall come, the Roman armies, who by his command shall destroy this nation as eagles devour their prey. Thus our Lord, after his usual manner, applies a proverbial expression with a particular meaning; and the Romans are very properly compared to

days, ^o shall the sun be darkened, and ^{A. M. 4037}
^{A. D. 33.} the moon shall not give her light, and
the stars shall fall from heaven, and the
powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 ^f And then shall appear the sign of the
Son of man in heaven: ^g and then shall all
the tribes of the earth mourn, ^h and they shall
see the Son of man coming in the clouds of
heaven with power and great glory.

31 ⁱ And he shall send his angels ^j with a

Rev. vi. 12.—^f Dan. vii. 13.—^g Zech. xii. 12.—^h Chap. xvi.
27; Mark xiii. 26; Rev. i. 7.—ⁱ Chap. xiii. 41; 1 Cor. xv. 52;
1 Thess. iv. 16.—^j Or, with a trumpet, and a great voice.

cagles, both because eagles are the fiercest birds of prey, and because the Roman ensign was an eagle, to which probably our Lord alluded in this passage.

Verse 29. *Immediately after, &c.*—We are now come to the last act of this dismal tragedy, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final dissolution of the Jewish polity in church and state, which our Lord, for several reasons, might not think fit to declare nakedly and plainly, and therefore chose to clothe his discourse in figurative language. Commentators, indeed, have generally understood this, and what follows, of the end of the world, and of Christ's coming to judgment: but the words, *immediately after the tribulation of those days*, show evidently that he is not speaking of any distant event, but of something immediately consequent upon the tribulation before mentioned, and that must be the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem, and the abolition of the Jewish polity, civil and religious. It is true, his figures are very strong, but not stronger than those used by the ancient prophets upon similar occasions. The Prophet Isaiah speaks in the same manner of the destruction of Babylon, chap. xiii. 10, *The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.* The Prophet Ezekiel describes in similar terms the destruction coming on Egypt, chap. xxxii. 7, 8. *When I shall put thee out I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.* The Prophet Daniel also uses similar language, when speaking of the slaughter of the Jews by the little horn, meaning probably Antiochus Epiphanes: *And it waxed great even unto the host of heaven; and cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.* And lastly, God, by Joel, foretelling this very same destruction of Jerusalem, chap. ii. 30, 31, says, *I will show wonders in heaven and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood.* So that great commotions and revolutions upon earth are often represented by commotions and changes in the heavens.

Verses 30, 31. *Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven*—Christ proceeds here ir

A. M. 4037. great sound of a trumpet, and they
A. D. 33. shall gather together his elect from
the four winds, from one end of heaven to the
other.

32 ¶ Now learn ^a a parable of the fig-tree;
When his branch is yet tender, and putteth
forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh :

^a Luke xxi. 29.—James v. 9.—² Or, *he*.—³ Chap. xvi.
23; xxiii. 36; Mark xiii. 30; Luke xxi. 32.

the same figurative style, and the plain meaning of his words is, that the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish state, civil and religious, would be such a remarkable instance of divine vengeance, and such a signal manifestation of Christ's power and glory, that all the Jewish tribes should mourn, and many should be led from thence to acknowledge him for the true Messiah. To explain this further it may be observed, "The *sign from heaven*, which both the disciples and Pharisees expected, was some visible appearance of the Messiah in the clouds, and some miraculous interposition of his power, by which the Romans, the masters of the world, were to be destroyed, and a universal empire over all nations erected in behalf of the Jews. This sign they were led to expect, because Daniel had said prophetically, of the Son of man, (chap. vii. 13.) that he saw him *coming in the clouds of heaven*, and that there was given him *dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, &c.* Nevertheless, by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds, Daniel meant his interposing for the destruction of his enemies, particularly the unbelieving Jews; and the erection of his own kingdom over all nations; a spiritual kingdom, a new dispensation of religion, which should comprehend the whole world within its pale. Therefore, to show the disciples that they had mistaken the prophecy, which referred wholly to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the conversion of the Gentiles, he adopted it into his prediction of these events, and thereby settled its true meaning."—Macknight. The figurative expression, *Coming in the clouds of heaven*, in several other passages of Scripture, signifies God's interposing evidently and irresistibly, to execute vengeance on a wicked generation, and to assert his own government over the world. See 2 Sam. xxii. 10-12; Psa. xcvi. 2; Isa. xix. 1. *He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, &c.*—This also is in the style of the prophets, and, stripped of its figures, means only that after the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ by his angels, or ministers, going forth with their powerful preaching, termed here *the great sound of a trumpet*, should gather to himself a glorious church, out of all the nations under heaven: that the Jews being thrust out, as he expresses it, Luke xiii. 28, &c., believers should *come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and should sit down in the kingdom of God.* Agreeably to this interpretation, we find the name *αγγελους*, angels, used of common messengers, James ii. 25; and

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall
see all these things, know ¹ that ² it
is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, ^m This generation
shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 ⁿ Heaven and earth shall pass away, but
my words shall not pass away.

^a Psa. cii. 26; Isa. li. 6; Jer. xxxi. 35, 36; Chap. v. 18; Mark
xiii. 31; Luke xxi. 33; Heb. i. 11.

of the ministers of the Asian churches, Rev. ii., iii.; of prophets, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; and of priests, Mal. ii. 7. And the preaching of the messengers of God is compared to the sound of a trumpet, Isa. lviii. 1; Jer. vi. 17; Ezek. xxxiii. 3-6. No person, versed at all in ecclesiastical history, needs to be told that the Christian religion spread and prevailed mightily after this period; and that hardly any one thing contributed more to this success of the gospel than the destruction of Jerusalem and the ruin of the Jewish nation, falling out in the very manner and with the very circumstances so particularly foretold by our Lord.

Verses 32-35. *Now learn a parable of the fig-tree*—Our Lord proceeds to declare that the signs which he had given would be as certain an indication of the time of his coming, as the fig-tree's putting forth its leaves is of the approach of summer; and that the time of his coming was at no great distance. For he adds, *This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled*,—Hereby evidently showing that he had been speaking all this while only of the calamities coming on the Jews, and the destruction of Jerusalem. "It is to me a wonder," says Bishop Newton, "how any man can refer part of the foregoing discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem, and part to the end of the world, or any other distant event, when it is said so positively here in the conclusion, *All these things shall be fulfilled in this generation.* And it seems as if our Lord had been aware of some such misapplication of his words, by adding yet greater force and emphasis to his affirmation, verse 35, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*—That is, heaven and earth shall sooner, or more easily pass away than my words; the frame of the universe shall sooner, or more easily pass away than my words shall not be fulfilled. In another place, (chap. xvi. 28.) he says, *There are some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom*, intimating that the event would not take place immediately, and yet not at such a distance of time but that some then living would be spectators of the calamities coming upon the nation. In like manner, he says to the women who bewailed him as he was going to be crucified, Luke xxiii. 28, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children*; which words sufficiently implied that the days of distress and misery were coming, and would fall on them and

A. M. 4037. 36 ¶ ° But of that day and hour
A. D. 33. knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels
of heaven, ° but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall
also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 ¶ For as in the days that were before the
flood, they were eating and drinking, marry-

ing and giving in marriage, until the A. M. 4037.
day that Noe entered into the ark, A. D. 33.

39 And knew not until the flood came, and
took them all away: so shall also the coming
of the Son of man be.

40 ¶ Then shall two be in the field; the one
shall be taken, and the other left.

° Mark xiii. 32; Acts i. 7; 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Peter. iii. 10.
¶ Zech. xiv. 7.

¶ Gen. vi. 3, 4, 5; vii. 5; Luke xvii. 26; 1 Pet. iii. 20.
* Luke xvii. 34, &c.

their children. But at that time there was not any
appearance of such an immediate ruin. The wisest
politician could not have inferred any such thing
from the then present state of affairs. Nothing less
than divine prescience could have foreseen and
foretold it."

Verse 36. *But of that day and hour knoweth no
man, &c.*—I consider *opa, hour*, here, says Grotius,
as denoting, not a part of a day, but a larger por-
tion of time. So also Bishop Newton, who observes,
"It would seem improper to say, *Of that day and
hour knoweth no man*; for if the *day* was not
known, certainly the *hour* was not, and it was super-
fluous to make such an addition. I conceive, there-
fore, that the passage should be rendered, *Of that
day and season knoweth no man*, as the word is
frequently used in the best authors, both sacred and
profane. It is true, our Saviour declares, 'All these
things shall be fulfilled in this generation;' it is true
also, the Prophet Daniel hath given some intimation
of the time in his famous prophecy of the 70 weeks;
but though this great revolution was to happen to-
ward the conclusion of 70 weeks, or 490 years, to
be computed from a certain date that is not easy to
be fixed; yet the particular *day*, the particular *sea-
son* in which it was to happen, might still remain a
secret to men and angels: and our Lord had before,
(verse 20,) advised his disciples to pray, that their
flight might not be in the winter, nor on the sabbath
day; the *day* not being known, they were to pray
that their flight might not be on the *sabbath day*;
the *season* not being known, they were to pray that
it might not be in the *winter*."

Verses 37-41. *But as the days of Noe were, &c.*—
As then they were eating and drinking, marrying
and giving in marriage, till they were surprised by
the flood, notwithstanding the frequent warnings
and admonitions of that preacher of righteousness:
so now, they shall be engaged in the business and
pleasures of the world, little expecting, little think-
ing of this universal ruin, till it come upon them,
notwithstanding the express predictions and decla-
rations of Christ and his apostles. *Then shall two
be in the field, &c.*—That is, Providence will then
make a distinction between such as are not at all
distinguished now. Some shall be rescued from the
destruction of Jerusalem, like Lot out of the burning
of Sodom; while others, nowise different in outward
circumstances, shall be left to perish in it. *Two
women shall be grinding at the mill*—A passage in
Dr. E. Daniel Clarke's *Travels in Greece, Egypt,*

and the Holy Land, published in 1812, (p. 428,) may fitly be quoted here. "Scarcely had we reached the apartment prepared for our reception," (namely, in Nazareth,) "when, looking from the window into the court-yard belonging to the house, we beheld two women grinding at the mill in a manner most forcibly illustrating a saying of our Saviour's. In the centre of the upper stone was a cavity for pouring in the corn, and by the side of this an upright wooden handle for moving the stone. As the operation began, one of the women, with her right hand, pushed this handle to the woman opposite, who again sent it to her companion; thus communicating a rotatory and very rapid motion to the upper stone, their left hands being all the while employed in supplying fresh corn, as fast as the bran and flour escaped from the sides of the machine."

Hitherto we have explained the contents of this chapter as relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, of which, without doubt, it is primarily to be understood. But though it is to be understood of this *primarily*, yet not of this *only*; for there is no question that our Lord had a further view in it. It is usual with the prophets to frame and express their prophecies so as that they shall comprehend more than one event, and have their several periods of completion. This every one must have observed who has been ever so little conversant in the writings of the ancient prophets, and this doubtless is the case here; and the destruction of Jerusalem is to be considered as typical of the end of the world, of which the destruction of a great city is a lively type and image. And we may observe that our Saviour no sooner begins to speak of the destruction of Jerusalem, than his figures are raised, his language swelled, (*The sun shall be darkened, &c.*) and he expresses himself in such terms as, in a lower and figurative sense indeed, are applicable to that destruction; but in their higher and literal sense, can be meant only of the end of the world. The same may be said of that text, *Of that day and season knoweth no man, &c.*: the consistence and connection of the discourse oblige us to understand it as spoken of the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, but in a higher sense it may be true also of the time of the end of the world, and of the general judgment. All the subsequent discourse too, we may observe, does not relate so properly to the destruction of Jerusalem as to the end of the world and the general judgment. Our Lord loses sight, as it were, of his former subject, and adapts his dis-

A. M. 4037. 41 Two women shall be grinding
A. D. 33. at the mill; the one shall be taken,
and the other left.

42 ¶ Watch therefore; for ye know not
what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good man
of the house had known in what watch the
thief would come, he would have watched,
and would not have suffered his house to be
broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such
an hour as ye think not, the Son of man
cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant,
whom his lord hath made ruler over his house-
hold, to give them meat in due season?

* Chap. xxv. 18; Mark xiii. 33, &c.; Luke xxi. 36.—¹ Luke
xii. 39; 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15.—² Ch.
xxv. 13; 1 Thess. v. 6.

course more to the latter. And, indeed, the end of
the Jewish state was, in a manner, the end of the
world to many of the Jews.

It appears next to impossible that any man should
duly consider these prophecies, and the exact com-
pletion of them, and, if he is a believer, not be
confirmed in the faith; or, if he is an infidel, not be
converted. Can any stronger proof be given of a
divine revelation than the spirit of prophecy; or of
the spirit of prophecy, than the examples now be-
fore us, in which so many contingencies, and we
may say, improbabilities, which human wisdom or
prudence could never have foreseen, are so particu-
larly foretold, and so punctually accomplished! At
the time when Christ pronounced these prophecies,
the Roman governor resided at Jerusalem, and had
a force sufficient to keep the people in obedience;
and could human prudence foresee that the city, as
well as the country, would revolt and rebel against
the Romans? Could it foresee *pestilences*, and *fa-
mines*, and *earthquakes* in divers places? Could it
foresee the speedy propagation of the gospel, so
contrary to all human probability? Could human
prudence foresee such an utter destruction of Jeru-
salem, with all the circumstances preceding and
following it? It was never the custom of the Ro-
mans absolutely to ruin any of their provinces. It
was improbable, therefore, that such a thing should
happen at all, and still more improbable that it
should happen under the humane and generous Ti-
tus, who was indeed, as he was called, *the love and
delight of mankind*. Yet, however improbable this
was, it has happened, and it was foreseen and fore-
told by Christ; but how was it possible for him to
foresee it, unless his foresight was divine, and his
prediction the infallible oracle of God? Eusebius
observes well upon this place, that, "Whoever shall
compare the words of our Saviour with the history
which Josephus has written of the war, cannot but

46 Blessed is that servant, whom A. M. 4037
his lord, when he cometh, shall find A. D. 33.
so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall
make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in
his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow-
servants, and to eat and drink with the
drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a
day when he looketh not for him, and in an
hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint
him his portion with the hypocrites: there
shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

* Luke xii. 42; Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. iv. 2; Heb. iii. 5.—⁷ Rev.
xvii. 15.—² Chap. xxv. 21, 23; Luke xxii. 29.—³ Or, cut him
off.—⁴ Chap. viii. 1; xxv. 30.

admire the wisdom of Christ, and acknowledge his
prediction to be divine."

Verses 42-44. *Watch therefore*—Let your mind
be thoroughly awake to a sense of the certainty and
importance of these things, and be on your guard
that they may not overtake you unawares, but that
you may be prepared to meet Christ in the way of
judgment or mercy; *for ye know not what hour
your Lord cometh*—Either to avenge himself of
this nation, to require your soul of you, or to call
you and all mankind to his bar. *Be ye also ready*
—By being assured of God's favour, and stamped
with his image, and by a holy deadness to the ob-
jects of this uncertain and transitory world, which
you are so soon to leave, and may be called to leave
at a moment's warning; be prepared to receive every
event of divine providence with resignation to God's
will, and a perfect acquiescence in the wisdom of
all his dispensations, fully persuaded that *all things
shall work for good to them that love him*.

Verses 45-51. *Who then is the faithful and wise
servant*—Which of you aspires after this character?
Wise—Every moment retaining the clearest convic-
tion that all he now has is only intrusted to him as
a steward: *Faithful*—Thinking, speaking, and act-
ing continually in a manner suitable to that convic-
tion. *Whom his lord hath made ruler over his
household*—This evidently chiefly concerns the mi-
nisters of the gospel. See notes on Luke xii. 42, &c.
Blessed is that servant, &c.—"You, the ministers
of religion, ought to be peculiarly faithful in the
discharge of your duty; for it is not an ordinary
trust that is committed to your charge. You are
stewards, whose business it is to take care of the
whole family, and who, because of the influence
which your example may have upon others, ought
to be remarkably diligent. Your duty is to be well
acquainted with the stores of evangelical truths, and
to understand how they may be best applied. You

should know likewise the various characters of the persons under your charge, that you may be able to give every one of them his portion of meat in due season. *Verily, he shall make him ruler over all his goods*—If when I come I find you thus employed, I will highly reward you with the glories and joys of my kingdom, even as an earthly master bestows particular marks of respect on such servants as have been remarkably faithful in any important trust.” *But if that evil servant*—Now become evil, having put away faith and a good conscience, shall say in his heart, *My lord delayeth, &c.*—“On the other hand, if you behave like wicked stewards, who, because their lord delays his coming, beat their fellow-servants and get drunk with sots and epicures; if you tyrannise over the consciences of your brethren, neglect the duties of your function, and give yourselves up to sensual pleasures, I will come when you

little think of it, and will make you dreadful examples of my indignation, by the severe punishments which I will inflict upon you.” *And shall cut him asunder*—Tearing and cutting persons into several pieces, was one of the severest kinds of punishment anciently used, and is here put for the extreme misery that awaits the persons here described in the other world. *And appoint him his portion with the hypocrites*—The worst of sinners. If ministers are the persons here primarily intended, there is a peculiar propriety in the expression. For no hypocrisy can be baser than to call ourselves ministers of Christ while we are the slaves of avarice, ambition, or sensuality. Wherever such are found, may God reform them by his grace, or disarm them of that power and influence which they continually abuse to his dishonour, and to their own aggravated damnation!

CHAPTER XXV.

In this chapter our Lord, continuing his discourse, enforces his exhortation to watchfulness, and a perpetual readiness for Christ's coming. (1.) By the parable of the ten virgins, 1–13. (2.) By the parable of the talents, which were delivered to three servants, 14–30. (3.) By a more plain representation of the last judgment, calculated to promote a constant readiness to receive our final sentence and everlasting portion, 31–46.

A. M. 4037. **T**HEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins,

which took their lamps, and went forth to meet ^a the bridegroom. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

^a Eph. v. 29, 30;

Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2, 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXV.

Verse 1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven, &c.*—Our Lord, having fully informed his disciples of the circumstances and general season of his coming to destroy the Jewish place and nation, that lively, earnest, and strong figure of his future coming to judge the world; he passes, as we have seen, by a natural transition, to a declaration of that dread event; of the watchfulness necessary thereto; and of the punishment to be inflicted upon those who should neglect so to watch and prepare for their Lord's coming. Referring to these events, he here proceeds to say, *Then*—When the Lord shall thus come to execute judgment on the Jewish nation, or to judge mankind in general, and punish the wicked servant, *shall the kingdom of heaven*—The gospel kingdom, or the state of things in the visible church, particularly the character, conduct, and lot of the subjects of that kingdom; *be likened unto ten virgins*—Or may be represented by the character, conduct, and fate of virgins at a wedding. In order to understand this parable, we must remember that here is an allusion to the customs of the Jewish marriages, as well as those of the other eastern countries. “With them it was usual for the bridegroom to bring home his bride in the evening,

sooner or later, as it might happen. And that she might be received properly at his house, his female friends of the younger sort were invited to come and wait with lamps, till some of his retinue, despatched before the rest, brought word that he was at hand; upon which they went forth, with their lamps trimmed and burning, to welcome him, and conduct him with his bride into the house. And for this service they had the honour of being guests at the marriage-feast.” To ten such virgins our Lord compares the candidates for the heavenly kingdom, the complete number of all Christian professors: he mentions *ten*, because this, it seems, was the general number appointed at their weddings to wait upon the bridegroom. And he compares professors to *virgins*, to signify the purity required in the Christian character, or perhaps merely because the allusion in the parable so required it. *Which took their lamps, &c.*—The lamp means a religious profession, and every one may then be said to take up this lamp, when admitted into the outward church by baptism; and *went forth to meet the bridegroom*—The bridegroom means the Lord Jesus in this parable, as well as in that recorded chap. xxii. 2, &c.; and every one that professes to expect and prepare for his coming,

A. M. 4037. 2 ^b And five of them were wise, A. D. 33. and five *were* foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them :

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, ^c they all slumbered and slept.

^b Chap. xiii. 47; xxii. 10.—^c 1 Thess. v. 6.—^d Chap.

whether to call men hence by death, or to summon them to his bar, may be said to go forth to meet him.

Verses 2-4. *And five of them were wise*—Prudent and provident; *and five foolish*—Inconsiderate and careless. *These latter took their lamps*—Took up a profession of the true religion; *but took no oil with them*—No more than kept them burning just for the present. None to supply their future want, to recruit their lamps' decay. They did not receive or maintain the saving grace of God, did not get or keep faith *working by love*, an interest in and union with Christ the good olive, or the life of God in their souls. *But the wise took oil in their vessels, &c.*—Together with the lamp of an external profession, they secured and maintained vital godliness, through the indwelling of the Spirit of God, and *living in the Spirit*, they *walked in the Spirit*, seeking daily a fresh supply of spiritual strength, till their faith was made perfect.

Verse 5. *While the bridegroom tarried*—That is, before they were called to attend him; *they all slumbered and slept*—That is, all Christians, so called, good and bad, sincere and hypocrites, those who really love and wait for the bridegroom, and those who only profess to do so; lie down together in the sleep of death: all, while the bridegroom delays to come, slumber in the grave, with respect to their bodies, and sleep till the great call, that shall awake them to different situations. This is undoubtedly the meaning of this clause, if by the coming of the bridegroom we understand Christ's coming to raise the dead and judge mankind, which seems evidently to be primarily intended thereby. But if we also consider it as referring to calamities coming on the Jews, or to his calling us hence by death, the spiritual slumbering and sleeping of the professors of Christianity must be intended, and the meaning of the clause must be, that while Christ defers to come in these senses, instead of *accounting his long-suffering salvation*, (2 Pet. iii. 15.) and improving it accordingly, they become unwatchful, remiss and careless, lukewarm and indolent. So it was with the professors at Laodicea and Sardis, who are therefore called upon to be *zealous and repent*, to be *watchful*, and to *strengthen the things which remained*, which were ready to die; Christ threatening that if they would not watch, he would come unexpectedly as a thief cometh. And even the *wise*, who have oil in their vessels, and their lamps burning; who have saving grace in their hearts, and

6 And at midnight ^d there was a A. M. 4037. cry made, Behold, the bridegroom A. D. 33. cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and ^e trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil: for our lamps are ¹ gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*;

xxiv. 31; 1 Thess. iv. 16.—^e Luke xii. 35.—¹ Or, *going out*.

whose conduct is generally exemplary, while Christ delays to call them hence by death, too often, like the church of Ephesus, leave in some degree *their first love*, lose their watchful spirit, and abate of their zeal and diligence in doing well, and their patience in suffering ill.

Verses 6-8. *And at midnight*—In an hour quite unthought of, and the most alarming. Perhaps the tradition mentioned by Jerome, which asserted that Christ would come to judgment at midnight, might be borrowed from hence; though certainly it is a very absurd one, since that can be the case only under one meridian at a time. *There was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh*—As Christ's coming to judge the world will be at a time the least expected; so then a great cry will be made, for the apostle assures us, he will *descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God*, 1 Thess. iv. 16. At this great cry, which will be heard to the ends of the earth, these virgins all awake, and begin to trim their lamps, to examine themselves, and prepare to meet their God: and now the foolish first perceive their folly: they find their lamps extinguished, and they have no oil wherewith to supply them: they find themselves destitute of vital religion, of union with Christ, and the graces of his Spirit, and that they have only a name to live while they are dead. Thus the hypocrite's hope shall perish. *And the foolish said unto the wise*—Whom before, perhaps, they had despised and derided as needlessly provident; *Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out*—They were therefore once lighted and burning. As if they had said, The light that was in us has become darkness, and the warmth of our love and zeal has become cold and dead, and we are utterly unprepared to meet the bridegroom. What a time was this to make such a discovery! whether the time of being overtaken with some unexpected judgment, the time of death, or that of Christ's second coming be intended. Reader, *Unto which of the saints wilt thou turn?* Who can help thee at such a season?

Verse 9. *But the wise answered, saying, Not so*—The words, *not so*, are not in the Greek, which is only, *μηποτε εκ αρκειση ημιν και υμιν, lest it should not be sufficient for us and you*. They begin the sentence abruptly, showing thereby their surprise at the state of those poor wretches who had so long deceived them, as well as their own souls. *Lest there be not enough*—It is sure there is not: for no

A. M. 4037. lest there be not enough for us and
A. D. 33. you: but go ye rather to them that
sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

† Luke xiii. 25.—† Chap. vii. 21, 22, 23.—† Psa. v. 5; Hab. i. 13; John ix. 31.

man has more holiness than is sufficient for himself. *Go ye rather to them that sell—Without money, and without price:* That is, to God in Christ. *And buy—If ye can.* O no! The time is past, and returns no more. But this clause, *Buy for yourselves,* seems, as Dr. Doddridge observes, “merely an ornamental circumstance; and it is strange that any popish writers should consider it as favouring their doctrine of a stock of merits in the church, founded on works of *supererogation*; since, if it referred to them at all, (which there is no reason to imagine,) it would rather expose than encourage any dependence upon them.” Observe, reader, *now only is the accepted time, and the day of salvation,* when we may come to God through Christ, in the use of the means of grace, and buy for ourselves the divine oil, which will never fail us: nay, we are counselled and exhorted to do so: and if we despise and reject these counsels and exhortations, while they may be useful, our cries and wishes will be as surely rejected another day, and our vain attempts to purchase when the bridegroom is coming will issue in an eternal exclusion from his kingdom.

Verses 10–12. *While they went to buy—*While they made some unsuccessful efforts to obtain oil, and light their lamps; *the bridegroom came, and they that were ready—*They who had put on the wedding-garment, who had an interest in Christ's obedience unto death, and were renewed by his Spirit, who had recovered the divine likeness, the whole image of God stamped upon their soul; who had done and suffered the whole will of God unto the end, while they had kept themselves *unspotted from the world:* they, (to speak in the language of Christ,) *whose loins were girded, and their lamps burning, and themselves like unto men waiting for their Lord, went in with him to the marriage—*For blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their labours, and their works follow them: and those that are *found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless,* in whatever way he comes to them, shall *enter into the joy of their Lord,* and sit down at the marriage-feast with patriarchs and prophets, and all the company of heaven. *And the door was shut—*The door of salvation, of pardon-mercy, and divine acceptance; the door of repentance, faith, and holiness; of grace and glory. This is always shut at death. It is universally acknowledged among Protestants, that as death leaves us judgment finds us. And surely then it is shut, when the final sentence is passed at the great

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’
A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, ^hI know you not.

13 ⁱWatch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

ⁱ Chap. xxiv. 42, 44; Mark xiii. 33, 35; Luke xxi. 36; 1 Cor. xvi. 13; 1 Thess. v. 6; 1 Pet. v. 8; Rev. xvi. 15.

day, and the eternal Judge has fixed the states of mankind for ever. Then all entrance into the heavenly city will be for ever precluded, and he that is filthy must remain filthy still. *Afterward came also the other virgins—*After the door was shut and bolted against them by the irreversible decree of Heaven, they came to enter, that is, they came too late, and therefore when they would have inherited the blessing, they were rejected, and *found no place for repentance.* *For he answered, &c.—*He was heard answering from within, *I know you not—*Ye pretended to be my friends, and to do me honour: but you have not acted as friends, nor do I acknowledge you as such.

Verse 13. *Watch, therefore, &c.—*See, therefore, that your mind be always awake and watchful, and that you maintain an habitual readiness for the coming of the bridegroom, not presuming on preparations to be made hereafter, lest you meet with a sad disappointment: *for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh—*To receive his prepared people to himself, and for ever to exclude the backslider, the hypocrite, and the sinner, from the glories and joys of his heavenly kingdom; or when he cometh to call you hence by death, or to summon you to his bar. Remember your life is a vapour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth; work while it is day, before the night come when you cannot work. Take care especially that you have oil in your vessels, and that you keep your lamp burning, for unless you attend to these things you watch in vain; these being the great, and indeed the only distinguishing difference between the wise and the foolish virgins here spoken of. Upon the whole, in this parable the characters and final judgment of the subjects of the kingdom of heaven are described, that is to say, of persons who have enjoyed the outward dispensation of the gospel, and by professing themselves to be Christians, pretended to honour Christ. Some, with the fair light of an outward profession in their hands, have the principles of the divine life in their hearts, a stock of oil to keep that light continually burning, both pure and clear, by which means they persevere in holiness to the end. But others, having the blaze of a profession, and nothing to keep it alive, it must needs end in smoke and darkness, failing them when they have most occasion for it. The midnight cry, raised at the coming of the bridegroom, shows, not only that the day of judgment will take place when by

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

14 ¶ For the kingdom of heaven is ¹ as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five ² talents, to another two, and to another one; ³ to every

¹ Lu. xix. 12.—² Ch. xxi. 33.—³ A talent is 187l. 10s. sterling;

the generality it is not looked for, but how suddenly and unexpectedly some are called away by death, so that little or no preparation can be made for the awful event in the confusion and perplexity of a death-bed sickness. In this parable, therefore, our Lord has taught us that unless we persevere in grace, having it always in possession, and even in exercise, as occasion requires, we shall be excluded from the abodes of the blessed without remedy, though we may have expressed considerable zeal and diligence in the service of Christ for a time: also, that the grace of other men, and their piety and virtue, will stand us in no stead at the hour of death or at the day of judgment. To conclude, as the parable represents the suddenness with which Christ frequently comes to call individual persons off the stage of life, it shows us both the folly and danger of delaying true and vital religion to a death-bed, and powerfully enforces habitual watchfulness upon all men, in every age, from the consideration of the uncertainty of human life; and strongly enforces the advice of Eliphaz, *Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace*; and more especially the declaration and exhortation of Christ, *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown: for, if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*.

Verses 14, 15. For, &c.—To show us more clearly the nature and duty of Christian watchfulness, to which he exhorts us in the preceding verse, our Saviour immediately subjoins another parable, wherein he represents to us the different characters of a faithful and slothful servant, and the difference of their future acceptance. Like the former, the present parable is intended to stir us up to a zealous preparation for the coming of our Lord, by diligence in the discharge of our duty, and by a proper employment and a careful improvement of our talents: as well as to unmask still more fully the vain pretences of hypocrites, and to demonstrate that fair speeches and outward forms, without the power of godliness, will stand us in no stead at the last day. *The kingdom of heaven is as a man, &c.*—The words *kingdom of heaven* are improperly supplied here. The sentence should rather run thus: *For he (namely, the Son of man, mentioned in the preceding verse) is as a man travelling into a far country*—Alluding to Christ's withdrawing his bodily presence from his church when he ascended into heaven, or to that long-suffering by which he waits for the fruit of our works: *who called his own servants*—*Τους ιδους, his own*, because created by his power, preserved by his providence, and purchased by his

man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

Ch. xviii. 24.—² Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 7, 11, 29; Eph. iv. 11.

blood; and delivered unto them his goods—The goods of which he was the sole proprietor. *Unto one he gave five talents*—As being able to traffic with them; *to another two*—As not being sufficient to manage more; and *to another one*, as being still more infirm. So Origen. A talent being in value about 187l. 10s., he who was intrusted with five, received 937l. 10s.; and he who had two, 375l. sterling. And who knows whether, all circumstances considered, there be a greater disproportion than this in the talents of those who receive the most and those who receive the fewest? By the talents here we are to understand gifts or endowments conferred for a spiritual end, powers of body and mind, abilities natural and acquired, health, strength, long life, understanding, judgment, memory, learning, knowledge, eloquence, influence, and authority over others, wealth, privileges, or offices, civil or religious, and indeed every power and advantage of which a good or bad use may be made. *To every man according to his several ability*—*Εκατω κατα την ιδιαν δυναμιν, to each according to his individual or respective capacity*, namely, to manage the sum, and according to the prospect there might reasonably be of his improving it. Or, according to the prudence, ability, and activity which he knew each to be possessed of.

Verses 16–18. *Then he that had received the five talents went and traded, &c.*—Thus the servants of Christ should consider the gifts or talents which they have received, whether by nature or by grace, as being intrusted with them for the sole end of their serving God and their generation with the use of them; and *made them other five talents*—Thus he who endeavours to use the gifts of God according to the design of the giver, is sure to find them increased; and that both because the exercise of any power or ability, gift or endowment, has a natural tendency to increase it, and because the divine blessing never fails to crown human diligence, when that diligence is used in the fear of God, in obedience to his will, and with a single eye to his glory. “He who lives not solely to his own profit,” says Theophylact, “but whether he have prudence, or riches, or power, or whatever influence or art he hath, endeavours thereby to serve and be useful to others, ο τριστος διπλασιαζει το δοθεν αυτω, this is the man who doubles that which is given to him.” Likewise he that had received two, &c.—He went immediately and traded with the talents he had received, and his improvement was in the same proportion; he gained *other two*. But he that had received one—Being displeased, probably, that he had received no more,

A. M. 4037. 17 And likewise he that *had re-*
A. D. 33. *ceived* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

or being seized with servile fear, without so much as attempting to make any proper use or improvement of his talent; *went and digged in the earth, &c.*—Buried his talent, instead of employing it according to the design of his master, who had intrusted him with it. He did not mispend or misemploy it; did not embezzle or squander it away, but he *hid* it. Here we have the characteristic of a slothful servant, of one who has received from God an excellent gift, and yet suffers it to remain useless and unemploy'd, and therefore unimproved; like money laid up in a bag, which, if properly used and dispersed, might be of much advantage, as well to the possessor as others, but while so locked up, is at once unprofitable to the owner and to all besides. And the sin of this slothful servant was highly aggravated in this, that the talent intrusted to him was not his own; *he hid his lord's money.* Had it been his own he might have asked, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* but, in truth, whatever abilities and advantages men, as the creatures and servants of the living God, possess, they are not their own: they are but stewards of them, and must give an account to their lord, whose goods they are. It was, moreover, an aggravation of this servant's slothfulness, that his fellow-servants were busy and successful in trading; their zeal and assiduity should have provoked his; and, incited by their example, he should have gone and done likewise. It will be a high aggravation of the offence of slothful professors, who have suffered the gifts of God to remain unimproved, that their fellow-servants have, with the same means, and the same opportunities, acted with the fidelity required, and gained to the talents committed to them a sufficient increase to obtain their Lord's approbation and applause. Reader, art thou thus slothful? Art thou burying the talent God hath lent thee?

Verses 19, 20. *After a long time*—Namely, of trial and long-suffering, and at an hour when they thought not of it; *the lord of those servants cometh*—Returned and summoned them to give an account of their several trusts. Thus, though the heavens have received the Lord Jesus *till the time of the restitution of all things*, he will surely come and reckon with his servants, and require of them a strict account of the use which they have made of their privileges and advantages, gifts and endowments; and will say to each of them, *Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.* So he that had received five talents—brought other five—Having doubled his blessings and gifts by the proper use of them; *saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me, &c.*—He acknowledges, (as did also the second, to whom two talents had been de-

20 And so he that had received five A. M. 4037.
talents, came and brought other five A. D. 33.

talents saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou*

livered,) that from the Lord only had proceeded his blessings and advantages; that they were the Lord's talents; and that, of consequence, he was accountable to the Lord for his use of them, and for all their increase, and was to depend on the Lord's bounty for all his reward. Observe, reader, this is the main thing on which the fidelity of us all depends: for if we do not acknowledge God's property in us and whatever we have or are;—if we think we have an independent right to dispose of ourselves or talents just as we see fit, without reference to the great Lord of all, we do as much as we can toward divesting him of his absolute sovereignty and supremacy; we disclaim his service, and set up for ourselves; presume, impudently presume, to trade upon our own bottoms, even with the very privileges and talents with which our Lord himself hath intrusted us for his own glory. This is a much greater evil than it may be at first suspected, and far more common than we in general apprehend. *Behold, I have gained five other talents*—Thy gifts have been wonderfully increased by being used according to thy direction and for thy glory. Here we have a second mark of fidelity in a true servant of Christ. As he acknowledges the Lord's absolute propriety in him, so he diligently improves the talents intrusted to him. And this he perseveres to do, notwithstanding all the inconveniences, difficulties, and impediments he meets with, or even the long absence of his Lord. Still he keeps his eye intent upon his business, and still applies himself diligently to his work, never *weary of this well doing*, for he knows *in due season he shall reap if he faint not*; and that he must *be faithful unto death if he would receive the crown of life.* But these proofs of fidelity will always be attended with a third, namely, a readiness to give up his account. When a man is assured that he has acted with a single eye to his master's advantage, it is with satisfaction that he submits his account to his master's inspection, as thereby his honesty is proved, and fidelity clearly manifested. And so it is with the sincere Christian: it is with joy that he goes to meet his Master, and to give up his account, as having the testimony of his conscience that it has been his desire and endeavour to be faithful to his trust in the use and improvement of his talents, and that *with simplicity and godly sincerity he has had his conversation in the world.* Then with delight he hears of his lord's return, and, not doubting of his approbation, *goes forth with joy to meet him.*

Verse 21. *His lord said unto him, Well done*—“The original word, *Ev, well done*, has a peculiar force and energy, far beyond what we can express in English. It was used by auditors or spectators in any public exercise, to express the highest ap-

A. M. 4037. good and faithful servant; thou hast
A. D. 33. been faithful over a few things, ^a I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into ^o the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

^a Chap. xxiv. 47; Verses 34, 46; Luke xii. 44; xxii. 29, 30.

plause, when any part had been excellently performed."—Doddridge. *Good and faithful servant*—Those that own and honour God now, he will own and confess hereafter; and their diligence and integrity will be found to praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1st, Their persons will be accepted. He that now knows their integrity will then bear witness to it; and they that are now found faithful, will then be declared to be so. 2d, Their performances will be accepted, *Well done*. Christ will call those, and those only, good servants, who have done well; for it is by a *patient continuance in well doing* that we seek for and obtain this glory and honour: and it is on condition of our doing that which is good, that we shall have praise of the same. *Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler, &c.*—It is usual, in the courts of princes and families of great men, to advance those to higher offices who have been faithful in lower. Christ is a master that will prefer his servants who acquit themselves well. He has honour in store for those that honour him,—a crown, a throne, a kingdom. Here they are beggars: in heaven they shall be rulers and princes. Observe, reader, the disproportion between the work and the rewards. There are but *few things* in which the saints are serviceable to the glory of God, but *many things* wherein they shall be glorified with God. The charge we receive from God, the work we do for God in this world, is but little, very little, compared with *the joy set before us*: put together all our services, all our sufferings, all our improvements, all the good we do to others, all we obtain to ourselves, and they are but *a few things*, next to nothing, not fit to be named the same day with the *glory to be revealed*. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord—The joy which he himself has purchased and provided for his servants; the joy of the redeemed, bought with the sorrow of the Redeemer; the joy which he himself is in possession of, and which he had his eye upon when he endured the cross and despised the shame, Heb. xii. 2; the joy of which he himself is the fountain and centre; for it is joy in the Lord, who is our exceeding joy. Into this joy glorified saints shall enter, that is, shall have a full and complete possession of it; as the heir, when he comes to age, enters upon his estate. Here the joy of our Lord enters into the saints, in the earnest of the Spirit, but shortly they shall enter into it, and shall be in it to all eternity, possessing *fulness of joy and unspeakable pleasures for evermore*.

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23 His lord said unto him, ^pWell A. M. 4037.
done, good and faithful servant; thou A. D. 33.
hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came, and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast

^p Heb. xii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 12; 1 Pet. i. 8.—^p Verse 21.

Verses 22, 23. *He also that had received the two talents—said, Behold, I have gained two other talents*—Here we see that he who had received only two talents, gives up his account as cheerfully as he who had received five; for our comfort and reward in the day of reckoning will be according to our faithfulness, not according to our usefulness; our sincerity, not our success; according to the uprightness of our hearts, and not the degree of our opportunities. We may, therefore, well rest contented with the talents our Master has allotted us, how few or small soever they may be, especially considering, 1st, that they are intrusted with us by him who knows infinitely better than we do what we are capable of managing, and who gives to all his servants according to their ability, or according as he knows they are able to cultivate or improve more or fewer: and considering, 2d, that if more and greater talents had been vouchsafed us, more care, caution, and diligence would have been requisite, and our account would have been more difficult. But these considerations should not only make us easy in every situation of life, but should incline us to constant activity in our sphere, be it what it may. Men frequently deceive themselves, (and the delusion is specious,) by supposing if they were in such a state, and had such and such opportunities, how much they could do, what good they might effect; by which means they are led frequently to overlook the advantages and means of good in their own state, and are carried out in fond desires after that imaginary one; falling short of which, they do no good at all. So the tempter gains his end. It is our wisdom to improve the present state, the present means, the present hour. All is in God's hand, and he best knows where and how his servants may or may not be subservient to his glory, and there can be no doubt but he will dispose of us accordingly. "Some," says Henry, "make it an excuse for their laziness, that they have not the opportunities of serving God which others have: and because they have not wherewithal to do what they say they *would*, they will not do what we are sure they *can*, and so sit down and do nothing: it is really an aggravation of their sloth, that when they have but one talent to take care about, they neglect that one;" as is represented in the next character.

Verses 24, 25. *He which received the one talent came*—"This may intimate that we are accountable for the smallest advantages with which we are in

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A. M. 4037. not sown, and gathering where thou
A. D. 33. hast not strewed :

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth : lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him,

trusted ; but it cannot imply that they who have received much will ordinarily pass their account best ; for it is too plain a fact, that most of those whose dignity, wealth, and genius give them the greatest opportunities of service, seem to forget they have either any Master in heaven to serve, or any future reckoning to expect ; and many of them render themselves much more criminal than this wicked and slothful servant, who hid his talent in the earth."—Doddridge. *I knew that thou art a hard man*—Here we have another, and no less certain mark of a slothful and wicked servant, his entertaining hard thoughts of his master. *I knew, &c.*—No: thou knewest him not. He never knew Christ who thinks him a hard master. *Reaping where thou hast not sown*—Requiring more of us than thou givest us power to perform. So does every obstinate sinner, in one kind or other, lay the blame of his own sins on God. *And I was afraid*—To risk thy money in trade, lest by some accident or other it should be lost, or miscarry under my management, and thou shouldst show me no mercy. Or rather, Lest, if I had improved my talent, I should have had more to answer for. So, from this fear, one will not learn to read, another will not hear sermons. *Lo, there thou hast that is thine*—If I have not made it more, as others have done, yet, this I can say, I have not made it less: and this, he thinks, may serve to bring him off, if not with praise, yet with safety. Observe, reader, many go very securely to judgment, presuming upon the validity of a plea that will be overruled as vain and frivolous. This servant thought that his account would pass well enough, because he had not wasted his lord's money. As if he had said, "I was no spendthrift of my estate, not prodigal of my time, not a profaner of thy sabbaths, nor an opposer of good ministers and good preaching. Lord, I never despised my Bible, nor set my wits on work to ridicule religion, nor abused my power to persecute any good man ; I never drowned my parts nor wasted God's good creatures in drunkenness and gluttony ; nor ever, to my knowledge, did I do an injury to any one." Many that are called Christians build great hopes for heaven upon their being able to make such a plea ; and yet all this amounts to no more than, *There thou hast that is thine*, as if no more were required, or would be expected.

Verses 26, 27. *Thou wicked and slothful servant*—Wicked, because slothful. Observe well, reader, slothful servants are wicked servants, and will be reckoned with as such by their Master: for *he that is slothful in his work*, and neglects to do the good that God has commanded, *is brother to him that is a great waster*, by doing the evil that God has for-

Thou wicked and slothful servant, A. M. 4037
thou knewest that I reap where I A. D. 33.
sowed not, and gather where I have not
strewed :

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my

bidden, Prov. xviii. 9. He that is careless in God's work, is near akin to him that is busy in the devil's work: *Satis est mali nihil fecisse boni*. It is evil enough to have done no good. Omissions of duty are commissions of sin, and must come into judgment as such. Slothfulness makes way for wickedness, and when the house is empty, the unclean spirit takes possession of it. *Thou knewest—I reap where I sowed not?*—That I require impossibilities! This is not an allowing, but a strong denial of the charge. *Thou oughtest therefore, &c.*—On that very account, on thy own supposition, to have improved my talent, as far as was possible. *To have put my money to the exchangers, &c.* He mentions this instance of good management, because it was the lowest that could be, and was attended with the least trouble ; to intimate that, though the servant had not pursued that particular sort of trade in which he ought to have employed the talent, yet if he had been at any pains at all to improve it, though it had been little, his lord would have accepted it. *And then I should have received mine own with usury*—*Συν τοκῷ*, with interest, or produce. "Anciently, the import of the word *usury* was no other than profit, whether great or small, allowed to the lender for the use of borrowed money. As this practice often gave rise to great extortion, the very name at length became odious. When Christian commonwealths judged it necessary to regulate this matter by law, they gave to such profit as does not exceed the legal, the softer name of *interest* ; since which time, *usury* has come to signify solely extravagant profit disallowed by law ; and which, therefore, it is criminal in the borrower to give, and in the lender to take. As it is not this kind of profit that is here meant, the word *usury* is now become improper."—Campbell. Observe, reader, though the parable represents but one in three unfaithful ; yet, in a history that answers the parable, we find the disproportion quite the other way ; when ten lepers were cleansed, nine of the ten hid the talent, and only one returned to give thanks, Luke xvii. 18, 19. The unfaithful servant was he that had only one talent, but doubtless there are many that have five talents, and bury them all ; great abilities, great advantages, and yet do no good with them : but Christ would intimate to us, 1st, that if he that had but one talent was reckoned with thus for burying that one, much more will they be accounted offenders that have more, that have many, and bury them. If he that was but of small capacity was cast into outer darkness, because he did not improve what he had as he might have done, shall those be spared that trample under foot the greatest advantages ? 2d, That often those who have least to do for God, do least of what they have to

A. M. 4037. coming I should have received mine
A. D. 33. own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

29 ¶ For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from

¶ Chap. xiii. 12; Mark iv. 25; Luke viii. 18; xix. 26; John xv. 2.
¶ Chap. viii. 12; xxiv. 51.

do. 3d, That the hard thoughts which sinners have of God will be so far from justifying their slothfulness, that they will rather aggravate and add to their guilt; so that in the day of final accounts, they will be left quite without excuse; all frivolous pleas will be overruled, and every mouth will be stopped.

Verses 28, 29. *Take therefore the talent from him*—Ye angels, the ministers of my will, take from him the blessing which he has thus abused, and *give it unto him which hath ten talents*—As a further token of my acceptance and favour. The master, who in disposing of the talents at first acted as an absolute owner and bountiful benefactor, now acts as a judge, and takes the talent from the unfaithful servant to punish him, and gives it to him that was eminently faithful, to reward him. And this may be applied, 1st, To any of the blessings of this life, such as wealth, honour, authority over others, health, strength, &c. Men are intrusted with these, that they may use them for the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-creatures: and he that conscientiously uses them for these ends, (which is signified in the next verse by *having* them; that is, having them to a good purpose,) shall have abundance, perhaps, of these things themselves, but if not, abundance of comfort in them, and of better things; *but from him that hath not*—That is, that hath these things as if he had them not, not doing good with them; they *shall be taken away*. Giving to the poor, and in other ways doing good with our talents, is trading with what we have, and the returns will be rich. The meal in the barrel, and the oil in the cruise will be multiplied, 1 Kings xvii. 14; but those that are niggardly and uncharitable will find that those riches which are so acquired and hoarded, will perish by *evil travail*, or are *kept by the owners thereof to their hurt*, Eccles. v. 13, 14. And it often happens that Providence strangely transfers property from those that do not do good with it to those that do. And other gifts and endowments are frequently taken from those who do not employ them according to the design of the great Master, and are given to others who are disposed to make a better use of them. 2d, We may apply it to the means of grace. They who are diligent in improving the opportunities and advantages they have, may expect to have them continued and increased; but they who know not and improve not the day of their visitation, shall have the things that belong to their peace hid from their eyes. In proof of this, see what God did first to Shiloh, and then to Jerusalem, and to the churches of the Lesser Asia, mentioned Rev. ii., iii. 3d, We may apply it to spiritual gifts.

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him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

31 ¶ When the Son of man shall come in

¶ Zech. xiv. 5; Ch. xvi. 27; xix. 28; Mark viii. 38; Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 7; Jude 14; Rev. i. 7.

He that hath these, and doth good with them, shall retain them and find them greatly enlarged, for they will improve by exercise, and brighten by use: but as to those who *stir not up the gift that is in them*, who do not exert themselves according to their capacity, their gifts rust and decay, and die away like a neglected fire.

Verse 30. *And cast ye the unprofitable servant*—Who has so wickedly abused my goodness; *into outer darkness*—The darkness which is without the heavenly city, even the horrible darkness of hell. *There*, instead of the light and joy possessed by those who are admitted to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, *shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*—Through the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched. There shall be the weeping of the careless, thoughtless sinner, and the gnashing of teeth of the proud and stubborn. See notes on chap. viii. 12; xiii. 42; xxii. 13. But why does this servant meet with this punishment? What had he done? It is true he had not done good. But neither is he charged with doing any harm. Why, for this reason, for *barely doing no harm*, he is consigned to outer darkness. He is pronounced a wicked, because he was a *slothful*, an *unprofitable servant*. So *mere harmlessness*, on which many build their hope of salvation, was the cause of his damnation! Observe this well, reader; slothful servants, who do nothing with respect to the purpose of their being sent into the world, nothing to answer the end of their birth and baptism, who are no way serviceable to the glory of God, or the good of others, will be reckoned with as unprofitable servants. A slothful servant is a withered member in the body, a barren tree in the vineyard, an idle drone in the hive, that is good for nothing. In one sense, indeed, we are all unprofitable servants, Luke xvii. 10. We cannot profit God, Job xxii. 2; but to others, and to ourselves, it is required that we be profitable; and if we be not, Christ will not own us as his servants.

Verse 31. *When, &c.*—The same great truth, that there is no such thing as negative goodness, which was shown, 1st, in the parable of the virgins; 2d, in the still plainer parable of the servants who had received the talents; is here shown a third time, in a direct unparabolical declaration of the manner in which our Lord will proceed at the last day. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, &c.*—With what majesty and grandeur does Christ here speak of himself! giving us one of the noblest instances of the true sublime. Indeed, not many descriptions in the sacred writers themselves seem equal to this. We can hardly read it without imagining ourselves

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A. M. 4037. his glory, and all the holy angels
A. D. 33. with him, then shall he sit upon the
throne of his glory :

32 And 'before him shall be gathered all
nations: and ' he shall separate them one

' Rom. xiv. 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 10 ; Rev. xx. 12.

before the awful tribunal it describes. He styles himself *the Son of man* here, because, when he appears as the great Judge, he will appear in the human form, and as very man, as he is, being to judge the sons of men. For by being of the same nature with those whom he judges, and having shared with them in human infirmity, he is the more proper for the office of their judge. But no one that reads this can reasonably suppose that he who speaks thus is a mere man. He is termed the Son of man, too, because his wonderful condescension in taking upon him our nature, and becoming the Son of man, will be recompensed by his exaltation in that day. For he shall come, not only in the glory of his Father, but in his own glory as mediator. His first coming was under a dark cloud of obscurity ; but his second will be in a bright cloud of glory. Doubtless if his disciples understood and believed what he here declares concerning his future glory, it would help them to meet with fortitude the offence of the cross, and prepare them for the approaching scene of his humiliation and sufferings. To manifest his glory still more, all the holy angels, who had long been subject to him as his ministering servants, shall now come along with him, and that not only for state, as his attendants, but for service, as ministers of his justice. They shall come to summon the court ; to gather together the elect, to sever the wicked from the just, to be witnesses of the saints' glory, Luke xii. 8 ; and of the sinners' misery, Rev. xix. 10. *Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory*—A throne high and lifted up, and conspicuous to the eyes of the whole assembled world ; the throne of judgment, very different from the throne of grace, upon which he now sits, with his Father, and to which we may come boldly.

Verses 32, 33. *Before him shall be gathered all nations*—That is, all the individuals of all nations and ages ; not only all that are found alive at the time of his appearing, and are changed in a moment, and rendered immortal, that they may be capable of enjoying eternal happiness, or of suffering everlasting misery ; but all that had ever lived from the beginning to the end of time. All of every clime, country, and place, great and small, even from the remotest corners of the world. *And he shall separate them one from another*—According to their different characters, (which he most perfectly knows,) with as much ease as a shepherd divideth his sheep, which belong to his flock, from the goats, which may be mingled with them, and places them in distinct companies. *And he shall set the sheep*—The righteous, whom he will own as such, and who are termed *sheep* on account of their innocence, meekness, and usefulness ; *on his right hand*—In token

from another, as a shepherd divideth
his sheep from the goats : A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right
hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on

' Ez. xx. 38 ; xxxiv. 17, 20 ; Chap. xiii. 49.

of his favour to them, and of the further honours he purposes to bestow upon them. *And the goats*—That is, the wicked, called goats because of the exorbitancy of their lusts ; *on his left*—To intimate his displeasure against them, and their final removal from among his people ; nor shall the haughtiest and mightiest sinner be able to resist that appointment by which he is placed in this situation. "I cannot imagine," says Dr. Doddridge, "a more magnificent image than this ; the assembled world distinguished with such unerring penetration, and distributed into two grand classes, with as much ease as sheep and goats are ranged by a shepherd in different companies." The wicked and the godly in this world dwell together in the same kingdoms, cities, churches, families, and are not with certainty distinguishable always one from another : such are the infirmities of saints, such the hypocrisies of sinners, and one event frequently happening to both ; but in that day they will be separated and parted for ever : for the Lord both *knows them that are his*, and them that are not, and he can and will separate them : and the separation will be so exact, that the most inconsiderable saint shall not be lost in the crowd of sinners, nor the most plausible sinner hid in the crowd of saints, Psa. i. 5 ; but every one shall go to his own place. Dr. Whitby thinks, that there is an allusion here to the received custom of the Jews in capital causes, to place them who are to be acquitted on the right hand, in the sanhedrim, and those who were to receive the sentence of condemnation, on the left.

Verse 34. *Then shall the King say, &c.*—In verse 31 he had only called himself *the Son of man*, but he now changes the appellation, taking the title of *king* with great propriety, when he is speaking of himself as exercising the highest act of kingly power, in passing the final sentence on all men as his subjects, whereby their state shall be unalterably fixed for ever. And this title adds unutterable beauty to the condescending words he is represented as speaking on this great occasion. *Come, ye blessed of my Father*—Here we see that while Jesus asserts his proper dignity as *Lord of all*, he represents himself as acting in subordination to his Father in his kingdom, addressing the righteous as persons *blessed of his Father—inheriting the kingdom prepared for you*—Purchased by my blood for you, and all others who have believed in me with the faith which wrought by love. Does it not appear probable from hence, that they are mistaken who suppose that mankind were created merely to fill up the place of the fallen angels ? The present state of good men is at best but a melancholy banishment from their native country ; an exile in which

A. M. 4037. his right hand, Come, ye blessed of
A. D. 33. my Father, *inherit the kingdom *pre-
pared for you from the foundation of the world :

35 *For I was a hungered, and ye gave me
meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink :

* I was a stranger, and ye took me in :

36 ^bNaked, and ye clothed me : I was sick,
and ye visited me : ^oI was in prison, and ye
came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him,

* Rom. viii. 17 ; 1 Pet. i. 4, 9 ; iii. 9 ; Rev. xxi. 7. — ⁷ Chap. xx. 23 ; Mark x. 40 ; 1 Cor. ii. 9 ; Heb. xi. 16. — ⁸ Isa. lviii. 7 ; Ez. xviii. 7 ; James i. 27.

they are frequently exposed to manifold temptations, to persecutions, to poverty, to reproach, and to innumerable other evils. But that they may bear all with unwearied patience, courage, and constancy, "they are given to know by this sentence that they are beloved, and blessed of God as his own children; that there is no less than an eternal kingdom prepared for them, even from the foundation of the world; and that they are the undoubted heirs of this eternal kingdom. Well may such bear with the violence of their oppressors, knowing what an exceeding and eternal weight of glory awaits them!" Macknight.

Verses 35, 36. *I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat, &c.*—All the works of outward mercy here mentioned suppose faith and love, and must needs be accompanied with works of spiritual mercy, such as instructing the ignorant, alarming the careless, encouraging the disconsolate, comforting the distressed, strengthening the weak, confirming the wavering, reclaiming the wicked, edifying the righteous. But works of this kind could not be mentioned by the Judge in the same manner: he could not say, I was ignorant, and you instructed me; I was in error, and you recalled me to the truth; I was in sin, and you brought me to repentance. But how astonishing is it to hear the great Judge declaring, that all the good offices which men have ever performed, supposing they performed them in obedience to his will, and with a single eye to his glory, were done to him! It is as if he had said, "In the whole of your conduct you have imitated the goodness and benevolence of my Father, and therefore I now declare you blessed and beloved of him, and appoint you to inherit this kingdom. Moreover, that you may know how acceptable acts of kindness and charity are to me, I assure you that I reckon every thing of this kind as done to myself. It was I who was a hungered and athirst, and a stranger and naked, and sick and in prison. It was I whom you clothed and lodged, and visited and comforted in prison." The word *επισκεψασθε*, rendered, *ye visited*, properly signifies to *take the oversight and care* of any thing that requires diligent inspection and attendance; (compare James i. 27;) and it strongly intimates that such an attendance on the poor in their illness is a very acceptable charity:

saying, Lord, when saw we thee a ^{A. M. 4037.}
hungered, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, ^{A. D. 33.}
and gave *thee* drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took
thee in? or naked, and clothed *thee*?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison,
and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto
them, Verily I say unto you, ^dInasmuch as
ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these

^a Heb. xiii. 2 ; 3 John 5. — ^b James ii. 15, 16. — ^c 2 Tim. i. 16. — ^d Prov. xiv. 31 ; xix. 17 ; Chap. x. 42 ; Mark ix. 41 ; Heb. vi. 10.

and this is what many may have an opportunity of doing, who have very little money to spare.

Verses 37–40. *Then shall the righteous answer, &c.*—The righteous, with great surprise, ask, with reverence and humility, when all this happened, since they never had seen him in want of their assistance, nor could remember that they had ever bestowed aught upon him. It cannot be supposed, however, that either the righteous or the wicked should answer in the very words here mentioned. But what we learn herefrom is, That neither of them have the same estimation of their own works which the Judge hath. *And the King shall answer—Inasmuch as, &c.*—"This is unspeakably astonishing! The united wisdom of men and angels could not have thought of any thing more proper to convey an idea of the warmth and strength of the divine benevolence to men, or offer a more constraining motive to charity, than that the Son of God should declare from the judgment-seat, in presence of the whole universe assembled, that such good offices as are done to the afflicted are done to him. Having in the days of his flesh suffered injuries and afflictions unspeakable, he considers all the virtuous distressed as members of his body, loves them tenderly, and is so much interested in their welfare, that when they are happy he rejoices; when they are distressed he is grieved: *Ye have done it unto me*—O wonderful condescension of the Son of God! O astonishing stupidity of men, who neglect altogether, or are persuaded with difficulty to do good to Christ! That Jesus should call the poor, even among the heathen, his brethren, is a great honour to the human nature, and shows the divine benignity in an amiable light. This happy relation arises from the manhood which he still possesses in common with men, and from the poverty, affliction, and other miseries of mankind, that he was exposed to while he lived in the world. He calls good men, more especially, his brethren, because they are children of the same Father, (namely, God,) after whose image they are formed by the influence of his Spirit. It is this conformity of natures, human and divine, which makes men Christ's brethren; for which reason, in whatever person it is found, he will acknowledge the relation, without regard to any cir-

A. M. 4037. my brethren, ye have done it unto
A. D. 33. me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, ° Depart from me, ye cursed, † into everlasting fire, prepared for ‡ the devil and his angels:

42 For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

• Psa. vi. 8; Ch. vii. 23; Luke xiii. 27.—† Ch. xiii. 40, 42.
‡ 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6.

cumstance whatever that is out of the person's power."—Macknight.

Verses 41–43. *Then shall he say to them on the left hand*—In this account of our Lord's proceedings at this awful time, the absolution of the righteous is represented as taking place before the condemnation of the wicked, to show that God takes greater delight in rewarding than in punishing. *Depart from me*—In this world they were often called to come to Christ, to come for life and rest; but they turned a deaf ear to his calls; justly, therefore, are they bid to depart from him, who would not come to him. Depart from me, the Fountain of all good; from me, the Saviour, and therefore from all hope of salvation; I will never have any thing more to say to you, or do with you. But if they must depart from Christ, might they not be dismissed with a blessing? with one kind and compassionate word at least? No: *Depart, ye cursed*—They that would not come to Christ to inherit a blessing, must depart from him under the burden of a curse, the curse of the law, due to every one that breaks it; and that of the gospel, which belongs to all that disobey it. But observe, Christ calls the righteous the *blessed of his Father*; for their blessedness is owing purely to the grace of God: but the wicked are called only, *ye cursed*, for their damnation is entirely of themselves. *Into everlasting fire, prepared*—Not originally for you: you are intruders into this everlasting misery; but *for the devil and his angels*—This declaration of our Lord, compared with verse 34, where the kingdom of heaven is expressly said to be prepared for the righteous, seems to have been intended to teach us that God's original design was to make men happy, and that their becoming miserable is the effect of their own voluntary iniquity and perverseness, in rejecting the counsel of God against themselves. No sooner was man created, than a state of consummate felicity was formed for him and his posterity. But the fire of hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, namely, after their fall: and because wicked men partake with devils in their sin of rebellion against God, they are doomed to share with them in their punishment. Perhaps, also, the fire of hell is here

44 Then shall they also answer A. M. 4037.
him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee A. D. 33.
a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, ^b Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

46 And ⁱ these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

^b Prov. xiv. 31; xvii. 5; Zech. ii. 8; Acts ix. 5.—ⁱ Dan. xii. 2; John v. 29; Rom. ii. 7, &c.

said to be made for the devil and his angels, to intimate the greatness of the misery to which sinners dying in sin shall be consigned. The punishment which they shall suffer is of the heaviest kind, being the punishment of devils.

Verses 44–46. *Then shall they answer, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, &c.*—So their endeavour to justify themselves will remain with the wicked even to that day! Perhaps, however, it may not be intended here to signify that the wicked shall make this answer in words: it is probably, rather, to be considered as the language of their hearts, which Christ perceiving, shall reply to as in the next verse. Multitudes will, no doubt, remember that they had often heard what reply will be made to such a plea: God grant that none who read it here may be in the number of those to whom it will be made! *These shall go away into everlasting punishment*—So the word *κολασιν* properly signifies, and not *destruction*, or *annihilation*, as some would understand it; and *the righteous into life eternal*—Either, therefore, the punishment is strictly eternal, or the reward is not; the very same expression in the original being applied to the former as to the latter. It appears, that the Judge will speak first to the righteous in the audience of the wicked; and then to the wicked, who shall go away into everlasting fire in the sight of the righteous. Thus the damned shall have no view of the everlasting life; but the righteous will see the punishment of the ungodly. It is not only particularly observable here, 1st, that the punishment lasts as long as the reward: but, 2d, that this punishment is so far from ceasing at the end of the world, that it does not begin till then. To conclude, the issue of the judgment, as it is represented in this paragraph, is awful beyond description. If the meaning of this last short sentence were fully understood and duly considered, what an impression would it make upon the minds of men! *Everlasting punishment! Eternal life!* What is there that is not comprehended in these words? And how miserable are they who dare to venture their souls on the supposition that the important word *αιωνιος*, which is the same in both places, signifies a limited duration in either!

CHAPTER XXVI.

This chapter contains, (1,) *The preliminaries, or preparatives, to Christ's sufferings; in his again foretelling them to his disciples, as being at hand, 1, 2. In the rulers' conspiracy to murder him, 3-5. In the anointing of his head at a supper in Bethany, to the great displeasure of his disciples, particularly Judas, 6-13. In Judas's bargain with the chief priests to betray him, 14-16. In his eating the passover with his disciples, after due preparation made for it, and discovering Judas's treachery, 17-25. In his instituting the Lord's supper, and warning his disciples, and particularly Peter, of their approaching fall, 26-35. (2,) His entrance on his sufferings, in his agony and fervent prayers in the garden, while his disciples, whom he took to witness it, sinfully slept, 36-46. In the seizing of him by the officers with Judas's help, 47-56. In his arraignment before the high-priest, and his condemnation of him as a blasphemer, 57-68; and in Peter's three-fold denial of him, of which, however, he quickly repented, 69-75.*

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. **AND** it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,
2 * Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.
3 ¶^b Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high-priest, who was called Caiaphas,

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him.
5 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people.
6 ¶ ° Now when Jesus was in ^d Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,
7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head as he sat at meat.
8 ° But when his disciples saw it, they had

^a Mark xiv. 1; Luke xxii. 1; John xiii. 1.—^b Psa. ii. 2; John xi. 47; Acts iv. 25, &c.

^c Mark xiv. 3; John xi. 1, 2; xii. 3.—^d Chap. xxi. 17.
^e John xii. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVI.

Verses 1, 2. *When Jesus had finished all these sayings*—The sayings or discourses which he began to deliver on his leaving the temple, (chap. xxiv. 1,) and continued, till he had declared all that is contained in the two preceding chapters; *He said unto his disciples, Ye know, &c.*—When he sat down on the mount of Olives, he was so far on his way to Bethany, and before he rose up to depart, he thought fit to add a word or two concerning his own death. For, as the greatest trial that his disciples were ever to meet with was now approaching, in their Master's humiliation and sufferings; therefore, to prepare them for this scene, he foretold those sufferings, together with the particular time and manner of them; and thus proved, that he perfectly knew whatever was to befall him, and that his sufferings were all voluntary and necessary. *After two days is the passover*—The manner wherein this was celebrated gives much light to several circumstances that follow. The master of the family began the feast with a cup of wine, which, having solemnly blessed, he divided among the guests, (Luke xxii. 17.) Then the supper began with the unleavened bread and bitter herbs; which when they had all tasted, one of the young persons present, (according to Exod. xii. 26.) asked the reason of the solemnity. This introduced the *showing forth*, or declaration of it: in allusion to which we read of *showing forth the Lord's death*, (1 Cor. xi. 26.) Then the master rose up and took another cup, before the lamb was tasted. After supper, he took a thin loaf or cake, which he broke and divided to all at the table, and likewise the cup, usually called the cup of thanksgiving, of which he drank first, and then all the guests. It was *this bread* and *this cup*, which our Lord consecrated to be a standing memorial of his death.

Verses 3-5. *The chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders*—They together constituted the sanhedrim, or great council, which had the supreme authority both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. *Assembled together unto the palace of the high-priest*—Namely, to deliberate how they might take Jesus, and put him to death; *and consulted how they might take him by subtlety*—Privately, by some artifice, without giving an alarm to his friends. *But they said, Not on the feast-day*—This was the result of human wisdom. But when Judas came, they changed their purpose. So the counsel of God took place, and the true paschal Lamb was offered up on the great day of the paschal solemnity.

Verses 6-13. *When Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper*—That is, who had been a leper, but, as seems highly probable, had been healed by Jesus. At least, it is not to be thought that he was now a leper, for in that case he would not have been suffered to live in a town, nor would any Jew have come to an entertainment in his house. There came a woman—Probably Mary, the sister of Lazarus, for it is highly probable, as Dr. Doddridge has shown, that the anointing of Jesus here mentioned, is the same with that recorded John xii. 1. *Having an alabaster box, &c.*—Being deeply affected with the many instances that Christ had given her and her sister Martha of his love, and especially by his late mercy in recovering her dear brother Lazarus from the grave, she was therefore solicitous to give some uncommon token of her gratitude to so excellent a person. *She brake the box, says Mark, and poured the precious ointment, or rich balsam, on his head.* See note on John xii. 3. *When the disciples saw it, they had indignation*—Several of them were angry, though none so much so as Judas, saying, *To what purpose is this waste?*—Such a

A. M. 4037. indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?
A. D. 33.

9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11 For ye have the poor always with you; but *me* ye have not always.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world,

^f Deut. xv. 11; John xii. 8.—^g Chap. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20; John xiii. 33; xiv. 19; xvi. 5, 28; xvii. 11.—^h Mark xiv. 10;

quantity of this rich balsam poured out to so little purpose. *For this ointment might have been sold for much*—The disciples being sensible that their Master was not delighted with luxuries of any kind, were grieved, and murmured against the woman, says Mark, for throwing away so much money idly, as they imagined. But they expressed themselves so as to cast a tacit reflection on Jesus himself. *Jesus said, Why trouble ye the woman?*—Why do ye grieve and distress the good woman, of whose piety and friendship we have had so long an experience? *For she hath wrought a good work upon me*—Hath given a great proof of her faith, gratitude, and love; and therefore deserves to be commended rather than to be blamed. For with respect to what has been now suggested, in favour of the poor, *ye have them always with you*—By the wise and gracious providence of God, it does, and always will happen, that objects needing your compassion and charity shall always be with you, that you may always have opportunities of relieving their wants, and so of laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven. *But me ye have not always*—I am soon to leave you, and to be placed beyond the reach of your kindness. *In that she hath poured this ointment on my body*—On my feet as well as my head; see John xii. 4. *She did it for my burial*—As it were, for the embalming of my body. Indeed this was not her design; but our Lord puts this construction upon it, to confirm thereby what he had before said to his disciples concerning his approaching death. *Verily, wheresoever this gospel*—That is, this part of the gospel history; *shall be preached, this that this woman hath done shall be told, &c.*—To make them further sensible of their folly in blaming her for this expression of her love to him, he assured them that however much she might be condemned by them, she should be highly celebrated for this action through the world, and live in the memory of all ages.

Verses 14–16. *Then one of the twelve*—Judas Iscariot, having been more forward than the rest (John xii. 4) in condemning the woman, thought himself, as it appears, peculiarly affronted by the

there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.
A. M. 4037.
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14 ¶^h Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

17 ¶ⁱ Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus,

Luke xxii. 7; John xiii. 2, 30.—^j Ch. x. 4.—^k Zech. xi. 12; Ch. xxvii. 3.—^l Ex. xii. 6, 18; Mark xiv. 12; Luke xxii. 7.

rebuke which Jesus now gave to all his apostles. Rising up, therefore, he went straightway into the city to the high-priest's palace, where doubtless he had received some previous information that the council would be assembled, and finding them there accordingly, *he said unto them, What will ye give me*—Words that show he was influenced to the infamous action partly, at least, by the love of filthy lucre; *and I will deliver him unto you?*—I will undertake to put him into your hands, at a time and place in which you may effectually secure him, without the danger of giving any alarm to the people. *And they covenanted*—Or, bargained, *with him for thirty pieces of silver*—That is, (reckoning each piece to be of the value of 2s. 6d.) for 3l. 15s. sterling, the price of a slave, Exod. xxi. 32. *A goodly price that he was prized at of them!* Zech. xi. 13. The sum was so trifling that it would be unaccountable that he should have been influenced in any degree by it, to betray to death his friend and Master, had it not been that, as Luke observes, chap. xxii. 3, *Satan* at this time *entered into him*, which doubtless he was permitted to do to punish him for giving way to a worldly, covetous spirit, and probably for other sins, and especially his not improving the great privilege he had enjoyed for about three years, in steadily attending upon Christ's ministry, hearing all his divine discourses, and being a constant spectator of his holy life and astonishing miracles, and having the high honour of being called to be one of his apostles. *And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him*—Namely, as Luke observes, in the absence of the multitude, and that officers from the high-priest and his council might come upon him and apprehend him privately.

Verse 17. *On the first day of unleavened bread*—Being Thursday, the fourteenth day of the first month, Exod. xii. 6, 15. *The disciples came, saying, Where wilt thou that we prepare the passover?*—They meant at what house. *And he said, Go into the city to such a man*—This implies that Jesus named the person to whom they were sent, though the evangelists have not thought it of importance

A. M. 4037. saying unto him, Where wilt thou
A. D. 33. that we prepare for thee to eat the
passover?

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a
man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My
time is at hand; I will keep the passover at
thy house with my disciples.

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had
appointed them; and they made ready the
passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat
down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say

Mark xiv. 17-21; Luke xxii. 14; John xiii. 21.—Psa. xli.
9; Luke xxii. 21; John xiii. 18.—Psa. xxii.; Isa. liii.; Dan.

to mention his name. He told them further, that
on their entrance into the city they should find one
of the man's servants in the street, bearing a pitcher
of water. This person he ordered them to follow,
without saying any thing to him, because as he was
carrying the water home he would lead them
straight to his master's house, with which, it seems,
the disciples were not acquainted. This direction,
and some others, mentioned Mark xiv. 14, 15; Luke
xxii. 11, 12, (where see the notes,) were given by
Jesus to his disciples, and these predictions were
uttered to show them how completely he foreknew
every thing that should befall him, and to convince
them that his sufferings were all predetermined of
God; and that, on his part, they were all submitted
to voluntarily. *The disciples did as Jesus had ap-
pointed*—and found every thing to happen exactly as
Jesus had foretold, which doubtless would tend no
little to confirm their faith in him, and prepare them
for the trial they would so soon have to pass
through.

Verses 20-25. *And when the even was come*—At
the proper hour; *he sat down with the twelve*—To
taste first, according to the custom of those days,
the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs, before the
lamb was served up. After which they proceeded as
is related in the note on verse 2. *And as they did
eat he said*—*One of you shall betray me*—He had
before told them, namely, chap. xvii. 22, that *the
Son of man should be betrayed*; he now comes to
acquaint them, that one of them would be the traitor,
and to point out the guilty person. *And they
were exceeding sorrowful*—They were sorrowful
that he should be betrayed by any one, but more so
that one of themselves should be the instrument of
so horrible a crime: *and began every one to say,
Lord, is it I,* that am this guilty creature? They
do not appear to have asked this question because
they mistrusted themselves, not knowing to how
great a wickedness their hearts might lead them;
but because each of them wanted to be freed from
the suspicion of such an iniquity. *He answered,
He that dippeth, &c.*—“Grotius and others think
this implies that Judas had placed himself so near

unto you, That one of you shall be-
tray me. A. M. 4037
A. D. 33.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and
began every one of them to say unto him,
Lord, is it I?

23 And he answered and said, He that
dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the
same shall betray me.

24 The Son of man goeth, as it is written
of him: but wo unto that man by whom the
Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for
that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, an-

ix. 26; Mark ix. 12; Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 46; Acts xvii. 2, 3; xxvi.
22, 23; 1 Cor. xv. 3.—John xvii. 12.

his Master as to eat out of the same dish with him.
But their way of lying on couches at meat must
have made it inconvenient for two or more persons
to eat in that manner. It is more probable that the
disciples, being in the deepest distress, had left off
eating, only Judas, to conceal his guilt, continued
the meal, and was dipping his meat in a kind of a
sauce named *haroseth*, (which they used on these
occasions,) when Jesus happened to be putting
his into it; which sauce, according to custom, was
served up in a separate dish.—Macknight. *The
Son of man goeth* through sufferings to glory, *as it
is written of him*—In the Scriptures; *and deter-
mined* in the divine counsels. See note on Acts
ii. 23. Yet this was no excuse for him that be-
trayed him: *but wo to that man, &c.*—In pronoun-
cing this wo upon the man by whom he should be
betrayed, our Lord manifestly shows that the fore-
knowledge and prediction that he should suffer, and
that by the treachery of Judas, laid no antecedent
necessity upon Judas of doing this action, for if it
had, it not only would have lessened the wo due to
him, but would have taken away all his guilt. For
no guilt can attach to any action which a man is
laid under an absolute necessity of doing, and which
to him is unavoidable. All that the prediction of
Judas's treachery implies is, that God with certainty
foreknew how his will, left entirely to its own free-
dom, would determine on this occasion: and, it
must be observed, it would have determined in the
same way, if such determination had neither been
foreknown nor foretold. See note on 1 Peter i. 2.
*It had been good for that man if he had not been
born*—May not the same be said of every man that
finally perishes? But who can reconcile this, if it
were true of Judas alone, with the doctrine of uni-
versal salvation? For, if the torments of hell were
not eternal, but, after suffering in them, though it
might be millions of millions of years, guilty sin-
ners should be rescued from them and brought to
the enjoyment of heavenly blessedness, it still
would be good for them that they had been born,
inasmuch as they would still have a never-ending
state of felicity before them. *Then Judas, who be-*

A. M. 4037. swered and said, Master, is it I? He
A. D. 33 said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 ¶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

^a Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 19.—^b 1 Cor. xi. 23-25.—^c Many Greek copies have, gave thanks, Mark vi. 41.—^d 1 Cor. x. 16.

trayed him—Who had in fact already betrayed him, verse 15, and was now waiting for an opportunity to deliver him privately into the hands of the chief priests, *answered, Master*—Gr. *Rabbi*, or teacher, *Is it I?*—The other disciples, in asking the same question, said each of them, *κύριε, Ὁ κύριε, Lord, is it I?* a title implying greater reverence than Judas was disposed to show his Master. As Judas was conscious of what he had already done, and was resolved still further to do, in betraying and delivering up his Divine Master, and could not but know that his whole conduct, and the very secrets of his heart, lay open to his inspection, he manifests by this question unparalleled impudence, as well as excessive hardness of heart. One would almost suppose, that he intended to insult Christ's prescience as well as long-suffering. *He, Jesus, said unto him, Thou hast said*—That is, It is as thou hast said: thou art the guilty person. Before this, when Christ discovered that he should be betrayed, he only told it in John's ear, that Judas would be the traitor: and John told it to Peter, (see John xiii. 23-26;) but the rest knew nothing of it. Now Jesus plainly points him out before them all; which, impudent as he was, evidently confounded and struck him speechless. But whether he immediately left the company, as some infer from John xiii. 30; or whether that passage refers to what happened at a former supper, as others think, is a question which it is not easy to decide. One thing seems clear: if he withdrew at this time, he must have soon returned, as it appears, from Luke xxii. 21, that he was present when the Lord's supper was instituted.

Verse 26. *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread*—The bread, or cake, which the master of the family used to divide among them, after they had eaten the passover. This custom our Lord now transferred to a nobler use. *This bread is*, that is, signifies or represents, *my body*, according to the style of the sacred writers. Thus Gen. xl. 12, *The three branches are three days*. Thus Gal. iv. 24, St. Paul, speaking of Sarah and Hagar, says, *These are the two covenants*. Thus in the grand type of our Lord, Exod. xii. 11, God says of the paschal lamb, *This is the Lord's passover*. Now Christ, substituting the holy communion for the passover, follows the style of the Old Testament, and uses the same expressions the Jews were wont to use in celebrating the passover. "When I consider," says Dr. Doddridge, "that, on the same foundation on which the Papists argue for *transubstantiation* from these words, they might prove

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33

Drink ye all of it;

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

^a Mark xiv. 23.—^b Exod. xxiv. 8; Lev. xvii. 11.—^c Jer. xxxi. 31.—^d Chap. xx. 28; Rom. v. 15; Heb. ix. 22.

from Ezek. v. 1-5, that the prophet's hair was the city of Jerusalem; from John x. 9, and xv. 1, that Christ was literally a door and a vine; from Matt. xxvi. 27, 28, and 1 Cor. xi. 25, that the cup was his blood, and that Christ commanded his disciples to drink and swallow the cup; I cannot but be astonished at the inference they would deduce from hence. Had Irenæus or Epiphanius reported such a thing of any sect of ancient heretics, now extinct, one would have been so candid to human nature as to suppose the historian misinformed. As it is, one is almost tempted to suspect it to be the effect of arrogance rather than error; and to consider it as a mere insolent attempt to show the world, in the strongest instance they could invent, what monstrous things the clergy should dare to say, which the wretched laity should not dare to contradict; nay, which they should be forced to pretend they believed. In this view the thought is admirable, and worthy the most malicious wit that ever lorded it over the heritage of God. But it may deserve some serious reflection, whether it be not an instance of *infatuation* to which God has given them up, that it may be a plain mark to all, that will use common sense, of the grossest error in a church which claims *infallibility*; and may not be intended by Providence as a kind of antidote against the rest of its poison."

Verses 27, 28. *And he took the cup*—Called by the Jews the cup of thanksgiving; which the master of the family used likewise to give to each after supper. *And gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this*—That is, of the wine which it contains. *For this is my blood*—That is, the sign of my blood; of the new testament—Whereby the new testament, or covenant, is procured or confirmed; which is shed for many—Even as many as spring from Adam; for the remission of sins—Namely, That as many as truly repent, bringing forth fruit worthy of repentance, and believe in me with their hearts unto righteousness, may receive from the mercy of my Father, in a way consistent with his holiness and justice, the free and full remission of all their past sins. See note on Rom. iii. 24-26. "I apprehend," says the last-mentioned divine, "this ordinance of the eucharist to have so plain a reference to the atonement or satisfaction of Christ, and to do so solemn an honour to that fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that I cannot but believe, that while this sacred institution continues in the church, (as it will undoubtedly do to the end of the world,) it will be utterly impossible to root that doctrine out of the minds of plain, humble Christians, by all the little artifices of such

A. M. 4037. 29 But ^a I say unto you, I will not
A. D. 33. drink henceforth of this fruit of the
vine, ^a until that day when I drink it new
with you in my Father's kingdom.

30 ¶ ^b And when they had sung a ^a hymn,
they went out into the mount of Olives.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, ^c All ye shall
^d be offended because of me this night: for it

^a Mark xiv. 25; Luke xxii. 18.—^b Acts x. 41.—^c Mark
xiv. 28.—^d Or, psalm.

forced and unnatural criticisms as those are by which it has been attacked. Unprejudiced and honest simplicity will always see the analogy this ordinance has to *eating the flesh of the Son of God, and drinking his blood*; and will be taught by it, to feed on him as *the Lamb that was slain* by the gracious appointment of God, *to take away the sin of the world*. The enemies of this heart-reviving truth might as well hope to pierce through a coat of mail with a straw, as to reach such a truth, defended by such an ordinance as this, by any of their trifling sophistries." For further information respecting the Lord's supper, see notes on Luke xxii. 19, 20; I Cor. xi. 23-34.

Verse 29. *But I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, &c.*—He had made the same declaration concerning the passover-cup, Luke xxii. 18; and therefore, it is probable, his meaning upon the whole was, that he would neither partake of the passover nor of the sacrament, till he had the satisfaction to see the things signified by these institutions fulfilled in the gospel dispensation, which therefore was nigh at hand. Or we may interpret the words in a more general sense, thus: that he would not partake of any joy till he rejoiced with them in the communications of the Holy Spirit, which were to be bestowed plentifully on them as soon as the gospel dispensation began. Others, however, understand the words thus: I will taste no more wine till I drink wine of quite another kind in the glorious kingdom of my Father; and of this you also shall partake with me.

Verses 30-32. *And when they had sung a hymn*—Which was constantly sung at the close of the passover. It consisted of six psalms, from the 113th to the 118th. See the contents of Psa. cxiii. *They went out into the mount of Olives*—That is, after some other facts had occurred, and some other instructions, advices, and warnings, see Luke xxii. 24-28; John xiii. 31-38; and the divine discourse recorded John xiv. had been delivered to the eleven disciples: the sermon contained in the 15th and 16th chapters of the same gospel, it seems, being preached on the mount of Olives, where also Christ offered to his Father his intercessory prayer, in chap. xviii. *Then saith Jesus*—After they arrived on the mount of Olives. *All ye shall be offended because of me this night*—Notwithstanding all the faith you have professed in me, and all the affection which you bear me, yet, not only one, or another, but all of you

is written, ^e I will smite the shepherd, ^e and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

32 But after I am risen again, ^f I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

^e Mark xiv. 27; John xvi. 32.—^d Ch. xi. 6.—^e Zech. xiii. 7.
^f Ch. xxviii. 7, 10, 16; Mark xiv. 28; xvi. 7.

shall be so terrified by the distress befalling me in your presence, and by a view of the sufferings which I am beginning to pass through, that it shall prove the sad occasion of your giving way to unbelief and sin, and of your forsaking me, your master and friend. *For it is written*, Zech. xiii. 7, *I will smite the shepherd, &c.*—I am that shepherd, and you the timorous sheep, that will be scattered by the assault made on your keeper. *But*, as it is afterward added there, by way of encouragement, *I will turn my hand upon the little ones*, namely, to reduce and recover them from this dispersed state; so likewise, I assure you for your comfort, that *after I am risen from the dead*, as I soon shall be, *I will go before you*, as a shepherd before his sheep, *into Galilee*, and there give not only to you, my apostles, but to all my disciples, the amplest demonstration both of my resurrection and my love; whereby your hearts shall be established in the firmest adherence to me; for though you forsake me, I will not for this forsake you.

Verses 33-35. *Peter answered and said*—According to Luke, chap. xxii. 31, our Lord had warned Peter before they left the house, of a violent assault which would be made upon him by Satan; and on Peter's declaring his readiness to go with Christ *to prison and death*, Christ had warned him that he would be overcome by the temptation, and would fall. Peter, therefore, now recollecting what Christ had said to him before, and being grieved afresh to find his Master still entertaining such thoughts of him, the vehemence of his temper hurried him to boast a second time of his courageous and close attachment to Jesus. *He answered*, *Though all men shall be offended, &c.*—In this protestation, Peter, no doubt, was sincere. Nevertheless, he was greatly to blame for not paying a due attention to his Master's repeated predictions of his fall; for the preference which he gave himself above his brethren; and for leaning to his own strength, instead of begging assistance of him from whom all human sufficiency is derived. Wherefore, to make him sensible of the pride of his heart, his self-confidence, and carnal security, which Jesus knew would produce unwatchfulness and neglect of prayer, he thought fit to forewarn him of his danger again, and in stronger terms, *saying*, *Verily, this night, before the cock crow*—Or rather, *before the cock-crow*, that is, before three in the morning, the usual time of cock-crow; although one cock was heard to crow once

A. M. 4037. 34 Jesus said unto him, ^a Verily I
A. D. 33. say unto thee, That this night, before
the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die
with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise
also said all the disciples.

36 ¶ ^b Then cometh Jesus with them unto
a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto
the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray
yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter, and ⁱ the

^a Mark xiv. 30; Luke xxii. 34; John xiii. 38.—^b Mark xiv.
32-35; Luke xxii. 39; John xviii. 1.—ⁱ Ch. iv. 21.—^k John

after Peter's first denial of his Lord. *Peter*—How-
ever, not convinced of his weakness, or that any
temptation could make him guilty of such base con-
duct, *said*—with still greater confidence and vehe-
mence; *Though I should die with thee, yet will I
not deny thee*—And, doubtless, so he thought. *Like-
wise said all the disciples*—They all joined Peter
in professing their fixed resolution of suffering death,
rather than they would deny their Master; yet the
event was exactly as Jesus had foretold, and fore-
knew it certainly would be; nevertheless such was
his tenderness, that he would not aggravate their sin
by making any reply. From this circumstance we
learn how ignorant men frequently are of them-
selves, and that to be pious and virtuous, it is not
sufficient to form the strongest resolutions.

Verses 36-38. *Then cometh Jesus to a place called
Gethsemane*—A garden, lying, it seems, at the foot
of the mount of Olives, which had its name, proba-
bly, from its soil and situation, the word, from גֶּתְשֶׁמָנִי
נָא, signifying, *the valley of fatness*. *And saith to
the disciples, Sit ye here*—Probably near the garden
door, within, for John says the disciples went into
the garden with him: *while I go and pray yonder*—
In a retired place, at a little distance. Doubtless he
intended that they should be employed as he was,
in watching and prayer. *And he took with him
Peter and the two sons of Zebedee*, James and John,
who had been witnesses of his transfiguration and
glory, and were now to be witnesses of his humili-
ation and agony: *and began to be sorrowful and very
heavy*—Gr. Δυπεισθαι και αδημονειν, *to be penetrated
with the most exquisite sorrow, and overwhelmed
with deep anguish*. This was probably from the
arrows of the Almighty sticking fast in his soul,
while God laid on him the iniquities of us all. Who
can tell what painful and dreadful sensations were
then impressed on him by the immediate hand of
God? *Then saith he, My soul is exceeding sor-
rowful*—Gr. Περιλυπος, *surrounded with sorrows* on
every side; *even unto death*—"This expression,"
says Dr. Campbell, "is rather indefinite, and seems
to imply a sorrow that would continue till death;
whereas the import of the original is such a sorrow
as was sufficient to cause death." He therefore ren-
ders the clause, *My soul is overwhelmed with a
deadly anguish*. Castalio translates it, *In tanto*

two sons of Zebedee, and began to be ^a A. M. 4037.
sorrowful and very heavy. A. D. 33.

38 Then saith he unto them, ^k My soul is
exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry
ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on
his face, and ^l prayed, saying, ^m O my Father,
if it be possible, ⁿ let this cup pass from me:
nevertheless, ^o not as I will, but as thou
wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and

xii. 27.—^l Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42; Heb. v. 7.—^m John
xii. 27.—ⁿ Chap. xx. 22.—^o John v. 30; vi. 38; Phil. ii. 8.

sum animi dolore ut emoriar, "I am in such trou-
ble of mind that I shall die." He evidently meant,
that his sorrow was so great that the infirmity of his
human nature must immediately sink under it with-
out some extraordinary relief and support; for which
he was about to pray, and for which he wished them
to pray, adding, *Tarry ye here and watch with me*
—Had these disciples done as Christ here directed,
they would soon have found a rich equivalent for
their watchful care, in the eminent improvement of
their graces by this wonderful and edifying sight.
For Christ was now sustaining those grievous sor-
rows in his soul, by which, as well as by his dying
on the cross, he became a sin-offering, and accom-
plished the redemption of mankind.

Verse 39. *And he went a little further*—Luke says,
He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast,
so that the apostles could still both see and hear him;
and fell on his face—It seems he first knelt down,
Luke xxii. 41, and then, as the ardour of his soul in-
creased, prostrated himself on his face to the ground,
and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible—
That is, if it be consistent with the salvation of the
world; *let this cup*—Of bitterness and terror, *pass
from me*—And it did pass from him soon; for when
he *cried unto God with strong cries and tears, he
was heard in that which he feared*, Heb. v. 7. God
took away the terror and severity of that in-
ward conflict. That it was not the fear of dying on
the cross which made our Lord speak and pray in
the manner here related, is evident from this, that to
suppose it would be to degrade his character infi-
nitely. Suppose his sufferings to be as terrible as
possible, clothe them with all the aggravating circum-
stances imaginable; yet if no more was included in
them than the pains of death, inasmuch as his hu-
man nature was strengthened far beyond the natu-
ral pitch by its union with the divine, for Jesus to
have shrunk at the prospect of them, would have
shown a weakness which many of his followers
were strangers to, encountering more terrible deaths
without the least emotion. *Nevertheless, not as I
will, but as thou wilt*—Here we see, that though his
prayer was most fervent, yet it was accompanied
with due expressions of entire resignation.

Verse 40. *And he cometh unto the disciples*—Unto
the three from whom he had withdrawn himself

A. M. 4037. findeth them asleep, and saith unto
A. D. 33. Peter, What! could ye not watch
with me one hour?

41 ^p Watch and pray, that ye enter not into
temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but
the flesh is weak.

42 He went away again the second time,
and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup
may not pass away from me, except I drink
it, thy will be done.

^p Mark xiii. 33; xiv. 38; Luke

a little way; and findeth them asleep—Notwithstanding the distress they saw him in, and the strict command that he had given them to watch. It seems a supernatural heaviness had fallen upon them. *And saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?*—According to Mark, (who must be considered as peculiarly accurate in what relates to Peter, his gospel having been revised by that apostle,) Christ addressed himself especially to Peter, saying, *Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour?*—Thou, who so lately boastedst of thy courage and constancy in my service, couldst thou not keep thyself awake for one hour, when I was in such an agony? Doubtless, however, Jesus also addressed the others, as Matthew signifies. As if he had said, And you, who were so ready to join with Peter in the same profession, could neither of you be mindful of me? and in this time of my extreme distress, could none of you perform your resolution, so as to watch one single hour with me? *Watch and pray*—As I must again exhort you with the greatest earnestness; *that ye enter not into temptation*—That ye do not yield to and fall by that dangerous temptation which is now approaching, and of which I so lately gave you notice. *The spirit indeed is willing*—You, in spirit, are ready to express the dutiful regard that you have for me, and I know your resolutions of adhering to me are very sincere; *but the flesh*—Your nature; *is weak*—As your present experience may convince you. How gentle a rebuke was this, and how kind an apology! especially at this time, when our Lord's own mind was so weighed down with sorrow.

Verses 42–45. *He went away again the second time*—For the sorrow of his soul still continued; *and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup, &c.*—If it be necessary, in pursuance of the great end for which I came into the world, that I should endure these grievous sufferings, *thy will be done*—I acquiesce in thy appointment, how painful soever it may be to flesh and blood: *and he came and found them asleep again*—He returned thus frequently to his disciples, that by reading his distress in his countenance and gesture, they might be witnesses of his passion. Our Lord's pains on this occasion were intense beyond expression, for he went away the third time to pray, *saying the same words* as before,

43 And he came and found them A. M. 4037.
asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. A. D. 33.

44 And he left them, and went away again,
and prayed the third time, saying the same
words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and
saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take
your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and
the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of
sinners.

xxii. 40, 46; Eph. vi. 18.

that is, offering petitions to the same effect, and in the same spirit of intense desire and perfect resignation. It appears, however, from Luke, that his inward conflict was greater than before, for notwithstanding that an angel was sent from heaven to strengthen his human nature, left to suffer, it seems, without its usual support from the divine, yet the sense of his sorrows so increased, that he was thrown into an *agony*, and his whole body was strained to such a degree, that his blood was pressed through the pores of his skin along with his sweat, and fell down in great drops to the ground: a circumstance which was the more extraordinary as he was now in the open air, and that in the cool of the night. "Some, indeed, have interpreted Luke's expression, *his sweat was as it were great drops of blood*, in a metaphorical sense; fancying that, as those who weep bitterly are said to weep blood, so they may be said to sweat blood who sweat excessively by reason of hard labour or acute pain. But others more justly affirm that our Lord's sweat was really mixed with blood to such a degree, that its colour and consistency was as if it had been wholly blood."—Macknight. *Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith, Sleep on now, &c.*—For by your watching you can show no further kindness and concern for me, who am now to be delivered into the hands of my enemies. Some late interpreters translate this with an interrogation thus, *Do ye still sleep on and take your rest?* This appears at first to suit better the words which follow, *Arise, let us be going*. "I cannot, however," says Dr. Campbell, "help favouring the more common, which is also the more ancient, translation." Nor is there any inconsistency between this order, which contains an ironical reproof, very natural in such circumstances, and the exhortation which follows, *Arise, behold, the hour is at hand*—The long-expected hour, and *the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners*—"The Greek word, *αμαρτωλων*, expresses more here than is implied in the English term *sinners*. Our Lord thereby signified, that he was to be consigned to the *heathen*, whom the Jews called, by way of eminence, *αμαρτωλοι*, because they were *idolaters*. See Gal. ii. 15. For a similar reason they were also called *ανομοι*, *lawless*, *impious*, as destitute of the law of God."

A. M. 4037. 46 Rise, let us be going : behold, he
A. D. 33. is at hand that doth betray me.

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he ; hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus and said, Hail, Master ; and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, where-

¶ Mark xiv. 43 ; Luke xxii. 47 ; John xviii. 3 ; Acts i. 16.
* 2 Sam. xx. 9.

Verses 46-49. *Rise, let us be going*—Namely, to meet those who are coming to arrest me, and to go along with them whithersoever they shall lead us. *Behold, he is at hand that doth betray me*—Though they had not come within sight, our Lord perfectly knew the precise moment of their approach, and gave his disciples notice of it. *And while he yet spake, Judas came*—Judas found Christ in the most heavenly and excellent employment when he came to apprehend him. O how happy is it when our sufferings find us in God's way, engaged in his service, and engaging his assistance by fervent supplication ! Thus did our Lord's sufferings meet him ; may ours so meet us ! *And with him a great multitude*—The chief priests and elders being informed by Judas that the proper time of apprehending his Master was come, sent a band of soldiers along with him, and servants—Υπηρετας, (John xviii. 3,) carrying lanterns and torches to show them the way ; because, though it was always full moon at the pass-over, the sky was dark by reason of the clouds, and the place whither they were going was shaded with trees. At the same time, a deputation of their number accompanied the band, to see that every one did his duty, (Luke xxii. 52,) for they were exceedingly anxious to get Jesus into their hands. *He that betrayed him gave them a sign, &c.*—As the soldiers probably had never seen Jesus before, and it was now night, and there were twelve persons together, probably dressed much alike, Judas found it necessary to point him out to them by some such sign as he now gave : a sign, the design of which was less to be suspected by his other disciples, as it was a Jewish custom, after a long absence, or at departing from each other, to make use of the ceremony of a kiss. They used it likewise as a sign of affection to their equals, and as a mark of homage and reverence to their superiors. See Psa. ii. 12 ; Luke vii. 45. It is very probable that our Lord, in great condescension, had used, agreeably to this custom, to permit his disciples thus to salute him when they returned, after having been any time absent. *And forthwith he came to Jesus*—Here we see it was the portion of our blessed Redeemer to be betrayed into the hands of his mortal enemies by the treachery of a

fore art thou come ? Then came they, A. M. 4037.
and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. A. D. 33.

51 ¶ And behold, one of them which were with Jesus, stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high-priest, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place : for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels ?

* Psa. xli. 9 ; lv. 13.—† John xviii. 10.—‡ Gen. ix. 6 ;
Rev. xiii. 10.—§ 2 Kings vi. 17 ; Dan. vii. 10.

false and dissembling friend, whose sin was greatly aggravated by the eminence of his place and station, and by the peculiar honour done him and trust reposed in him. For he bare the bag ; that is, he was, as it were, almoner and steward of Christ's family, to take care for the necessary accommodations of Christ and his apostles ; and yet this man, thus called, thus honoured, thus respectfully treated by Christ, for the lucre of a little money, perfidiously betrays him ! " O whither," says Burkiitt, " will not a bad heart and busy devil carry a man ? " *Hail, Master, and kissed him*—" Here was honey on the tongue, and poison in the heart. This treacherous kiss enhanced his crime beyond expression. O vilest of hypocrites, how durst thou approach so near thy Lord in the exercise of so much baseness and ingratitude ! But none sin with so much impudence as hypocrites and apostates."

Verses 50-54. *Jesus said, Friend*—Gr. εταρα, companion ; wherefore—Gr. εφ' ω, For what, or against whom, art thou come ?—Against me, thy Teacher, Saviour, and Lord ? And to put me into the hands of murderers ? Our Lord also added, (see Luke xxii. 48,) *Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss ?*—Art thou so vile a hypocrite as to betray thy Lord and Master by that which all men use as the symbol either of love or homage, making it the signal of thy treachery ? The heroic behaviour of the blessed Jesus, in the whole period of his sufferings, will be observed by every attentive eye, and felt by every pious heart : although the sacred historians, according to their usual but wonderful simplicity, make no encomiums upon it. With what composure does he go forth to meet the traitor ! With what calmness receive that malignant kiss ! With what dignity does he deliver himself into the hands of his enemies ! Yet plainly showing his superiority over them, and even then leading, as it were, captivity captive ! *And one of them which were with Jesus*—Namely, Peter ; *struck a servant of the high-priest*—Probably the person that seized Jesus first, or was showing greater forwardness than the rest in this business. This servant's name was Malchus, John xviii. 10. But why did not Peter draw his sword upon Judas, rather than

A. M. 4037. 54 But how then shall the Scriptures
A. D. 33. be fulfilled, ⁷ that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat

⁷ Isa. liii. 7, &c.; Verse 24; Luke xxiv. 25, 44, 46.

Malchus? Doubtless because Judas had concealed his purpose so well from the disciples, that Peter did not suspect him, nor understand the treacherous design of his kiss. Though this might seem a courageous action of Peter, it was really very imprudent; and had not Christ, by some secret influence, overawed their spirits, it is very probable that not only Peter, but the rest of the apostles, might have been cut to pieces. Accordingly, Jesus ordered him to sheath his sword, telling him that his unseasonable and imprudent defence might prove the occasion of his destruction; or rather, as Grotius interprets it, that there was no need of fighting in his defence, because God would punish the Jews for putting him to death. See Rev. xiii. 10; where this very expression, *they that take the sword shall perish with the sword*, is used in predicting the destruction of the persecutors of true Christians. Christ told him, likewise, that his rash conduct implied both a distrust of the divine providence, which can always employ a variety of means for the safety of his servants, and gross ignorance of the Scriptures. *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father—Who heareth me always; and he shall give me more than twelve legions of angels—“The legion was a Roman military term, and as the band which now surrounded them was a Roman cohort, our Lord might make use of this term by way of contrast, to show what an inconsiderable thing the cohort was, in comparison of the force he could summon to his assistance;—more than twelve legions, not of soldiers, but of angels—Instead of twelve deserting, timorous disciples! How dreadfully irresistible would such an army of angels have been, when one of these celestial spirits was able to destroy 185,000 Assyrians at one stroke! 2 Kings xix. 35.”* Peter, it must be observed, had not only wounded the ear of the high-priest’s servant, but had actually cut it off. Jesus, however, repaired this injury; *He touched his ear and healed him, Luke xxii. 51; either putting the ear on again, which was cut off, or creating a new one in the place of it: or if he performed the cure in any other way, he equally demonstrated both his goodness and power; and it is surprising that such a miracle, done in such circumstances, made no impression on those that came to apprehend him, especially as he put them in mind, at the same time, of his other miracles. For,*

Verses 55, 56. *In that same hour, Jesus said to the multitude—And particularly unto the chief priests and elders, &c., Luke xxii. 52, Are ye come out as against a thief, &c.—Or robber, that would make a desperate resistance, armed in this way with swords and staves, as if you came to seize me at the*

daily with you teaching in the temple— A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done that the ^a Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then ^a all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

^a Lam. iv. 20; Verse 54.—^a John xviii. 15.

hazard of your lives? *I sat daily with you teaching in the temple—When you had opportunities in abundance to have secured me, if there had been any crime with which you could have charged me: yet then you laid no hold on me—Ye took me not; so Mark. All this was done, &c.—I know the reason of all this better than you yourselves do: you have hitherto been kept under a secret restraint, which is now removed; and this is your hour, in which God has let you loose against me, and the power of darkness is now permitted to rage with peculiar violence, Luke xxii. 53; for it is under the instigation of Satan and his infernal powers that you now act, with whatever pious names you may affect to consecrate the deed. That the Scriptures might be fulfilled—That is, hereby those predictions of the prophets are fulfilled which were uttered under an infallible prescience that all these things would be done. “This,” says Dr. Doddridge, “was a consideration which, if duly applied, might have prevented his disciples from being offended at his sufferings: and it strongly intimated that he still kept up the claim, which he had formerly made, of being the Messiah; and that what he was now to go through was so far from being at all inconsistent with that claim, that, on the whole, it was absolutely necessary, in order to make it out to full satisfaction.” Then all the disciples forsook him and fled—Immediately, it seems, as soon as they saw him in the hands of his enemies, notwithstanding that they might have followed him with safety, as the priests had no design against them. “Perhaps, however, they were afraid that the action of Peter would be imputed to them all, and might bring their lives into danger. But, whatever they apprehended, their precipitate flight in these circumstances was the basest cowardice and ingratitude, considering not only how lately they had been warned of their danger, and what solemn promises they had made of a courageous adherence to Christ; but also what an agony they had just seen him in; what zeal he had a few moments before showed in their defence, what amazing power he had exerted to terrify his enemies into a compliance with that part of his demand which related to the safety of his friends, John xviii. 6-8; and especially that his prophecy of their continued usefulness in his church was equivalent to a promise of their preservation, whatever danger they might now meet with.” But thus our Lord’s prediction concerning their being offended and forsaking him, verse 31, was fulfilled; and by his permitting them to act in this false and cowardly manner, we may learn not to depend too confidently on the friendship and fidelity even of the very best of men.*

A. M. 4037. 57 ¶^b And they that had laid hold
A. D. 33. on Jesus, led *him* away to Caiaphas the high-priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high-priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

60 But found none: yea, though ^c many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came ^d two false witnesses,

61 And said, This fellow said, ^e I am able to

^b Mark xiv. 53; Luke xxii. 54; John xviii. 12, 13, 24. — ^c Ps. xxvii. 12; xxxv. 11; Mark xiv. 55; Acts vi. 13. — ^d Deut. xix. 15. — ^e Chap. xxvii. 40; John ii. 19. — ^f Mark xiv. 60. — ^g Isa. liii. 7; Ch. xxvii. 12, 14.

Verses 57, 58. *And they led him away to Caiaphas*—From Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, to whom they had carried him first; *where the scribes and the elders*—Or chief members of the sanhedrim; *were assembled*—Doubtless by a summons from Caiaphas, and were waiting for Jesus to be brought before them. *But Peter followed him afar off*—Viciously agitated by conflicting passions: love constrained him to follow his Master; fear made him follow him afar off. *Unto the high-priest's palace*—Or, *the court of the high-priest's house*, as Campbell translates it. From verse 69, as well as from what we are told in the other gospels, it is evident that Peter was only in the court without, which, though enclosed on all sides, was open above, nor was it any wise extraordinary to kindle a fire in such a place. *And went in and sat with the servants*—Τῶν υπηρετῶν, rather, *with the officers*, the servants of the public, or official servants of those in authority, as the word commonly means. These were unfit companions for Peter, as the event showed.

Verses 59, 60. *The chief priests, and all the council, sought false witness*—“When the council found that Jesus declined answering the questions, whereby they would have drawn from him an acknowledgment of his being the Messiah, they examined many witnesses to prove his having assumed that character; for it appears, by what happened afterward, that they considered such a pretension as blasphemy in his mouth, who, being nothing but a man, as they supposed, could not, without affronting the majesty of God, take the title of God's Son, which of right belonged to the Messiah. But, in examining the witnesses, they acted like interested and enraged persecutors, rather than impartial judges; for they formed their questions after such a manner as, if possible, to draw from them expressions which they might pervert into suspicions of guilt, whereupon they might condemn Jesus. *But found none, though many false witnesses came*—Notwithstanding they were at the utmost pains to procure such a proof as

destroy the temple of God, and to A. M. 4037. build it in three days. A. D. 33.

62 ^f And the high-priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

63 But ^g Jesus held his peace. And the high-priest answered and said unto him, ^h I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless, I say unto you, ⁱ Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man ^k sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

^h Lev. iii. 1; 1 Sam. xiv. 24, 26. — ⁱ Dan. vii. 13; Chap. xv. 27; xxiv. 30; Luke xxi. 27, xxv. 31; John i. 51; Rom. xiv. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 16; Rev. i. 7. — ^k Psa. cx. 1; Acts vii. 55.

in the eye of the law would justify the sentence which they were resolved at all hazards to pass upon Jesus, they exerted themselves to no purpose. Because, though they suborned many witnesses, these, in giving their testimony, contradicted one another; a circumstance which the most illiterate person in the court could not but be sensible invalidated their evidence.” “As this was a great proof of Christ's innocence, so it is a singular instance of the power of God over men's minds, that, for all the rewards these great men could offer, no two consistent witnesses could be procured to charge him with any gross crime. Possibly, the exertion of his miraculous power, in striking to the ground those that were most forward to seize him, might intimidate the spirits of some who might otherwise have been prevailed upon.” *At last came two false witnesses*—Such they were, although part of what they said was true, because our Lord did not speak some of the words they mentioned at all; nor any of them in the sense in which they represented them as being spoken. See Macknight and Doddridge.

Verses 62–64. *And the high-priest arose, (Mark, stood up in the midst,) and said, Answerest thou nothing?*—When the high-priest found that Jesus took little notice of the things which the witnesses alleged against him, he rose from his seat in a passion, supposing that our Lord intended to put an affront upon the council, and desired him to give the reason of his conduct. But finding this in vain, in order to cut the trial short and insnare him, he *adjured* him, or required him to answer upon oath, whether or not he was the Christ. *I adjure thee*—Εξορκίζω σε. “This appears to have been the Jewish manner of administering an oath. The Heb. יְשָׁבַע, which in the Old Testament is commonly, by our interpreters, rendered, *to make one swear*, is justly translated by the LXX. ορκίζω, or εξορκίζω. Thus, Gen. xxiv. 3, where we have an account of the oath administered by Abraham to his steward, which is rendered in our Bible, *I will make thee swear by the*

A. M. 4037. 65 ¹ Then the high-priest rent his
A. D. 33. clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphem-
y; what further need have we of witnesses?
behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and
said, ^m He is guilty of death.

¹ 2 Kings xviii. 37; xix. 1.—^m Lev. xxiv. 16; John xix. 7.
² Isa. l. 6; liii. 3; Ch. xxvii. 30.—³ Luke xxii. 63; John xix. 3.

Lord, the God of heaven, &c., is thus expressed in the LXX., εφορκω σε Κυριον του Θεου του ουρανου, &c. *I adjure thee by Jehovah, the God of heaven and earth.* After such adjuration by a magistrate, or lawful superior, the answer returned by the person adjured was an answer upon oath: a false answer was perjury; and even the silence of the person adjured was not deemed innocent." He was under the necessity of giving an explicit answer, and of speaking the whole truth without disguise. Compare Exod. xxii. 11; Lev. v. 1; and Prov. xxix. 24. See Campbell. "The craft of the question lay in this, that if Jesus answered it in the affirmative, they were ready to condemn him as a blasphemer; but if in the negative, they proposed to punish him as an impostor, who, by accepting the honours and titles of the Messiah from the people, had deceived them." *Jesus saith, Thou hast said, that is, as Mark expresses it, I am.* Being put upon oath, or, according to Jewish customs, adjured by the magistrate, he no longer declines answering. And he adds, *Nevertheless, Gr. κληρ, moreover, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man—He speaks in the third person, modestly, yet plainly: sitting on the right hand of power—That is, of God: and coming in the clouds of heaven—As he is represented by Daniel, chap. vii. 13, 14.* Our Lord looked very unlike that person now! But nothing could be more awful, more majestic, and becoming, than such an admonition in such circumstances! The sending down of the Holy Ghost, the wonderful progress of the gospel, the destruction of Jerusalem, of the temple, and of the Jewish state, were unquestionable proofs and demonstrations shown forth by Jesus Christ of the infinite power wherewith he was invested at the right hand of God.

Verse 65. *Then the high-priest rent his clothes—* Though the high-priest was forbidden to rend his clothes, (that is, his upper garments,) in some cases, where others were allowed to do it, (Lev. x. 6; and xxi. 10;) yet in case of blasphemy, or any public calamity, it was thought allowable, 2 Kings xix. 1; 1 Mac. xi. 71; Caiaphas, therefore, by this action, expressed in the strongest and most artful manner, his horror at hearing so mean and vile a person as he thought Jesus to be, claiming the sovereignty over Israel, and a seat at the right hand of God, and this when adjured upon oath on so solemn an occasion.

Verses 67, 68. *Then did they spit in his face, &c.—Spitting in the face was the greatest contempt and disgrace which could possibly be shown.* See Num. xii. 14. *Buffeting, or striking a person with*

67 ^a Then did they spit in his face, A. M. 4037.
and buffeted him; and others smote ^{A. D. 33.}
him with ³ the palms of their hands,

68 Saying, ^p Prophecy unto us, thou Christ,
Who is he that smote thee?

69 ¶ ^q Now Peter sat without in the palace:

³ Or, rods.—^p Mark xiv. 65; Luke xxii. 64.—^q Mark xiv. 68; Luke xxii. 55; John xviii. 16, 17, 25.

the fist on the temples, was esteemed one of the most disgraceful punishments by the Greeks, from whom the Romans might have adopted it. *Smiting with the open palm of their hands, was such a dishonour as none but a slave ought to endure.* "Because Matthew here says, that they who condemned Jesus *spit in his face, and buffeted him:* and Mark, chap. xiv. 65, mentions the indignities which the servants in particular put upon him; it appears that he was smitten, blindfolded, and buffeted even by some of the council; who, to ridicule him for having pretended to be the great prophet foretold by Moses, bade him exercise his prophetic gift in guessing who it was that struck him; *Prophecy unto us, thou Christ—*It was hardly possible for those miscreants to invent any thing more expressive of the contempt in which they held our Lord's pretensions to be the Messiah. Thus was the Judge of the world placed at the bar of his own creatures, falsely accused by the witnesses, unjustly condemned by his judges, and insulted by all. Yet, because it was agreeable to the end of his coming, he patiently submitted, though he could with a frown have made his judges, his accusers, and those who had him in custody, all to drop down dead in a moment, or to shrivel into nothing."—Macknight.

Verses 69, 70. *Now Peter, &c.—*Our Lord's trial in the high-priest's palace, and Peter's denying him, being contemporary events, either of them might be related first, as the historian might think most proper. Matthew and Mark describe the trial first, as being the principal fact, but Luke introduces it after Peter's denials. John has preserved the exact natural order, for he begins with the first denial, because it happened immediately after Peter entered the palace; then gives the history of the trial, as the principal fact, and concludes with the subsequent denials. The apostles, no doubt, were in great consternation when their Master was apprehended, as appears from their forsaking him and fleeing. Some of them, however, recovering out of the panic that had seized them, followed the band at a distance, to see what the end would be. Of this number was Peter, and another disciple, whom John has mentioned without giving his name, and who, therefore, is generally supposed to have been John himself, it being his manner to speak of himself in the third person. See chap. xiii. 23; xxi. 10. "Matthew and Mark seem to differ in the account which they give of the place where Peter first denied his Master. Matthew's words are, *Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, &c.* Mark says, chap. xiv. 66, the denial happened *as Peter*

A. M. 4037. and a damsel came unto him, saying,
A. D. 33. Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto

was beneath in the palace. To reconcile this difference, some suppose that the high-priest's palace was built so as to form a court; that the fire at which the servants sat was lighted in the court; and that Jesus was examined in the porch, called by Matthew *πυλων*, and by Mark *προαυλιον*. Accordingly they think persons in the court might be said to have been (*εξω*) *without, in the palace*, that is, *without* in respect of the covered buildings; and (*κατω*) *beneath in the palace* with respect to the porch, which was higher than the level of the court. But it appears from John xviii. 25, that Peter was with the servants at the fire when he denied his Master the third time; and from Luke xxii. 61, that Jesus looked upon Peter just as he was pronouncing the words of the third denial. Our Lord, therefore, and his disciple, were not, the one in the court and the other in the porch of the palace during his trial, but they were together in one room, Jesus with his judges at the upper end of it, and Peter with the servants at the fire in the other. According to this disposition, Peter might be said to have been *without in the hall*, that is, without in relation to the crowd of judges, witnesses, and soldiers around Jesus; but in relation to the place where the council sat, he was *beneath in the hall*, a way of speaking common even in our own language. Further, John says, verse 18, that Peter, after the first denial, *stood* with the officers at the fire; whereas Matthew and Luke tell us, when he first denied his Master he *sat* by the fire. It seems, the maid's words had put him into such confusion, that before he answered her he rose from the seat which the servants had given him on his first coming in.—Macknight. According to John, the maid who attacked Peter, was the damsel who kept the door. It seems, after having admitted him, she followed him to the fire, and spoke to him in an angry tone, having been informed that it was he who had cut off her fellow-servant's ear, see John xviii. 26. *Thou also wast with Jesus*—She meant when he was apprehended in the garden. This blunt attack threw Peter into such confusion, that he flatly denied his having any thing to do with Jesus, saying, *I know not what thou sayest*—I do not understand what thou meanest by speaking to me in this manner. Here we see that apostle, who had formerly acknowledged his Master to be the Messiah, who was honoured with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and who had most confidently boasted of fortitude, and a firm attachment to him in the greatest dangers, proved a very coward upon trial.

Verses 71, 72. *When he was gone out into the porch*—Or portico, as Dr. Doddridge renders it, who observes, "I apprehend that the word *προαυλιον*, (used by Mark here,) most exactly answers to the

them that were there, *This fellow* A. M. 4037.
was also with Jesus of Nazareth. A. D. 33.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou

Latin word *vestibulum*, by which many interpreters render it. And, considering the magnificence of the Jewish buildings at this time, it is reasonable to conclude that this, which belonged to the high-priest's palace, was some stately *piazza*, or *colonnade*; and therefore I choose rather to render it, *portico*, than *porch*, a word applicable to the meanest buildings of that kind." *Another maid saw him, and said, This fellow was also with Jesus*—Whatever he may pretend to the contrary, and how positively soever he may deny it. *And again he denied with an oath*—A sin to which possibly he was not unaccustomed before our Lord called him. *Saying, I do not know the man*—Jesus was so public a person, and so well known to thousands, not at all in his interest, that this additional falsehood was most unnecessary; and, as it frequently happens when people allow themselves to transgress the bounds of truth, it was more likely to entangle and discover him than to clear him. A learned divine conjectures, that Peter was suffered to fall more foully than any of the rest of the apostles, except Judas the traitor, and to make more remarkable mistakes in his conduct, that we might thus be cautioned against that extravagant regard which would afterward be demanded to him and his pretended successors. How must these people, before whom Peter denied his Lord, be surprised when they saw, as no doubt some of them did, this timorous disciple, within the compass of a few weeks, when he was brought with John before the council, not only maintaining the cause and honour of Jesus, but boldly charging the murder of this Prince of life on the chief men of the nation, and solemnly warning them of their guilt and danger in consequence of it. Acts iv. 5–12. Perhaps when it is said there, verse 13, that *they took knowledge of Peter and John that they had been with Jesus*, the meaning may be, that some of them, or their attendants, remembered Peter and John as the two persons who had followed Jesus thus far, when the rest had forsaken him. See Clarke's *Seventeen Sermons*, p. 236, and Doddridge.

Verses 73, 74. *And after a while came they that stood by, &c.*—When the servants at the fire heard Peter deny the charge, which John has mentioned, they drew near and supported it by an argument drawn from the accent with which he had pronounced his answer: *Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee.* Η λαλια σου δηλον σε σου, *thy manner of speech* (meaning the Galilean dialect or pronunciation) *maketh thee manifest*—Or, as Mark expresses it, *Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.* Peter, being thus pressed from different quarters, and having now quite lost the reins, the government of himself; in order to

A. M. 4037. also art *one* of them ; for thy ' speech
A. D. 33. bewrayeth thee.

74 Then 'began he to curse and to swear,

* Luke xxii. 59.

give his lie the better colour, he profaned the name of God by swearing, and wished the bitterest curses on himself if he was telling a falsehood. Perhaps he hoped by these acts of impiety to convince them effectually that he was not the disciple of the holy Jesus. *And immediately the cock crew*—All the evangelists say, that the cock crew immediately after Peter pronounced the words of the third denial, which they themselves have related. But upon comparing the things said when this third attack was made, it appears that the speeches, at least which John has recorded, did not come from the persons mentioned by the other evangelists. Wherefore the third denial was occasioned by different attacks made in succession; unless the men spoke all at once, which is not very probable. It is more natural to think, that when Peter denied his Master to them who first attacked him, the others, who stood by, supported the charge, with an argument drawn from his dialect or pronunciation, which proved him to be a Galilean. However, as in either case the succession of his answers must have been very quick, the veracity of the evangelists remains unshaken, because thus the cock crew immediately after Peter pronounced the words which they have severally related. Thus through the mere *fear of man*, a principle from which have sprung many denials of Christ and his truth in different ages, Peter denied his Master three sundry times with many aggravating circumstances, forgetting the vehement protestations he had made a few hours before. He was permitted to fall in this manner to teach mankind several important lessons: as, 1st, That no dependence can be placed on any mere human strength, or on any resolutions man can form, without supernatural aid. 2d, That whatever a person's attainments may have been formerly, if once he give way to temptation, so as to commit known and actual sin, he frequently, perhaps it may be said commonly, proceeds from bad to worse, one sin naturally drawing on another; for which reason the very least appearance of evil ought always to be dreaded, and the greatest humility and self-diffidence maintained. 3d, The goodness wherewith Jesus treated his fallen apostle, teaches us that no sinner whatever needs to despair of mercy who truly repents.

Verse 75. *And Peter*—Immediately upon hearing the cock crew, *remembered the words of Jesus*—The crowing of the cock reminding him of them. Thus, at the same time that Jesus predicted his fall, by mentioning that it would happen before the cock crew, he provided the means of his recovery, and by this little circumstance the fallen apostle is awakened and brought to repentance. Such weak and contemptible means does God sometimes use to open the eyes of sinners, and bring them to a sense

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saying, I know not the man. And A. M. 4037.
immediately the cock crew. A. D. 33.

75 And Peter remembered the words of Jesus,

* Mark xiv. 71.

of their danger and their duty! This, however, was not the only means of Peter's restoration. Luke informs us, that immediately upon Peter's denying Christ the third time, and the crowing of the cock, *the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and that, upon his so doing, Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crew thou shalt deny me thrice.* "The members of the council," it appears, "who examined Jesus, sat at the upper end of the hall; in the other, were the servants with Peter at the fire. Wherefore, if Christ was placed on some footstool or bench, that his judges, who were many in number, might hear and see him, he could easily look over the heads of those who stood around him, and observe what was doing at the fire; particularly he could see Peter, who was then denying him with imprecations, and in the vehemency of his passion was speaking loud enough to be heard at the upper end of the room. But he had no sooner denied his Master the third time, than the cock crew, and awakened in him the first conviction of his sin; or at least made him look to his Master, in order, perhaps, to see if he were taking notice of what had happened. But at the same instant Jesus, turning about, fixed his eyes on his cowardly disciple. The look pierced him, and with the crowing of the cock, brought his Master's prediction afresh into his mind. He was stung with deep remorse, and being unable to contain himself, he covered his face with his garment (see note on Mark xiv. 72) to conceal the confusion he was in, and going out he *wept most bitterly;*" experiencing that godly sorrow which *worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of.*

Before we dismiss this melancholy subject of Peter's fall, it may not be unprofitable to notice, as a warning to ourselves, two particulars therein: First, the gradual progress of sin in him, and the various gradations by which it advanced to this depth of wickedness. From *self-confidence*, which was the source of the whole mischief, he proceeded, 1st, To disbelieve and disregard Christ's warnings; and therefore, 2d, Neglected to watch and pray. 3d, When alarmed by the unexpected coming of the band to apprehend Jesus, he gave way to his own spirit, and drew his carnal weapon to defend his heavenly Master. 4th, Immediately upon being convinced of his error in this, he passed from rash courage to unreasonable cowardice, and instantly forsook his Master and fled. 5th, When, recollecting himself, he followed, it was *afar off*. 6th, Having unthinkingly ventured into the company of Christ's enemies, when he had the fairest opportunity of confessing his Master, and an evident call to do it, he denied him, first, it seems, equivocating and shuf-

225

a

A. M. 4037. which said unto him, 'Before the
A. D. 33. cock crow, thou shalt deny me

thrice. And he went out, and wept
A. M. 4037. bitterly. A. D. 33.

† Verse 34; Mark xiv. 30; Luke xxii.

61, 62; John xiii. 36.

fling, then telling a plain and direct lie, and confirming it by an oath, and, last of all, to gain it still greater credit, cursing and swearing. The aggravations of his sin are, secondly, deserving of our notice: 1st, He was guilty of this base, cowardly, and false conduct in the presence of Christ's enemies, the high-priest, scribes, and elders, and their servants, who, doubtless, rejoiced at it; and were confirmed in their unbelief, after witnessing the treachery of one of Jesus's disciples in selling him for money, to hear another of them denying him through fear. 2d, He thus denied his Master, told these lies, and uttered these oaths and curses within his Master's view, and in his hearing. 3d, The time when Peter behaved in this manner was a peculiar aggravation of his sin. It was within a few hours after his gracious Master had most solemnly and repeatedly warned him of his danger, and he had been a witness of his conflict and bitter sorrow in the garden: it was when his Lord, of whose transfiguration and glory on the mount he had been an astonished and admiring spectator, was beginning to be most unjustly and cruelly treated by the persecu-

tors of God's truth, and the enemies of all righteousness, for his unspeakable love to Peter himself, and others of the human race, whom he was about to redeem and save. "The time," says Saurin, "when Peter denied Christ, makes his crime great indeed! The time of the Lord's looking at him illuminates his looks! At the very time when Jesus was giving the tenderest marks of his love, Peter discovered the blackest ingratitude to him; while Jesus redeemed Peter, Peter denied Jesus! While Jesus yielded to the bloody death of the cross for Peter, Peter refused to confess him! But—Jesus looks at him! My brethren, what do these looks say? how eloquent are those eyes! Never was a discourse so effectual; never did an orator express himself with so much force! It is the man of griefs complaining of a new burden, while he is ready to sink under what he already bears. It is the beneficent Redeemer of mankind pitying a soul ready to be lost! It is the apostle of our profession preaching in chains! In fine, it is the Sovereign of the hearts of men, the Almighty God of love, curbing the efforts of the devil, and taking his conquest away!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The prosecution of Christ. He is early delivered up to Pilate, the Roman governor, 1, 2. Judas avows him to be innocent; and, in desperate grief, hangs himself, 3-5. The chief priests buy a field with the money which had been given to Judas for his treachery, and which he had returned, 6-10. Jesus is arraigned and tried before Pilate, 11-14. Pilate, notwithstanding his conviction of Christ's innocency, and his wife's dream and warning, sentences him to be crucified, 15-26. (2.) The execution of Christ. His barbarous usage in the common hall, and being led to the place of execution, 27-33. He is crucified, insulted, and reviled, 34-44. An awful darkness covers the land, Jesus calls upon his Father, is offered vinegar to drink, and expires, 45-50. (3.) The prodigies which accompanied and followed his death, 51-53. He is acknowledged as the Son of God by the centurion and others, 54. Several women behold his crucifixion, 55, 56. (4.) His honourable burial by Joseph of Arimathea; and the malice of the Jewish rulers, in setting a watch on his grave, 57-86.

A. M. 4037. WHEN* the morning was come,
A. D. 33. * all the chief priests and elders

of the people took counsel against
A. M. 4037. Jesus to put him to death. A. D. 33.

* Sixth Sunday in Lent, gospel, verse 1 to verse 55.—Ps.

ii. 2; Mark xv. 1; Luke xxii. 66; xxiii. 1; John xviii. 28.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVII.

Verses 1, 2. *When the morning was come*—As soon as the day dawned, the chief priests and elders took counsel against Jesus, &c.—It seems they separated for the space of an hour or two, and at day-break came together again to consult what method they should take to carry into execution the sentence they had passed against him, namely, to put him to

death for the pretended crime of blasphemy. And now they resolved to carry him before Pilate the governor, loaded with chains, that he likewise might give sentence against him. For, indeed, otherwise they could not accomplish their purpose; the power of life and death being now taken out of their hands. The Roman governors of Judea, it must be observed, resided commonly at Cesarea, and there was only

A. M. 4037. 2 And when they had bound him, A. D. 33. they led *him* away, and ^b delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

3 ¶ ° Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

^b Chap. xx. 19 ; Acts iii. 13.—^a Chap.

an inferior officer in Jerusalem, with a single legion to keep the peace of the city. At the great festivals, however, they came up to prevent or suppress tumults, and to administer justice; for the governors of provinces frequently visited the principal towns under their jurisdiction on this latter account. Accordingly it is insinuated, John xviii. 39, that Pilate was wont to give judgment in Jerusalem at the passovers. Being come, therefore, as usual, a while before the feast, Pilate heard of the stir that was among the rulers, and was informed, perhaps by Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, of the character of the person on whose account it was made; and that the chief priests were actuated by envy in their proceedings against him, verse 18.

Verses 3-5. *Then Judas, when he saw that he was condemned*—Which probably he thought Christ would have prevented by a miracle; *repented himself*—Of the fatal bargain he had made, and the great guilt he had thereby contracted; and being pierced with the deepest remorse and agony of conscience on that account; to make some reparation, if possible, for the injury he had done, he came and confessed his sin openly before the chief priests, scribes, and elders, bringing again the money with which they had hired him to commit it, and earnestly begging that they would take it back. It seems he thought this the most public testimony he could give of his Master's innocence, and of his own repentance. *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood: and they said, What is that to us?*—They answer with the steady coolness of persons who knew no shame or remorse for their wickedness. *See thou to that*—But was it nothing to them that they had thirsted after this innocent blood, and hired Judas to betray it, and had now condemned it to be shed unjustly? Was this nothing to them? Ought it not to have given a check to the violence of the prosecution; a warning to take heed what they did to this just man? Thus do fools make a mock at sin, as if no harm were done, no hazard run by the commission of the greatest wickedness. Thus light did these Jewish priests and elders make of shedding innocent blood! When Judas found that he could not prevent the dreadful effects of his traitorous conduct, "his conscience, being enraged, lashed him more furiously than before, suggesting thoughts which by turns made the deepest wounds in his soul. His Master's innocence and benevolence, the usefulness of his life, the favours he had received from him, with many other considerations

4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

And they said, *What is that to us?* see thou to that.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, ^d and departed, and went and hanged himself.

xxvi. 14, 15.—^d 2 Sam. xvii. 23 ; Acts i. 18.

crowding into his mind, racked him to such a degree, that his torment became intolerable; he was as if he had been in the suburbs of hell. Wherefore, unable to sustain the misery of those agonizing passions and reflections, he threw down the wages of his iniquity, (which the chief priests and elders would not take back,) *in the temple*—Probably in the treasury, before the Levite porters and others who happened to be there, and then *went away* in despair, and *hanged himself*—Making such an end of a wicked life as one might expect those to make into whom Satan enters, and who are given up to the love of money, for which this wretch betrayed his master, friend, and Saviour, and cast away his own soul." See chap. xxiv. 24. The word *απηγασατο*, here rendered, *he hanged himself*, plainly denotes *strangling*, but does not say whether by *hanging* or otherwise. The term used in those places where *hanging* is mentioned is different from this. Our translation follows the Vulgate, *laqueo se suspendit*. The Syriac renders it, *he strangled himself*. "St. Peter seems to give rather a different account, Acts i. 18. *Falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out*. And to reconcile the two passages, Tobit iii. 10 is adduced to prove that the word *απηγασατο* in Matthew may signify *suffocation with grief*, in consequence of which a man's bowels may gush out; and instances are cited of persons who are supposed to have died in this manner. But as these instances may be otherwise understood, it is more natural to suppose that Judas hanged himself on some tree growing out of a precipice; and that the branch breaking, or the knot of the handkerchief, or whatever else he hanged himself with, opening, he fell down headlong, and dashed himself to pieces, so that his bowels gushed out. Peter's phrase, *ελακασε μεσος*, *he burst asunder*, favours this conjecture."—Macknight. Thus perished Judas Iscariot the traitor, a miserable example of the fatal influence of covetousness, and a standing monument of the divine vengeance, proper to deter future generations from acting contrary to conscience, through the love of the world. Some have said, that he sinned more in despairing of the mercy of God than in betraying his Master, but it is probable his sin was in its own nature unpardonable; at least it appeared so to him; at which we cannot wonder, if he noticed, as it is probable he did, the words uttered by Christ at his last supper with his disciples, *Wo to that man, &c. It had been good for that man if he had not been born*. Doubtless the

A. M. 4037. 6 And the chief priests took the
A. D. 33. silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with

• Acts i. 19.

terrors of the Almighty set themselves in array against him; and all the threatenings and curses written in God's book entered his soul, as water may into the bowels, or oil insinuate itself into the bones, as was foretold concerning him, Psa. cix. 18, 19, and drove him to this desperate shift for the escaping of a hell within, to leap into a hell before him, which was but the perfection and perpetuity of the horror and despair felt in his soul. Thus we see in him, that even sorrow for sin, if it be not according to God, worketh death, even the worst kind of death, death eternal, while godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation. And as we saw the latter of these kinds of sorrow exemplified before in the story of Peter, so we see the former exhibited here in this of Judas.

Verses 6-8. And the chief priests took the silver pieces—They refused to receive them from Judas, for fear, perhaps, of taking thereby the whole guilt of the murder of Christ upon themselves, which they wished Judas to bear with them; but the money being thrown down in some place belonging to the temple, in the precincts of which it is probable they held their council, they took it up; but were at first at a loss to know what use to make of it. *It is not lawful*, said they, *to put them* (the pieces of silver) *into the treasury: because it is the price of blood*—Yes, of innocent blood: and was it lawful to purchase that? We see these priests and rulers had a conscience too! but what kind of a conscience! A conscience that strained out a gnat and swallowed a camel! They scrupled deviating from a ceremonial direction of Moses, while they were knowingly and wilfully transgressing, in the most flagrant instance possible, the eternal and unchangeable laws of justice and mercy! were adjoining to an ignominious and painful death the Holy One of God! These "arch hypocrites," says Baxter, "make conscience of ceremony, and make no conscience of perjury, persecution, and murdering the innocent! Blood they thirst for, and will give money to procure it, but the price of blood must not be consecrated!" They scruple not to give money to procure the shedding of blood, but scruple the putting that money into the treasury! they are afraid to defile the treasury, but not afraid to pollute their souls. The word *κορβαν*, here rendered *treasury*, occurs in no other passage in the Scriptures. Josephus makes use of it, and interprets it, *τον ιερων θησαυρον*, the sacred treasure. It is formed from *κορβαν*, originally Hebrew, which also occurs but once in the Greek form, namely, Mark vii. 11, and signifies that which is given, or devoted to God. The unlawfulness of putting the thirty shekels into this repository arose from this single circumstance, that it contained the trea-

sure consecrated to God; and the priests judged that such an offering, as this price of blood, would have been as much an abomination to the Lord, as the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, which were expressly forbidden to be brought into the house of God for any vow, or offering, Deut. xxiii. 18. They took counsel and bought the potter's field

—Well known, it seems, by that name; to bury strangers in—Foreigners, heathen, especially, of whom there then were great numbers at Jerusalem. To purchase this field with the money, they thought would be putting it to a pious use; so holy and charitable would they be! Perhaps they thought to atone for what they had done by this public good act of providing a burying-place for strangers, though not at their own charge! Thus, in the dark times of Popery, people were made to believe that building churches, and endowing monasteries, would make amends for immoralities. Thirty pieces of silver may seem but a small price for a field so near to Jerusalem as this was. Probably the potters, by digging earth out of it for their ware, had made it useless either for tillage or pasture. Wherefore that field was called, *The field of blood*—Because it was bought with the money Judas received for betraying his Master's life. Providence seems to have set this name upon the field to perpetuate the memory of the transaction. Jerome, who had been upon the spot, tells us that they still showed this field in his time: that it lay south of mount Zion, and that they buried there the poorest and meanest of the people. The historian's mentioning the purchase of the potter's field with the money for which Judas betrayed his Master, being an appeal to a very public transaction, puts the truth of this part of the history beyond all manner of exception.

Verse 9. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy—The words here quoted are not in any copy of Jeremiah extant. But they bear a strong resemblance to the words of Zechariah, chap. xi. 12, 13. One MS., not of great account, has *Ζεχαριου*, of Zechariah. Another adds no name to the word *prophet*, and there is none added in the Syriac version, the words being only, *which was spoken by the prophet*. And it seems, from a remark of Augustine, that some copies in his time named no prophet. Indeed it is not improbable that the name *Jeremiah* was inserted by some officious transcriber. Or we may suppose, with Bishop Hall, that in copying the words, *Jeremiah* was put down for Zechariah, a blunder which transcribers might easily commit, especially if the names were written by abbreviation, *Ιηου* for *Ζηου*, as the bishop says he has seen in some ancient MSS. But if the present reading is retained, we may allow, that,

8 Wherefore that field was called, • The field of blood, unto this day.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken

A. M. 4037. by Jeremy the prophet, saying, ^f And
A. D. 33. they took the thirty pieces of silver,
the price of him that was valued, ¹ whom they
of the children of Israel did value ;

10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the
Lord appointed me.

11 ¶ And Jesus stood before the govern-
or : ^e and the governor asked him, saying,

^f Zech. xi. 12, 13.—¹ Or, *whom they bought of the children of Israel.*—^e Mark xv. 2 ; Luke xxiii. 3 ; John xviii. 33.

as the Jewish Scriptures were divided into three parts, *the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms*, what was found in the prophets might properly enough be said to be in Jeremiah, if his prophecies stood first in the collection, just as our Lord affirmed that whatever was in the Hagiographa concerning him, was contained in the Psalms, because the Psalms stood first in that division of the Scriptures. Or, we may adopt the solution offered by Grotius, who observes, that the Jews had many prophecies handed down to them by tradition, such as the prophecy of Enoch, Jude 14, 15, and the traditionary prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem mentioned by Josephus, and that the later prophets often allude to and repeat the words of the former. He therefore declares it to be his opinion, that the prophecy concerning the thirty pieces of silver, recorded Zech. xi. 12, 13, which represented symbolically, according to the manner of the prophets, the things that were to befall the Messiah, was originally acted and spoken by Jeremiah, as Matthew affirms ; but that Zechariah, who in many particulars followed Jeremiah, was directed by the Spirit to repeat it afterward, and preserve it in writing among his other prophecies ; and that the Jews had preserved the knowledge of this fact by tradition ; wherefore, though it be now found in Zechariah, being originally spoken by Jeremiah, Matthew has committed no error here in referring it to him. See note on Zech. xi. 12, 13.

Verse 11. *And Jesus stood before the governor*—As a prisoner before the judge. "Little did the governor imagine," says Bishop Porteus, "who it was that then stood before him. Little did he suspect that he himself must one day stand before the tribunal of that very person whom he was then about to judge as a criminal." Observe, reader, we could not have stood before God because of our sins, nor have lifted up our face in his presence, if Christ had not thus been judged and condemned, and thereby made a sin-offering for us. He was arraigned that we might be discharged. For a more full account of our Lord's appearance before Pilate, see John xviii. 29, &c., and Luke xxiii. 2, &c. *And the governor asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews?*—From Pilate's asking our Lord this question, we must suppose that the priests explained their accusation by telling him that Jesus had travelled continually through the country, and everywhere had given himself out for the Messiah ; and that even during

Art thou the King of the Jews ? A. M. 4037.
And Jesus said unto him, ^h Thou ^{A. D. 33.}
sayest.

12 And when he was accused of the chief
priests and elders, ⁱ he answered nothing.

13 Then saith Pilate unto him, ^k Hearst
thou not how many things they witness
against thee ?

^h John xviii. 37 ; 1 Tim. vi. 13.—ⁱ Chapter xxvi. 63 ; John xix. 9.—^k Chap. xxvi. 62 ; John xix. 10.

his trial before them, he had been so presumptuous as to assume that dignity in open court. Without some information of this kind, the governor would hardly have put such a question to Jesus, no prisoner being obliged to accuse himself. *And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest*—That is, according to the Hebrew idiom, *It is as thou sayest*. John tells us that our Lord added, *Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?* that is, Dost thou ask this question of thine own accord, because thou thinkest that I have affected regal power, or, dost thou ask it according to the information of the priests, who affirm that I have acknowledged myself to be a king? Jesus undoubtedly knew what had happened, but he spake to the governor after this manner, because, not being present 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 and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me, as a seditious person. What hast thou done to merit such a charge?* *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world.* See on John xviii. 35.

Verses 12–14. *When he was accused of the chief priests, &c., he answered nothing*—In consequence of the conversation that took place between Jesus and Pilate, referred to in the preceding note, Pilate was inclined to acquit Jesus, declaring he *found in him no fault at all* ; but the priests were not disconcerted, nor abashed by the public declaration which the governor, in obedience to conscience and truth, made of the prisoner's innocence ; for they persisted in their accusations with more vehemence than before, affirming that he had attempted to raise a sedition in Galilee ; see Luke xxiii. 5. To this heavy charge *Jesus answered nothing*. Nay, he continued mute, notwithstanding the governor expressly desired him to speak in his own defence, saying, *Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee?*—Yes, he did hear, and still hears all that is witnessed unjustly against his truth and ways ; but he keeps silence because it is the day of his patience, and does not answer as he shortly will, Psa. l. 3. In *answering nothing* to the accusations of the witnesses, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. liii. 7. But a conduct so extraordinary, in such circumstances, astonished Pilate exceedingly, for he had good reason to be persuaded of Christ's innocence. Indeed, his humble appearance was a suffi-

A. M. 4037. 14 And he answered him to never
A. D. 33. a word; insomuch that the governor
marvelled greatly.

15 ¶ ¹ Now at *that* feast, the governor was
wont to release unto the people a prisoner,
whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner,
called Barabbas.

17 Therefore, when they were gathered to-
gether, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye

¹ Mark xv. 6; Luke xxiii. 17; John xviii. 39.—² Mark

cient refutation of the charge which the Jews brought against him, and his silence served instead of the most elaborate defence; and possibly he might decline making any public defence, lest the common people, moved by what he must have said, should have asked his release, and prevented his death; in which respect he showed his followers a noble example of courage and submission to the divine will. Besides, the gross falsehood of the accusation, known to the chief priests themselves, and to all the inhabitants of Galilee, rendered any reply needless.

Verses 15-18. *Now at that feast, &c.*—It had become a custom with the Roman governors, at the feast of the passover, to gratify the people with the pardon and release of any one prisoner they pleased. There was no law to oblige them to do this, nor is it certain when or how this custom arose. But as acts of grace are generally popular things, it is probable it originated with the Romans themselves, and that they introduced and continued it to please their tributaries. It was, however, a bad custom, being an encouragement to wickedness, and an obstruction to justice. *And they had then a notable, επισημων, a remarkable, or notorious prisoner*—Who had really been guilty of the crime whereof they falsely accused Jesus; had made an insurrection, with accomplices, and committed murder in the insurrection; a crime which, though their impudence exceeded all bounds, they durst not lay to Christ's charge. *When they were gathered together*—About Pilate's tribunal, and began with great noise and clamour to demand of him *that he would do*, at this passover, *as he had always done* upon the like occasion, Mark xv. 8; and would discharge a prisoner, Pilate asked, *Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas or Jesus?*—Pilate, desiring to preserve the life of Jesus, of whose innocence he was fully convinced, in order to induce the people to ask for his release, proposes no other alternative than that scandalous and outrageous criminal who has just now been mentioned. *For he knew that for envy, as well as from malice and revenge, they had delivered Jesus.* That it was not his guilt, but his goodness that they were provoked at: and that they envied him because the people magnified him. Hence Pilate was willing to make the proposal to the people in such a form as might be most likely to secure his life.

that I release unto you? Barabbas, A. M. 4037.
or Jesus, which is called Christ? A. D. 33.

18 (For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.)

19 ¶ When he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

20 ¶ ² But the chief priests and elders per-

xv. 11; Luke xxiii. 18; John xviii. 40; Acts iii. 14.

Verses 19, 20. *When he was set down, &c.*—While Pilate was labouring to effect his purpose, he was confirmed in his unwillingness to condemn Jesus, by a message sent from his wife by way of caution; which message was probably delivered to him publicly, in the hearing of all present, for it was intended to be a warning, not to him only, but to the prosecutors: *saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man*—Gr. *το δίκαιον, that righteous man*; an honourable testimony this, not only to our Lord's innocence, but to his virtue and universal goodness, given even at a time when he was persecuted as the worst of malefactors. And, when his friends were afraid to appear in his defence, God made even those that were strangers and enemies to speak in his favour: when Peter denied him, Judas confessed him; when the chief priests pronounced him guilty of death, Pilate declared he found no fault in him; when the women that loved him stood afar off, Pilate's wife, that knew little of him, showed a concern for him! Observe, reader, God will not leave himself without witnesses to the truth and equity of his cause, even when it seems to be most spitefully run down by its enemies, and most shamefully deserted by its friends. *I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him*—Whether she dreamed of the cruel usage of an innocent person, or of the judgments that were about to fall upon those that had any hand in his death, or both, her dream, it seems, was very frightful and distressing, and made such an impression on her mind, that she could not be easy till she had sent an account of it to her husband, who was sitting on the tribunal in the pavement. And the special providence of God must be acknowledged in sending this remarkable dream at this time; for it is not likely that she had heard any thing before concerning Christ, at least not so as to occasion her dreaming of him, but that the dream was immediately from God. She might, indeed, be one of those termed *devout and honourable women*, and might have some sense of religion; yet God sometimes revealed himself to some that had not, as to Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar. Be this as it may, her message was a fair warning to Pilate, and by it and similar instances we learn, that, as the *Father of spirits* has many ways of access to the spirits of men, and can give them instruction even in a dream,

A. M. 4037. suaded the multitude that they should
A. D. 33. ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I

or vision of the night; so he has many ways of giving checks to sinners in their sinful pursuits; and it is a great mercy to have such checks, whether from the word of God, or from his providence, or from faithful friends, or from our own consciences, or in any other way. The people had not yet said whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas released to them. Therefore, when Pilate received his wife's message, he called the chief priests and rulers together, and in the hearing of the multitude made a speech to them, wherein he gave an account of the examination which Jesus had undergone at his tribunal and at Herod's, and declared that in both courts the trial had turned out honourably for his character. Wherefore he proposed to them that he should be the object of the people's favour. See Luke xxiii. 13-17. *But the chief priests, &c., persuaded the multitude*, both by themselves and their emissaries, whom they sent abroad among them, *that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus*—Suggesting, doubtless, that he was an impostor in league with Satan; an enemy to their church and temple; that if he were let alone, the Romans would come and take away their place and nation; that Barabbas, though an ill man, yet, not having the interest that Jesus had, could not do so much mischief. Thus they managed the mob, who otherwise were well affected to Jesus, and, if they had not been so much at the beck of their priests, would never have done such a preposterous thing as to prefer Barabbas before Jesus. Here, 1st, We cannot but look upon these wicked priests with indignation. By the law, in certain matters of controversy, the people were to be guided by the priests, and to do as they directed them, Deut. xvii. 8. This great power, put into their hands, they wretchedly abused, and the leaders of the people caused them to err. 2d, We cannot but look upon the deluded people with pity, to see them hurried on thus violently to such great wickedness, and falling into the ditch with their blind leaders!

Verses 21, 22. *The governor said, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?*—He still hoped to gain his point, and have Jesus released: but, to his great surprise, *they said, Barabbas*—As if his crimes were less than those of Jesus, and therefore he less deserved to die; or, as if his merits were greater, and therefore he better deserved to live! Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and thou earth, be horribly afraid! Were ever men that pretended to reason or religion guilty of such prodigious madness, such horrid wickedness! This was it that Peter charged so home upon them, when he said, Acts iii. 14, *Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go, and*

do then with Jesus, which is called A. M. 4037.
Christ? *They all say unto him, Let* A. D. 33.
him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, Why? what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and ye killed the Prince of life. Pilate saith, &c.—Pilate, being amazed at their choice of Barabbas, was willing to hope it was rather from a fondness to him than from enmity to Jesus, and therefore put this question to them, *What shall I do then with Jesus?*—Shall I release him likewise for the greater honour of your feast? Or, will you leave the disposing of him to me? No:—*They all say, LET HIM BE CRUCIFIED*—The punishment which Barabbas had deserved: and this probably made them think of it. But in their malice they forgot with how dangerous a precedent they furnished the Roman governor. And indeed, within the compass of a few years, it turned dreadfully upon themselves. They desired he might die that death, because it was looked upon as the most scandalous and ignominious; and they hoped thereby to make his followers ashamed to own him, and their relation to him. It was absurd for them to prescribe to the judge what sentence he should pass, but their malice and rage made them forget all rules of order and decency, and turn a court of justice into a riotous and seditious assembly. Though they that cried thus, perhaps, were not the same persons that the other day had cried, *HOSANNA*; yet see what a change was made in the face of the populace in a little time! When he rode in triumph to Jerusalem, so general were the acclamations of praise, that one would have thought he had no enemies; but now, when he was led in dishonour to Pilate's judgment-seat, so general were the outcries of enmity, that one would think he had no friends! Such revolutions are there in this changeable world, through which our way to heaven lies, as our Master's did, *by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report*, counterchanged. 2 Cor. vi. 8.

Verse 23. *The governor said, Why? what evil hath he done?*—A proper question to be asked before we censure any in common discourse, much more for a judge to ask, before he pass a sentence of death. It is much for the honour of the Lord Jesus, that, though he *suffered as an evil doer*, yet neither his judge nor his prosecutors could find that he had done any evil. Had he done any evil against God? No: he always did those things that pleased him. Had he done any against the civil government? No: as he did himself, so he taught others to *render to Cesar the things that were Cesar's*. Had he done any against the public peace? No: he did not *strive or cry*, nor was his kingdom of this world. Had he done any evil to particular persons? Whom had he defrauded, or otherwise injured? Not one: so far from it, that he continually *went about doing good*. *But they cried the more, LET HIM BE CRUCIFIED*. They do not go about to show any evil he had done,

A. M. 4037. 24 When Pilate saw that he could
A. D. 33. prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he ^a took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

^a Deut. xxi. 6.—Deut. xix. 10; Josh. ii. 19; 1 Kings ii. 32; 2 Sam. i. 16; Acts v. 28.

but, right or wrong, he must be crucified. Quitting all pretensions to the truth of the premises, they resolved to hold fast the conclusion, and what was wanting in evidence to make up in clamour.

Verses 24, 25. *When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing*—That he could not convince them what an unjust, unreasonable thing it was for him to condemn a man whom he believed to be innocent, and whom they could not prove to be guilty; and that instead of doing any good by his opposition to their will, a tumult was made—Through their furious outcries; he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude—Pilate did this, says Origen, according to the custom of the Jews, being willing to assert Christ's innocency to them, not in words only, but by deed. Thus, in the instance of a murder, committed by an unknown hand, the elders of the city nearest to the place where the dead body was found, were to wash their hands over a heifer slain by way of sacrifice to expiate the crime, and to say, *Our hands have not shed this blood*, Deut. xxi. 6. Alluding to which ceremony, the psalmist, having renounced all confederacy with wicked and mischievous men, says, *I will wash my hands in innocency*. But as washing the hands in token of innocency was a rite frequently used also by the Gentiles, it is much more probable that Pilate, who was a Gentile, did this in conformity to them. He thought, possibly, by this avowal of his resolution to have no hand in the death of Christ, to have terrified the populace; for one of his understanding and education could not but be sensible that all the water in the universe was not able to wash away the guilt of an unrighteous sentence. *Saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it*—Nevertheless, solemn as his declaration was, it had no effect; for the people continued inflexible, crying out with one consent, *His blood be on us and on our children*—That is, We are willing to take the guilt of his death upon ourselves. The governor, therefore, finding by the sound of the cry that it was general, and that the people were fixed in their choice of Barabbas, passed the sentence they desired. *He released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired, but he delivered Jesus to their will*, Luke xxiii. 25. In this conduct, notwithstanding his efforts to save Jesus, he was utterly inexcusable, and the more so the more he was convinced of Christ's innocence. He had an armed force under his command sufficient to have scattered this infamous mob, and to have enforced the execution of a righteous sentence. But if not, he ought himself rather to have suffered death than

25 Then answered all the people, A. M. 4037.
and said, ° His blood be on us, and A. D. 33.
on our children.

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when ^p he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

^p Isaiah liii. 5; Mark xv. 15; Luke xxiii. 16, 24, 25; John xix. 1, 16.

to have knowingly condemned the innocent. Accordingly, as the ancient Christians believed, great calamities afterward befell him and his family, as a token of the displeasure of God for his perversion of justice in this instance. According to Josephus, he was deposed from his government by Vitellius, and sent to Tiberius at Rome, who died before he arrived there. And we learn from Eusebius, that quickly after, having been banished to Vienne in Gaul, he laid violent hands upon himself, falling on his own sword. Agrippa, who was an eye-witness to many of his enormities, speaks of him, in his oration to Caius Cesar, as one who had been a man of the most infamous character.

As to the imprecation of the Jewish priests and people, *His blood be on us and on our children*, it is well known, that as it was dreadfully answered in the ruin so quickly brought on the Jewish nation, and the calamities which have since pursued that wretched people in almost all ages and countries; so it was particularly illustrated in the severity with which Titus, merciful as he naturally was, treated the Jews whom he took during the siege of Jerusalem; of whom Josephus himself writes, [*Bell. Jud.*, l. v. 11, (al. vi. 12), § 1,] that *μαστιγυμενοι ανεταυρωτο, having been scourged, and tortured in a very terrible manner, they were crucified in the view and near the walls of the city; perhaps, among other places, on mount Calvary; and it is very probable, this might be the fate of some of those very persons who now joined in this cry, as it undoubtedly was of many of their children. For Josephus, who was an eye-witness, expressly declares, "that the number of those thus crucified was so great that there was not room for the crosses to stand by each other; and that at last they had not wood enough to make crosses of."* A passage which, especially when compared with the verse before us, must impress and astonish the reader beyond any other in the whole story. If this were not the very finger of God, pointing out their crime in crucifying his Son, it is hard to say what could deserve to be called so. Elsner has abundantly shown, that among the Greeks, the persons on whose testimony others were put to death used, by a very solemn execration, to devote themselves to the divine vengeance, if the person so condemned were not really guilty. See Doddridge.

Verse 26. *And when he had scourged Jesus, &c.*—This was an ignominious and cruel punishment, usually, but most unreasonably inflicted by the Romans on such as were condemned to be crucified; as if the exquisite tortures of crucifixion were not a punishment sufficient of any crime, real or pretended,

A. M. 4037. 27 ¶ Then the soldiers of the go-
A. D. 33. vernor took Jesus into the ² common
hall, and gathered unto him the whole band
of soldiers.

¶ Mark xv. 16; John xix. 2.—³ Or, *governor's house*.

without adding to them those of the scourge. Matthew and Mark seem to signify, that the scourging of Jesus was performed on the pavement; for they tell us, that after it was over, the soldiers took him into the prætorium, and mocked him. We may, therefore, suppose, that the priests and multitude required the governor to scourge him openly in their sight; and that he, to pacify them, consented, contrary to his inclination, hoping, as some suppose, that this previous punishment would excite the pity of the Jews, and prevent Christ's crucifixion. That, however, was not the case. Nothing short of that ignominious and torturing death would satisfy them. Jesus being thus scourged, the Scriptures were fulfilled, *I gave my back to the smiters*, Isa. l. 6. *The ploughers ploughed on my back: they made long their furrows*, Psa. cxxix. 3. *By his stripes we are healed*.

Verses 27-30. Then the soldiers took Jesus—The soldiers, having received orders to crucify Jesus, carried him into the common hall, or prætorium, in Pilate's palace, after they had scourged him. Here they added the shame of disgrace to the bitterness of his punishment; for, sore as he was, by reason of the stripes they had laid on him, they dressed him as a fool in an old purple robe, (Mark, John,) in derision of his being called King of the Jews. Then they put a reed into his hand, instead of a sceptre; and having made a wreath of thorns, they put it on his head for a crown, forcing it down in such a rude manner that his temples were torn, and his face besmeared with blood. It is certain that they intended by this crown to expose our Lord's pretended royalty to ridicule and contempt; but, had that been all, a crown of *straws* might have served as well. They undoubtedly meant to add cruelty to their scorn; which especially appeared in their striking him on the head, (verse 30,) when this crown was put on. If the best descriptions of the eastern thorns can be credited, they are much larger than any commonly known in these parts. Hasselquist, speaking of the *naba*, or *nabka*, of the Arabians, (*Trav.*, p. 288,) says, "In all probability this is the tree which afforded the crown of thorns put on the head of Christ: it grows very common in the East, and the plant is extremely fit for the purpose; for it has many small, and most sharp spines, which are well adapted to give great pain. The crown might be easily made of these soft, round, and pliant branches, and, what in my opinion seems to be the greatest proof of it, is, that the leaves much resemble those of ivy, as they are of a very deep green: perhaps the enemies of Christ would have a plant somewhat resembling that with which emperors and generals were used to be crowned, that there might be calumny even in the punish-

28 And they stripped him, and ^r put A. M. 4037.
on him a scarlet robe. A. D. 33

29 ^s And when they had platted a crown of
thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed

¶ Luke xxiii. 11.—^s Psa. lxix. 19; Isa. liii. 3.

ment." Bishop Pearce, Michaelis, and a late learned writer, indeed, have remarked, that *ακανθων* may be the genitive plural either of *ακανθα*, *thorn*, or of *ακανθος*, the herb called *bear's-foot*, a smooth plant, and without prickles. But in support of the common version let it be observed, 1st, That in both Mark and John it is called *σφρανος ακανθινος*, a *thorny crown*. This adjective, both in sacred and classical use, plainly denotes *thorny*; "that it ever means *bear's-foot*," says Dr. Campbell, "I have seen no evidence. Thus in the LXX., Isa. xxxiv. 13, in the common editions, the phrase, *ακανθινα φυλα*, is used for prickly shrubs. 2d, That the word *ακανθα*, *thorn*, both in the right case, and in the oblique cases, occurs in several places of the New Testament and of the LXX., is unquestionable. But that in either the word *ακανθος* is found, has not been pretended. Not one of the ancient, or of the Oriental versions, or indeed of any versions known to me, favours this hypothesis. The Italic and the Syriac, which are the oldest, both render the word *thorns*. Tertullian, the first of the Latin fathers, mentions the crown as being of thorns, and speaks in such a manner as clearly shows that he had never heard of any different opinion, or even a doubt raised upon the subject, which is very strong evidence for the common translation. Add to this, that an eminent Greek father, Clement of Alexandria, a contemporary of Tertullian, understood the word in the same manner. *It is absurd*, says he, (Pæd., l. 2, c. 8,) *in us who hear that our Lord was crowned with thorns, ακανθαις, to insult the venerable sufferer by crowning ourselves with flowers*. Several passages, equally apposite, might be given from the same chapter, but not one word that betrays a suspicion that the term might be, or a suggestion that it ever had been, otherwise interpreted. To this might be added all the ancient commentators, both Greek and Latin. There is therefore here the highest probability opposed to mere conjecture." To the Son of God, in this condition, the rude soldiers bowed the knee, and said, *Hail, king of the Jews*—Pretending respect, but really mocking him, and at the same time giving him severe blows, some with the reed, others with their hands. Those who smote him with the reed laid their blows upon the thorns, with which his head was crowned: thereby driving the prickles thereof afresh into his temples. Those who smote him with their hands, aimed at his cheeks or some part of his body. To see an innocent and virtuous man treated with such barbarity, one would suppose must have excited feelings of pity and sympathy in the minds of some, even of his unfeeling and hard-hearted enemies! Of this, however, if it took place, the evangelists are silent.

A. M. 4037. in his right hand: and they bowed
A. D. 33. the knee before him, and mocked
him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

30 And they spit upon him, and took the
reed, and smote him on the head.

31 And after that they had mocked him,
they took the robe off from him, and put his
own raiment on him, and led him away to
crucify him.

† Isa. l. 6; Chap. xxvi. 67.—^a Isa. liii. 5.—^x Num. xv. 35;
1 Kings xxi. 13; Acts vii. 58; Heb. xiii. 12.

Verses 31, 32. *After they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him*—But it is not said they took the crown of thorns off his head, which served to gratify both their malice and contempt; probably he died wearing it, that the title, which was written over him, might be the better understood. *And led him away to crucify him*—It was a Jewish custom, in the time of Moses, to execute delinquents without the camp; but after Jerusalem was built, they were executed without the city walls. And Dr. Lardner has proved, by many quotations, that it was customary not only for the Jews, but also for the Sicilians, Ephesians, and Romans to execute their malefactors without the gates of their cities. *And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene*—According to custom, Jesus walked to the place of execution, and bore his cross at his first setting out, (John xix. 17,) not indeed the whole cross, but the transverse beam to which he was to be nailed; the other part being at the place already. But the fatigue of the preceding night, spent without sleep, the sufferings he had undergone in the garden, his having been hurried from place to place, and obliged to stand the whole time of his trials, the want of food and loss of blood, which he had sustained, and not his want of courage on this occasion, concurred to make him so faint, that he was not long able to bear his cross. The soldiers, therefore, laid it on one Simon, a native of Cyrene in Egypt, *the father of Alexander and Rufus*, two noted men among the first Christians at the time Mark wrote his gospel, (see chap. xv. 21,) and forced him to bear it after Jesus. This they did, however, not out of compassion for Jesus; but lest he should die with fatigue, and by that means should elude his punishment. As Jesus went along he was followed by a great crowd, particularly of women, who sighed, shed tears, beat their breasts, and bitterly lamented the severity of his lot; which gave occasion to his predicting, once more, the calamities coming on his country: for, turning unto them, he said, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children, &c.*; see Luke xxiii. 27–30; thus showing, that the thoughts of those calamities afflicted his soul far more than the feelings of his own sufferings.

Verses 33, 34. *And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha*—A Syriac word which signifies a *scull*, or *head*. In Latin it is called *Calvary*. The place was so named, either because malefactors

32 ^x And as they came out, ^y they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 ¶ ^z And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, A place of a scull,

34 ^a They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

^y Mark xv. 21; Luke xxiii. 26.—^z Mark xv. 22; Luke xxiii. 33; John xix. 17.—^a Psa. lxxix. 21; Verse 48.

used to be executed there, or because the charnel-house or common repository for bones and skulls might have been there. Being upon an eminence, it seems to have been a proper spot of ground for the execution of criminals, as those that were crucified there might be seen at a considerable distance, and by a great number of spectators. *They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall*—The word *χολη*, here rendered *gall*, is used with great latitude in the Septuagint. The Hebrew word, signifying *worm-wood*, is twice so rendered, Prov. v. 4; Lam. iii. 15. At other times it seems to denote any bitter or poisonous infusion that tasted like gall. Mark says, *They gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh, εμυρρησμενον οινον*. But, it seems, the two evangelists speak of the same ingredients. For though Mark terms that *wine* which Matthew calls *vinegar*, he may really have meant *vinegar*, which was a common drink among the ancients, (see Num. vi. 6,) and such as might very properly be called *wine*, as it was usually made of wine, or of the juice of grapes. Besides, it is well known that the ancients gave the general name of wine to all fermented liquors whatsoever. It is evident, therefore, that to reconcile the evangelists here, we have no occasion for the reading of Beza's copy, which has *οινον* instead of *οξος*. As to the other ingredient of this potion, it is probable the bitter, or poisonous infusion of Matthew mentioned above, might be called *myrrh* by Mark, because it had myrrh mixed with it; there being nothing more common than for a medicine, compounded of many ingredients, to take its name from some one of them that is prevalent in the composition. Or the evangelists may be reconciled more directly by supposing, that the word used by Matthew and rendered *gall*, and which, as we have seen, is applied to wormwood, signifies any bitter drug whatsoever, and therefore may denote *myrrh*, which has its name from a Hebrew word signifying *bitterness*. Casaubon has given a third solution of this difficulty. He thinks that our Lord's friends put a cup of myrrhed wine into the hands of one of the soldiers to give to him, but that the soldier, out of contempt, added gall to it. Whatever were the ingredients in this liquor, it is probable that it was offered to Christ by some of his friends, with a view to stupify and render him insensible of the ignominy and pain of his punishment. For it appears it was not unusual to give criminals drink of this kind,

A. M. 4037. 35 ° And they crucified him, and
A. D. 33. parted his garments, casting lots :
that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by
the prophet; ° They parted my garments
among them, and upon my vesture did they
cast lots.

° Mark xv. 24; Luke xxiii. 34; John xix. 24.—^c Psa. xxii. 18.
^d Verse 54.

before their execution, in order to make them insensible of the pains of death. Jesus, however, refused the potion that was offered him, because he would bear his sufferings, however sharp, not by intoxicating and stupifying himself, but through the strength of faith, fortitude, and patience.

Verses 35, 36. *And they crucified him*—The person crucified was nailed to the cross as it lay on the ground, through each hand, extended to the utmost stretch, and through both the feet together. Then the cross was raised up, and the foot of it thrust with a violent shock into a hole in the ground prepared for it. This shock disjoined the body, whose whole weight hung upon the nails, till the person expired through mere dint of pain. This kind of death was used only by the Romans, and by them inflicted only on slaves and the vilest criminals. With regard to Jesus, therefore, as soon as he refused the liquor offered him, the soldiers, according to custom, stripped him quite naked, and in that condition began to fasten him to the tree. But while they were piercing his hands and his feet with the nails, instead of crying out through the acuteness of his pain, according to Luke xxiii. 34, he calmly, though fervently prayed for them, and for all who had any hand in his death, beseeching God to forgive them, and excusing them by the only circumstance that could alleviate their guilt—their ignorance. Saying, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* This was infinite meekness and goodness, truly worthy of God's only-begotten Son; an example of forgiveness which, though it never can be equalled by any, is fit to be imitated by all. Dr. Heylin (*Theolog. Lect.*, p. 103) has well described our Lord's passion, as follows: "The appointed soldiers dig the hole in which the cross was to be erected. The nails and the hammer are ready. The cross is placed on the ground, and Jesus lies down upon the bed of sorrows. They nail him to it. They erect it. His nerves crack. His blood distils. He hangs upon his wounds," naked, "a spectacle to heaven and earth." Thus was the only-begotten Son of God, who came down to save the world, crucified by his own creatures! *Hear, O heavens! O earth, earth, earth, hear! The Lord hath nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against him!*

And parted his garments, casting lots—When the soldiers had nailed his naked body to the cross, and raised him up upon it, they divided his garments into four parts, John xix. 23, and cast lots for the shares. This was according to the Roman custom; among whom soldiers performed the office of executioners, and divided among them the spoils of the criminals.

36 ^d And sitting down, they watch- A. M. 4037.
ed him there : A. D. 33.

37 And ° set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

38 ^f Then were there two thieves crucified

° Mark xv. 26; Luke xxiii. 38; John xix. 19.—^f Isa. liii. 12;
Mark xv. 27; Luke xxiii. 32, 33; John xix. 18.

His coat was excepted out of this division, because, as it was without seam, they agreed to cast lots for it by itself. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, &c.*—This clause, though wanting in many valuable copies of this gospel, and in several early versions, is, however, found in the parallel place of John's gospel, to the text of which it unquestionably belongs, not being omitted by one MS. or *version*, or *ancient commentator*. As it was a practice with some transcribers to correct, and, as they imagined, improve one gospel by another, Dr. Campbell thinks it probable, that it was at first copied by some one out of John's gospel, and inserted in this. The prophet here referred to is David, who, Psa. xxii., foretold this, and several other circumstances of the Messiah's sufferings, upward of a thousand years before they took place. *And sitting down, they watched him*—The Romans used also to appoint a guard to stay by the crucified persons, that none might come and take them away. And the chief priests, doubtless, would take care that this guard was set, lest any of the people, of whom they were still jealous, should rise and rescue Jesus. But Providence so ordered it, that those who were appointed to watch him, became thereby unexceptionable witnesses for him; having the opportunity to see and hear those things which extorted from them that noble confession, verse 54, *Truly this was the Son of God.*

Verses 37, 38. *And set over his head his accusation*—That is, a superscription, containing the substance of his pretended crime, written in capital letters, and in these remarkable words, THIS IS JESUS, (John adds, OF NAZARETH,) THE KING OF THE JEWS. The two other evangelists do not express the title so fully. See the note on John xix. 19, &c. Bishop Pearson, (*On the Creed*, p. 205,) and Dr. Lardner, (*Credibil.*, vol. i. p. 347,) have abundantly proved it to be usual, in cases of any extraordinary punishment, to put an inscription over the head of the sufferer, indicative of the crime for which he suffered. *Then were there two thieves crucified with him*—"They placed Jesus in the middle, by way of mock honour, because he had called himself a king, and was now crowned with thorns; or, if the priests had any hand in this, they might design hereby to impress the spectators more strongly with the thought of his being an impostor, and to make them look on him as the chief malefactor. Thus, however, as Mark observes, *the Scripture*, namely, Isa. liii. 12, *was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.* For, in giving the history of our Lord's sufferings, the evangelists endeavour

A. M. 4037. with him: one on the right hand, A. D. 33. and another on the left.

39 ¶ And ^ε they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, ^h Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. ⁱ If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests, mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said,

ε Psa. xxii. 7; cix. 25; Mark xv. 29; Luke xxiii. 35.—^h Chap. xxvi. 61; John ii. 19.

all along to make their readers sensible that all the circumstances of them had been foreseen and foretold by the prophets. Their design in which was, to prevent the offence which might otherwise have been taken at Christ's sufferings.

Verses 39–44. *They that passed by reviled him, &c.*—As it was a great aggravation of our Lord's sufferings that he was crucified along with two thieves, and in the middle of them, as though he had been the chief malefactor of the three, so it was a further aggravation thereof that he was reviled, mocked, and derided by different descriptions of persons. The common people, whom the priests had incensed against him by the malicious lies which they spread concerning him, and which they pretended to found on the evidence of witnesses, seeing him hang as a malefactor on the cross, and reading the superscription that was placed over his head, expressed their indignation against him by railing on him, *and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, &c., save thyself*—The rulers having, as they imagined, wholly overturned his pretensions as the Messiah, ridiculed him on that head, and, with a meanness of soul which will render them for ever infamous, mocked him while in the agonies of death, and even most basely upbraided him with the *saving power*, which they could not deny that he had exerted; saying, *he saved others, himself he cannot save*—Thus they scoff at the wonderful miracles of healing, by which he had demonstrated that he was the Messiah; and they promise to believe on him on condition that he would prove his pretensions by coming down from the cross. In the mean time nothing could be more false and hypocritical, for they continued in their unbelief notwithstanding that he raised himself from the dead, which was a much greater miracle than his coming down from the cross would have been; a miracle also that was attested by witnesses whose veracity they could not call in question; for it was told them by the soldiers whom they themselves had placed at the sepulchre to watch his body. It is plain, therefore, that their incorrigible stubbornness would not have yielded to any proof, however convincing, and that when they said they would believe if he would come down from the cross, they only meant to insult him; thinking it impossible now for him to escape out of their

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

43 ^k He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

44 ^l The thieves also which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

45 ^m Now, from the sixth hour there was

ⁱ Chap. xxvi. 63.—^k Psa. xxii. 8.—^l Mark xv. 32; Luke xxiii. 39.—^m Amos viii. 9; Mark xv. 33; Luke xxiii. 44.

hands. In saying, *He trusted in God, &c.*, they deride his faith and reliance on God, whom he had called his Father, and thus show themselves to be either real infidels, or very profane, though under a profession of religion. In speaking thus, however, they fulfilled a remarkable prophecy concerning the Messiah's sufferings, Psa. xxii. 8, where it is foretold that his enemies would utter these very words, in derision of his pretensions. *The thieves also, &c., cast the same in his teeth*—That is, one of them did so, for, according to Luke, chap. xxiii. 39, &c., the other exercised a most extraordinary faith in our Lord, and that at a time when he was deserted by his Father, mocked by men, and hung on a cross as the worst of malefactors. Some commentators endeavour to reconcile the two evangelists by supposing, that both the thieves might revile Jesus at first. But this solution is not very probable. In Scripture, a single person or thing is often expressed in the plural number, especially when it is not the speaker's or writer's intention to be more particular.

Verse 45. *Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour*—From mid-day till three in the afternoon with us, (see note on chap. xx. 1.) *there was darkness over all the land*—Or, *over all the earth*, as the original expression, *επι πασαν την γην*, is more literally rendered in the Vulgate, and understood by many learned men; "*the sun being darkened*," says Grotius, "as Luke informs us, not by the interposition of the moon, which was then full, nor by a cloud spread over the face of the sky, but in some way unknown to mankind." It is true, the same expression sometimes evidently signifies only *all the land*, as Luke iv. 25, where it is so translated. It seems, however, highly probable, if the darkness did not extend to the whole earth, or, to speak more properly, to the whole hemisphere, (it being night in the opposite one,) it extended to all the neighbouring countries. "This extraordinary alteration in the face of nature was peculiarly proper," says Dr. Macknight, "while the Sun of righteousness was withdrawing his beams from the land of Israel, and from the world, not only because it was a miraculous testimony borne by God himself to his innocence, but also because it was a fit emblem of his departure, and its effects, at least till his light shone out anew with additional splendour, in the ministry

A. M. 4037. darkness over all the land unto the
A. D. 33. ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour ^a Jesus cried

^a Heb. v. 7.

of the apostles. The darkness which now covered Judea, together with the neighbouring countries, beginning about noon and continuing till Jesus expired, was not the effect of an ordinary eclipse of the sun; for that can never happen except when the moon is about the change, whereas now it was full moon; not to mention that total darknesses occasioned by eclipses of the sun never continue above twelve or fifteen minutes. Wherefore it must have been produced by the divine power, in a manner we are not able to explain." The Christian writers, in their most ancient apologies to the heathen, while they affirm that, as it was full moon at the passover, when Christ was crucified, no such eclipse could happen by the course of nature; "they observe, also, that it was taken notice of as a prodigy by the heathen themselves. To this purpose, we have still remaining the words of Phlegon, the astronomer and freedman of Adrian, cited by Origen, (*Contra Cels.*, p. 83,) at a time when his book was in the hands of the public. That heathen author, in treating of the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad, which is supposed to be the year in which our Lord was crucified, tells us, 'That the greatest eclipse of the sun which was ever known happened then; for the day was so turned into night, that the stars in the heavens were seen.' If Phlegon, as Christians generally suppose, is speaking of the darkness which accompanied our Lord's crucifixion, it was not circumscribed within the land of Judea, but must have been universal. This many learned men have believed, particularly Huet, Grotius, Gusset, Reland, and Alphen." Tertullian (*Apol.*, cap. xxi.) says that this prodigious darkening of the sun was recorded in the Roman archives; for, says he, "at the same moment, about noontide, the day was withdrawn; and they, who knew not that this was foretold concerning Christ, thought it was an eclipse."—And Eusebius, in his Chronicle, at the eighteenth year of Tiberius, says, "Christ suffered this year, in which time we find in other commentaries of the heathen, these words: 'There was a defection of the sun: Bithynia was shaken with an earthquake; and many houses fell down in the city of Nice.'" And then he proceeds to the testimony of Phlegon. See Whitby.

Verse 46. *About the ninth hour*—Just before he expired; *Jesus cried with a loud voice*—Our Lord's great agony probably continued these three whole hours, at the conclusion of which he thus cried out, while he suffered from God himself, and probably also from the powers of darkness, what was unutterable; *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*—These words are quoted from the first verse of the twenty-second Psalm, (where see the note,) but it is to be observed, that they are not the very words of the Hebrew original; but are in what is called Syro-Chaldaic, at

with a loud voice, saying, *Eli, Eli*, A. M. 4037. *lama sabachthani?* that is to say, A. D. 33. ^o My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

^o Psa. xxii. 1

that time the language of the country, and the dialect which our Lord seems always to have used. Mark expresses the two first words rather differently, namely, *Eloi, Eloi*, which comes nearer to the Syriac. Some think our Lord, in his agony, repeated the words twice, with some little variation, saying at one time, *Eloi*, and the other, *Eli*. "This," says Dr. Doddridge, "is possible, and if it were otherwise, I doubt not but Mark has given us the word exactly, and Matthew a kind of contraction of it." Both the evangelists have added the interpretation of the words, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* which words the last-mentioned divine paraphrases thus: "O my heavenly Father, wherefore dost thou add to all my other sufferings, those which arise from the want of a comfortable sense of thy presence? Wherefore dost thou thus leave me alone in the combat, destitute of those sacred consolations, which thou couldst easily shed abroad upon my soul, and which thou knowest I have done nothing to forfeit."—Thus, in a most humble and affectionate manner, he intimated to his heavenly Father that he was only by imputation a sinner, and had himself done nothing to incur his displeasure, and showed that the want of the light of God's countenance on his soul, and the sense of divine wrath due to the sins of mankind, were far more than all his complicated sufferings; but that his confidence in his Father, his love to him, and submission to his will, were unabated, even in that dreadful hour. In other words, while he utters this exclamation of the psalmist, he at once expresses his trust in God, and a most distressing sense of his withdrawing the comfortable discoveries of his presence, and filling his soul with a terrible sense of the wrath due to the sins which he was bearing. Some would interpret the words, *My God, my God, to what a degree, or, to what length of time, or, to what [sort of persons] hast thou forsaken me?* because *lama*, in the Hebrew, may have this signification, and the expression *etc. etc.*, whereby Mark has rendered it. But certainly the word *wart*, which answers to it here in Matthew, is not liable to such ambiguity; nor can such an interpretation of Psa. xxii. 1 be made in any degree to accord with the verses immediately following, as the reader will see, if he will please to turn to them. The truth is, our Lord's words here must be viewed in the same light with his prayer in the garden. For as that prayer expressed only the feelings and inclinations of his human nature, sorely pressed down with the weight of his sufferings, so his exclamation on the cross proceeded from the greatness of his sufferings then, and expressed the feelings of the same human nature, namely, an exceeding grief at God's forsaking him, and a complaint that it was so. But as his prayer in the garden

A. M. 4037. 47 Some of them that stood there,
A. D. 33. when they heard *that*, said, This
man calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took
a sponge, ^p and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it*

^p Psa. lxi. 21; Mark xv. 36; Luke xxiii. 36;

was properly tempered with resignation to the will of his Father, while he said, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt*; so his complaint on the cross was doubtless tempered in the same manner, though the evangelists have not particularly mentioned it. For that in the inward disposition of his mind he was perfectly resigned while he hung on the cross, is evident beyond all doubt, from his recommending his spirit to his Father in the article of death, which he could not have done if he had either doubted of his favour, or been discontented with his appointments. That the sufferings which made our Lord utter this exclamation, "were not merely those which appeared to the spectators, namely, the pains of death which he was then undergoing, is evident from this consideration, that many of his followers have suffered sharper and more lingering bodily torture, ending in death, without thinking themselves on that account forsaken of God; on the contrary, they both felt and expressed raptures of joy under the bitterest torments. Why then should Jesus have complained and been dejected under inferior sufferings, as we must acknowledge them to have been, if there were nothing in them but the pains of crucifixion? Is there any other circumstance in his history which leads us to think him defective in courage or patience? In piety and resignation came he behind his own apostles? Were his views of God and religion more confined than theirs? Had he greater sensibility of pain than they, without a proper balance arising from the superiority of his understanding? In short, was he worse qualified for martyrdom than they? The truth is, his words on the cross cannot be accounted for but on the supposition that he endured in his mind distresses inexpressible, in consequence of the withdrawing of his heavenly Father's presence, and a sense of the wrath due to the sins of mankind, which he was now suffering."—See Macknight. It is justly observed here by Dr. Doddridge, "That the interruption of a joyful sense of his Father's presence (though there was, and could not but be, a rational apprehension of his constant favour, and high approbation of what he was now doing) was as necessary as it was that Christ should suffer at all. For had God communicated to his Son on the cross those *strong consolations* which he has given to some of the martyrs in their tortures, all sense of pain, and consequently all real pain, would have been swallowed up; and the violence done to his body, not affecting the soul, could not properly have been called suffering." Some think Jesus on this occasion repeated the whole twenty-second Psalm. And, as it contains the most remarkable particulars of our Lord's passion, being a sort of summary of all the prophecies

on a reed, and gave him to drink. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. 49 The rest said, Let be, let us see
whether Elias will come to save him.

50 ^a Jesus, when he had cried again with a
loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

John xix. 29.—^a Mark xv. 37; Luke xxiii. 46.

relative to that subject, it must be acknowledged, that nothing could have been uttered more suitable to the circumstances wherein he then was, or better adapted to impress the minds of the beholders with becoming sentiments. For by citing it, and thereby applying it to himself, he signified that he was now accomplishing the things predicted therein concerning the Messiah. See the notes on that Psalm.

Verses 47–49. *Some said, This man calleth for Elias*—These must have been some of the strangers, of whom there was always a great concourse at the passover, who did not understand the dialect then spoken in Jerusalem. *And one of them ran, &c.*—Jesus knowing that he had now accomplished every thing required by God of the Messiah, and foretold by the prophets, excepting that circumstance of his sufferings, which was predicted Psa. lxi. 21, *In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*, in order to give occasion to the accomplishment of this likewise, he said aloud, *I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar*, (John xix. 28.) *And one took a sponge and filled it with vinegar*—It is well known, that vinegar and water (which mixture was called *posca*) was the common drink of the Roman soldiers, for which purpose they usually carried vinegar with them in vessels when on duty. Perhaps, therefore, this vinegar was set here for their use, or for that of the crucified persons, whose torture would naturally make them thirsty. *And put it on a reed*—They put the sponge, as John tells us, upon hyssop, that is, a stalk of hyssop, called by the other evangelists *καλαμος*, which signifies not only *a reed*, but the stalk of any plant. For that hyssop was a shrub, appears from 1 Kings iv. 33, where it is reckoned among the trees. This office they performed to Jesus, not so much from pity, as to preserve him alive, in the hopes of seeing the miracle of Elijah's descent from heaven, as appears from the next verse.

Verse 50. *And Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice*—According to John xix. 30, when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, *It is finished*, meaning that the predictions of the prophets, respecting his sufferings and ministry on earth, were all fulfilled, and that the redemption of the world was on the point of being accomplished; and probably these were the words which he uttered with a loud voice, showing thereby, that his strength was not exhausted, but that he was about to give up his life of his own accord. And when he had thus cried, he said, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*. Luke xxiii. 46. *And yielded up the ghost*—Or rather, *dismissed his spirit*, as the original words, *αφηκε το πνευμα*, properly signify: an expression admirably suited to our Lord's own words, John x. 18,

A. M. 4037. 51 ¶ And behold, ^rthe veil of the
A. D. 33. temple was rent in twain from the
top to the bottom: and the earth did quake,
and the rocks rent;

52 And the graves were opened, and many

^r Ex. xxvi. 31; 2 Chron. iii. 14;

No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. He died by a voluntary act of his own, and in a way peculiar to himself. He alone, of all men that ever were, could have continued alive, even in the greatest tortures, as long as he pleased, or have retired from the body whenever he thought fit. And how does it illustrate that love which he manifested in his death! Inasmuch as he did not use his power to quit the body, as soon as it was fastened to the cross, leaving only an insensible corpse to the cruelty of his murderers: but continued his abode in it, with a steady resolution, as long as it was proper. He then retired from it with a majesty and dignity never known, or to be known in any other death: *dying*, if one may so express it, *like the Prince of life.*

Verse 51. *And behold*—Immediately upon his death, while the sun was still darkened; *the veil of the temple*—The inner veil which divided the *holy* from the *most holy place*; though made of the richest and strongest tapestry; *was rent in two from the top to the bottom*: so while the priest was ministering at the golden altar, (it being the time of the evening sacrifice,) the sacred oracle, by an invisible power, was laid open to full view: God thereby signifying the speedy removal of the Jewish ceremonies, the abolition of the Mosaic dispensation, the breaking down the partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles, who were both to be now admitted to equal privileges, and the opening a way, through the veil of Christ's flesh, for all believers into the most holy place. *And the earth did quake*—There was a general earthquake, probably through the whole globe, though chiefly at and near Jerusalem: God testifying thereby his wrath against the Jewish nation, for the horrid impiety they were committing. *And the rocks rent*—Mr. Fleming (*Christology*, vol. ii. pp. 97, 98) informs us, that a Deist, lately travelling through Palestine, was converted by viewing one of these rocks. For when he came to examine the clefts of it narrowly and critically, he was convinced that the rent had been made in a supernatural manner, as he acknowledged to his fellow-travellers, saying, I have long been a student of nature and the mathematics, and I am sure these rents in this rock were not made by a natural, or ordinary earthquake; for by such a concussion the rock must have split according to the veins, and where it was weakest in the adhesion of its parts; for this I have observed to have been done in other rocks, when separated or broken by an earthquake, and reason tells me, it must always be so. But it is quite otherwise here, for the rock is split athwart and cross the veins in a most strange and preternatural manner. This, therefore, I plainly see to be the effect of a real mi-

bodies of the saints which slept, A. M. 4037.
arose, A. D. 33.

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

Mark xv. 38; Luke xxiii. 45.

racle, which neither nature nor art could have effected. Sandys (*Trav.*, p. 264) has given an accurate description and delineation of this fissure; and Mr. Maundrell (in his *Journey from Aleppo*, p. 73, 74) tells us, that it is about a span wide at the upper part, and two spans deep; after which it closes, but opens again below, and runs down to an unknown depth in the earth.

Verses 52, 53. *And the graves were opened*—Some of the tombs were shattered and laid open by the earthquake, and doubtless continued open all the sabbath, since the law would not allow of any attempt to close them on that day: but the dead bodies which were in them did not come to life till Christ's resurrection had taken place, as is implied in the next clause, for he was the *first-born from the dead*, Col. i. 18; and *the first-fruits of them that slept*, 1 Cor. xv. 20. *And many bodies of the saints which slept*—The bodies of many eminently holy persons; *arose and came out of their graves*—Or tombs, while they remained unclosed; *after his resurrection*—Probably immediately after it; *and went into the holy city*—That is, Jerusalem, called *the holy city*, on account of the temple and its worship; *and appeared unto many*—Who knew them; thus attesting the truth of that most important event, Jesus's resurrection, and declaring their own rescue from the grave, as a kind of first-fruits of his power over death, which should at length accomplish a general resurrection. It is and must remain uncertain who these saints were that had now the honour of being the first-fruits of Christ's resurrection. Mr. Fleming thinks, that they were some of the most eminently holy mentioned in the Old Testament; and that they appeared in some extraordinary splendour, and were known by revelation to those to whom they appeared, as Moses and Elijah were to the disciples at the transfiguration. But Mr. Pierce, Dr. Macknight, and many others, think it more probable that they were persons who had died but lately, perhaps, such as had believed on Christ, and were well known to surviving disciples. Whoever they were, their resurrection was a most extraordinary event, and doubtless was much spoken of in Jerusalem among those to whom they appeared, and other well-disposed persons to whom they mentioned it. It is not improbable that Christ's prophecy, recorded John v. 25, referred to this event, and thereby received its accomplishment, being distinguished from the general resurrection predicted in verses 28, 29 of that chapter. As it is only said, these saints *appeared to many in Jerusalem*, but not that they continued with them, it is probable that as they were undoubtedly raised to immortality, they attended their risen Saviour, during his abode on earth, and

A. M. 4037. 54 * Now, when the centurion,
A. D. 33. and they that were with him, watch-
ing Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those

things that were done, they feared A. M. 4037.
greatly, saying, Truly this was the A. D. 33.
Son of God.

* Verse 38; Mark xv. 39;

Luke xxiii. 47.

afterward accompanied him in his ascension, to grace his triumph over death and the grave, and all the powers of darkness, Eph. iv. 8; Col. ii. 15. Thus, as the rending the veil of the temple intimated that the entrance into the most holy place, the type of heaven, was now laid open to all nations, so the resurrection of a number of saints from the dead demonstrated that the power of death and the grave was broken; that the sting was taken from death, and the victory wrested from the grave; and if they ascended with him too, it was thus shown that the Lord's conquest over the enemies of mankind was complete, and not only an earnest given of a general resurrection of the dead, but of the kingdom of heaven being opened to all believers.

Verse 54. *When the centurion*—The officer who commanded the guard, called *centurio*, from *centum*, a hundred, because he had the command of a hundred men; *and those that were with him*—The soldiers that attended him; *watching Jesus*—And standing over against him; *saw the earthquake, and the things that were done*—The other wonders wrought at his crucifixion, together with his meek and patient behaviour under his sufferings, and the composure and confidence with which he committed his departing soul into the hands of his heavenly Father; *they feared greatly*—Were greatly alarmed and influenced by a religious fear of that Being who had given such awful proofs of his displeasure at what had just taken place. Luke says, *The centurion glorified God*, and that not only by acknowledging his hand in the prodigies they had witnessed, but by confessing the innocence of Jesus, *saying, Certainly this was a righteous man*—Gr. *dikaïos*, the character which Pilate's wife had given of him before he was condemned, verse 19. According to Mark, chap. xv. 39, he said likewise, *Truly this man was the Son of God*. It is true, because the article is here wanting in the original, and the words, both in Matthew and Mark, are only *υιός θεού*, and not *ο υιός τῦ θεού*, some would render the expression, *a son of God*; a phraseology which they think perfectly suitable in the mouth of a polytheist and an idolater, such as they take it for granted this Roman centurion was. But it is evident that no argument can be brought in justification of such a sense of the words from the absence of the Greek article, because it is often wanting when the true God is evidently meant, as verse 43, and John xix. 7. It is probable this centurion was not now an idolater, but a proselyte to the Jewish religion, and therefore a worshipper of the true God. At least he must have been acquainted with the opinions of the Jews, and have known that Jesus was put to death by them for averring himself to be, not *the son of a heathen god*, but the son of the God whom the Jews worshipped: and therefore, when he made his confession, he

doubtless referred to that circumstance, or to the words of the chief priests and scribes, recorded in verse 43, *He trusted in God, &c., for he said, I am the Son of God*. Matthew says, *They that were with the centurion joined in the same confession*. It may be questioned, indeed, as they seem to have been the same soldiers that crowned Jesus with thorns and mocked him, whether they understood the proper meaning of the expression, *The Son of God*. They probably, however, were convinced that he was a person approved of, and beloved by, the God of the Jews; and that his heavenly Father would certainly avenge his quarrel very terribly on them, and on the Jewish nation, who had delivered him into their hands to be crucified. In the mean time, though the Roman centurion, and his heathen soldiers, were thus alarmed by the prodigies which they had beheld, these wonders appear to have had no influence on the minds of the Jewish priests, scribes, and elders: their minds, it seems, continued impenetrable and obstinate, and full of unbelief and invincible prejudice against Christ, so that neither the miracles done by him in his life, nor those wrought at his death, could convince them that he was any other than an impostor and deceiver. This, however, was not the case with the common people. From Luke xxiii. 48, we learn that not only the centurion and his soldiers, but *all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts*, for sorrow and remorse; in terrible expectation that some sad calamity would speedily befall them and their country, for the indignities and cruelties they had offered to a person for whom God had expressed so high a regard, even in his greatest distress. "They had, indeed, been instant with loud voices to have him crucified, but now that they saw the face of the creation darkened with a sullen gloom during his crucifixion, and found his death accompanied with an earthquake, as if nature had been in an agony when he died, they rightly interpreted these prodigies to be so many testimonies of his innocence; and their passions, which had been inflamed and exasperated against him, became quite calm, or moved in his behalf. Some could not forgive themselves for neglecting to accept his life when the governor offered to release him; others were stung with remorse for having had an active hand both in his death, and in the insults that were offered to him; others felt the deepest grief at the thought of his lot, which was undeservedly severe; and these various passions appeared in their countenances, for they came away from the cruel execution pensive and silent, with downcast eyes, and hearts ready to burst: or groaning deeply within themselves, they wept, smote their breasts, and wailed greatly. The grief which they now felt for Jesus, was distinguished from

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. 55 And many women were there (beholding afar off) ¹ which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him :

56 ² Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

57 ¶ ³ When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus's disciple :

¹ Luke viii. 2, 3.—² Mark xv. 40.—³ *Easter Eve*, gospel, verse 57 to the end.

their former rage against him by this remarkable character, that their rage was entirely produced by the craft of the priests, who had wickedly incensed them; whereas their grief was the genuine feeling of their own hearts, greatly affected with the truth and innocence of him that was the object of their commiseration. Nor was this the temper only of a few, who may be thought to have been Christ's particular friends. It was the general condition of the people, who had come in such numbers to look on, that when they parted, after the execution, they covered the roads, and, as it were, darkened the whole fields around."—Macknight.

Verses 55, 56. *And many women were there, beholding afar off*—Viewing these things with weeping eyes and sympathizing hearts: *which followed Jesus from Galilee*—To Jerusalem, eighty or a hundred miles, out of the great love they had to him, and to his heavenly doctrine; *ministering unto him*—Liberal assisting him and his disciples with their property. *Among which were Mary Magdalene*—Or rather, *Mary the Magdalene, or Mary of Magdala*, as Μαρια η Μαγδαληνη, would be more properly rendered; even as Ιησους ο Ναζαρητης, is *Jesus the Nazarene, or Jesus of Nazareth*. "There can be no doubt that this addition, employed for distinguishing her from others of the same name, is formed from *Magdala*, the name of a city, mentioned chapter xv. 39, probably the place of her birth, or at least of her residence."—Campbell. *And Mary the mother of James*, (namely, *James the Less*, Mark xv. 49,) *and Joses*—Probably our Lord's mother's sister, (called, John xix. 25, *Mary the wife of Cleophas*,) *and the mother of Zebedee's children*—Namely, *Salome*. The three evangelists agree in affirming that these women stood *afar off*, looking on. Yet this is not inconsistent with John xix. 25, where two of them, with our Lord's mother, are said to have stood by the cross. It seems they were kept at a distance a while, perhaps by the guards, or they were afraid to approach. But when the greatest part of the soldiers were drawn off, and the darkness began, they gathered courage, and came so near that Jesus had an opportunity to speak to them a little before he expired. It is greatly to the honour of these excellent women, that they thus manifested more courage and attachment to their Lord and Master, than even the apostles themselves, who, notwithstanding that they had promised to die

58 He went to Pilate, and begged ⁴ the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 And ⁵ laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

⁴ Mark xv. 42; Luke xxiii. 50; John xix. 38.—⁵ *Isaiah* liii. 9.

with him rather than desert him, had forsaken him and fled. But O! who can describe the feelings of these pious females, while they attended Jesus in these last scenes of his sufferings! What words can express, or heart conceive the depth of sorrow, compassion, anxiety, and despondency which must have been excited in their breasts, by what their eyes saw, and their ears heard during these mournful and awful hours! Of some other circumstances which occurred while our Lord hung on the cross, see the notes on Luke xxiii. 39-43; John xix. 26, 27, 31-37.

Verse 57-61. *When the even was come*—That is, when it was past three o'clock; for the time from three to six they termed the first evening: this being Friday, or the day before the sabbath, which began at six o'clock, after which no work could lawfully be done, our Lord's body must have been applied for and obtained as soon as four, or a little after, otherwise there would not have been time to bury it before the sabbath began. *There came a rich man of Arimathea*—A city of the Jews, anciently called Ramoth: (Luke says, he was a counsellor; Mark, an honourable counsellor, and a good man and just;) *who also himself was Jesus's disciple*—(But secretly, John xix. 38,) not having courage openly to profess his faith in him, *for fear of the Jews and their rulers*. *And he also waited for the kingdom of God*, Luke xxiii. 51; that is, for the manifestation of the Messiah's kingdom; and, of consequence, had not *consented to the deed of them who condemned Jesus*: though a member of the sanhedrim, he had not joined them in their unjust sentence. He had either kept away from the court when they sat on the trial of Jesus, or, if he was present when the sentence was passed, he remonstrated against it. This honourable, just, and pious person went (Mark says, *boldly*) *to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus*—Joseph had nothing to fear from the governor, who in the course of the trial had showed the greatest inclination to release Jesus; but he had reason to fear that this action would draw upon him abundance of ill-will from the rulers, who had been at such pains to get Jesus crucified. Nevertheless, the regard he had for his Master overcame all other considerations, and he asked leave to take his body down; because, if no friend had obtained it, it would have been ignominiously cast out among the executed malefactors.

A. M. 4037. 61 And there was Mary Mag-
A. D. 33. dalene, and the other Mary, sitting
over against the sepulchre.

62 ¶ Now the next day, that followed the

Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered—Namely, after he had called the centurion to him, and had been assured by him that Jesus was certainly dead, which Pilate had at first doubted. Pilate was probably the more willing to grant the body to Joseph, both because he was thoroughly convinced that Jesus was innocent, and because it was generally thought by the heathen that the spirits of the departed received some advantage from the honours of a funeral paid to their bodies. "In discharging this last duty to his Master, Joseph was assisted (as we learn from John xix. 39) by another disciple named Nicodemus, the ruler who formerly came to Jesus by night, for fear of the Jews. But he was not afraid of them now, for he showed a courage superior to that of the apostles, bringing such a quantity of spices along with him as was necessary to the funeral of his Master. These two, therefore, taking down the naked body, wrapped it with the spices in the linen furnished by Joseph. *And laid it in his own new tomb, hewn out in the rock*—Here we learn that Joseph, though a man of great wealth, and in a high situation of life, lived mindful of his mortality. For he had erected for himself a sepulchre in his garden, John xix. 41, the place of his pleasure and retirement, that it might be often in his view, and suggest to him the thoughts of death and eternity. In the description of the sepulchre given by the evangelists, it is particularly remarked, that it was nigh to the place where he was crucified, consequently nigh to Jerusalem. By this circumstance 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 rose out of it, and cuts off all suspicion of his being raised by touching the bones of some prophet 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, verse 62, &c., and consequently that it was not in their power to steal away the body while the guards remained there performing their duty. *And he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre*—To block up the entrance. The sepulchre, it seems, differed from that of Lazarus, being partly above ground; whereas Lazarus's being wholly under ground, had a stone laid on the mouth of it, covering the entry of the stair by which they went down to it. The rolling of the stone to the grave's mouth was with them as filling up the grave is with us; it completed the funeral. Having thus in silence and sorrow deposited the precious body of our Lord Jesus in the house appointed for

day of the preparation, the chief
priests and Pharisees came together
unto Pilate.

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that de-

all living, they departed without any further ceremony. It is the most melancholy circumstance in the funerals of our Christian friends, when we have laid their bodies in the dark and silent grave, to go home and leave them behind; but, it is not we that go home and leave them behind; no, it is they that are gone to the better home, and have left us behind! *There was Mary Magdalene and the other Mary*—Namely, the mother of James and Joses, verse 56. The mother of Jesus, it appears, was not there, being hindered, probably, by the excess of her sorrow, or, perhaps, she might have been taken to the house of John as to her home, John xix. 26, 27. Thus we see the company which attended the funeral was very small and mean. There were none of the relations in mourning to follow the corpse; no formalities to grace the solemnity, but only these two good women, that were true mourners, who, as they had attended him to the cross, so they followed him to the grave, as if they gave themselves up to sorrow; and they sat over against the sepulchre, "not so much," says Henry, "to fill their eyes with the sight of what was done, as to empty them in rivers of tears:" for true love to Christ will carry us to the utmost in following him: death itself will not, cannot, quench that divine fire.

Verses 62–66. *Now the next day; the day that followed the day of the preparation*—That is, after the sun was set, for the Jewish day began then. The day of preparation was the day before the sabbath, whereon they were to prepare for the celebration of it. The next day, then, (namely, Saturday,) was the sabbath, according to the Jews. But the evangelist seems to express it by this circumlocution, to show that the Jewish sabbath was then abolished. *The chief priests, &c., came together unto Pilate*—The chief priests and Pharisees, remembering that Jesus had predicted his own resurrection more than once, came to the governor and informed him of it, begging that a guard might be ordered to the sepulchre, lest the disciples should carry his body away, and affirm that he was risen from the dead. But they took this measure not on the morrow, in our sense of the word, but in the evening, after sunset, when the Jewish sabbath was begun, and when they understood the body was buried. To have delayed it to sunrise would have been preposterous, as the disciples might have stolen the body away during the preceding night. Besides, there is no inconsistency between this account of the time when the watch was placed and the subsequent articles of the history, which proceed upon the supposition that the women present at our Lord's funeral were ignorant that any watch was placed at his grave. For they departed so early, that they had time to buy spices and ointments in the city before the preparation of the sabbath was ended; whereas the watch was not placed till the

A. M. 4037. ceiver said, while he was yet alive,
A. D. 33. * After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the

* Ch. xvi. 21; xvii. 23; xx. 19; xxvi. 61; Mark viii. 31; x. 34;

sabbath began. *Saying, Sir*—Thus the word *Kupte* is here very properly rendered, as in many other places it is as improperly translated *lord*. It should certainly always be translated *sir*, when no more than civil respect is intended. *We remember that the deceiver said, After three days*—Or, as *μετα τρεις ημερας* may be properly rendered, *within three days, I will rise again*—We do not find that he had ever said this to them, unless when *he spoke of the temple of his body*, (John ii. 19, 21.) And if they here refer to what he then said, how perverse and iniquitous was their construction on these words, when he was on his trial before the council! chapter xxvi. 61. Then they seemed not to understand them! Perhaps, however, they may refer to what he said (when the scribes and Pharisees demanded a sign of him) respecting the Prophet Jonas, namely, that as Jonas was *three days and three nights in the whale's belly*, the Son of man should be so long *in the heart of the earth*. Or, on some occasion not mentioned by the evangelists, our Lord may have made a public declaration of his resurrection in the very terms here set down. But, in whatever way they came to the knowledge of it, certain it is that the chief priests and Pharisees were well acquainted with our Lord's predictions concerning it; and hence the precaution and care which they used in guarding the sepulchre, all which was overruled by the providence of God to give the strongest proofs of Christ's ensuing resurrection. *Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure*—This, as being a servile work, it might be thought they would not ask to be done on the sabbath. But we must observe, that they asked this of Romans, whom they did not consider as bound by the law of the sabbath. Jews to this day do not scruple to avail themselves of the work done by Christians on the Jewish sabbath. *Pilate said, Ye have a guard*—“Pilate, thinking their request reasonable, allowed them to take as many soldiers as they pleased of the cohort which, at the feast, came from the castle

dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. A. M. 4037, A. D. 33.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.

66 So they went and made the sepulchre sure, * sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

Luke ix. 22; xviii. 33; xxiv. 6, 7; John ii. 19.—* Dan. vi. 17.

Antonia, and kept guard in the porticoes of the temple. For that they were not Jewish but Roman soldiers whom the priests employed to watch the sepulchre, is evident from their asking them of the governor. Besides, when the soldiers returned with the news of Christ's resurrection, the priests desired them to report that his disciples had stolen him away while they slept; and, to encourage them to tell the falsehood boldly, promised, that if their neglect of duty came to the governor's ears, proper means should be used to pacify him and keep them safe; a promise which there was no need of making to their own servants.”—Macknight. *So they went*—The priests and Pharisees having got a party of soldiers, placed them in their post, *and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone*—To hinder the guards from combining in carrying on any fraud. See Dan. vi. 17: where we learn that a precaution of the like kind was made use of in the case of Daniel shut up in the lions' den. “Thus, while the priests cautiously proposed to prevent our Lord's resurrection from being palmed upon the world, resolving no doubt to show his body publicly after the third day, as a proof that he was an impostor, they put the truth of his resurrection beyond all question; for, besides that there could be no room for the least suspicion of deceit, when it should be found that his body was raised out of a new tomb, where there was no other corpse, and this tomb hewn out of a rock, the mouth of which was secured by a great stone, under a seal, and a guard of soldiers; by appointing this guard, they furnished a number of unexceptionable witnesses to it, whose testimony they themselves could not refuse. See chap. xxviii. 11.” “The chief priests and Pharisees,” says Bishop Porteus, “having taken these precautions, waited probably with no small impatience for the third day after the crucifixion—when they made no doubt they should find the body in the sepulchre, and convict Jesus of deceit and imposture.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Here, (1.) Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Jesus, go early in the morning to see the sepulchre, 1. (2.) A great earthquake, and an angel descending and rolling back the stone, terrify the guard, 2-4. (3.) The angel encourages the women, assuring them that Jesus was risen, and commissions them to announce his resurrection to his disciples, which they immediately go to do, 5-8. (4.) Jesus himself appears to them as they were returning, and commands them to tell

his disciples to meet him in Galilee, 9, 10. (5,) The soldiers attest his resurrection to the chief priests, but are bribed to affirm that his disciples had stole away his body, 11-15. (6,) According to his own and the angel's promise, he appears to the eleven disciples in Galilee, 16, 17. (7,) He gives them an apostolic commission, to preach and baptize everywhere, promising to be with his ministers to the end of the world, 18-20.

A. M. 4037. **I**N the ^aend of the sabbath, as it
A. D. 33. began to dawn toward the first
day of the week, came Mary Magdalene,
^b and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.
2 And behold, there ¹was a great earthquake:

for ^o the angel of the Lord descended A. M. 4037.
from heaven, and came and rolled A. D. 33.
back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.
3 ^d His countenance was like lightning, and
his raiment white as snow :

^a Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1.—^b Chap. xxvii. 56.
¹ Or, had been.

^c Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 4; John xx. 12.
^d Dan. x. 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVIII.

Verse 1. *In the end of the sabbath*—Or rather, *After the sabbath*, as *οψε σαββατων* may be properly translated. Thus, in Philostratus, *οψε των Τρωικων* signifies, *after the Trojan war*; *οψε μυσηριων*, *after the mysteries were ended*. And in other authors, *οψε των* is, *after these things*; *οψε νυκτος*, *after night*; see many examples of this in Stephanus. And so this perfectly agrees with the other evangelists, who say what is here related was done when the *sabbath was ended*, Mark xvi. 1; or *the first day of the week*, Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1. And perhaps Matthew here mentions *σαββατων*, *sabbaths*, in the plural, because there were two *sabbaths* in that week, the paschal sabbath on Friday, and the ordinary sabbath on Saturday. *As it began to dawn toward*, &c.—*Τη επιφωσκειση εις μιαν σαββατων*, *when it began to dawn into the first day of the week*, that is, Sunday, or the Lord's day; for *μια των σαββατων* always signifies *the first day of the week*, or *the Lord's day*, or the day of his resurrection from the dead: and thus the word *μια* usually signifies in the Septuagint, when it is joined with days, weeks, or months; as Gen. i. 5, *The evening and morning were, ημερα μια, the first day*: Exod. xl. 2; Ezra iii. 6, x. 17, *ημερα μια τρι μηνος, is the first day of the month*. See note on 1 Cor. xvi. 2. On this day, in the evening, Christ appeared to the eleven, John xx. 19; and again, verse 26; and to the two disciples, Luke xxiv. 13.

Came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, (see on chap. xxvii. 61,) *to see the sepulchre*—To see if all things were as they had left them the preceding evening. It appears from Mark xvi. 1, that they were accompanied by Salome: and from Luke xxiv. 10, that they were soon joined by Joanna, and other female friends, who were to meet them there. These women had bought, and now brought with them, spices, which they had prepared to embalm the body of Jesus, to do which, it seems, was their principal reason for visiting the sepulchre so early this morning: from which it is evident, that notwithstanding Christ had repeatedly and explicitly foretold that he should rise from the dead the third day, they had no faith in his predictions. And yet they were truly pious women, and certainly genuine and very faithful followers of Jesus, evidently more attached to him than even the apostles themselves, and more bold and courageous in his cause. So slow of heart

are the best disposed of mankind to believe what the Lord hath spoken.

Verse 2. *And behold, there was a great earthquake*—While the women were making these preparations for embalming the body of Jesus, he arose from the dead; his resurrection being preceded by the descent of an angel, whose appearance at the sepulchre was ushered in with a great earthquake, and probably also a storm, the word *σεισμος*, here rendered *earthquake*, signifying any shaking, whether in the earth, air, or sea. Thus, chap. viii. 24, *σεισμος μεγας εν τη θαλασση*, is rightly rendered, *a great tempest in the sea*. And Ezek. iii. 12, LXX., *φωνην σεισμου μεγαλη*, is, *the voice of a great rushing wind*; and *ουρασεισμος*, is the word by which the LXX. denote a *whirlwind*, such as that wherein Elijah was caught up, 2 Kings, ii. 1. Hammond and Le Clerc interpret the words *σεισμος μεγας*, in this passage, of a *tempest* only. *For the angel of the Lord descended from heaven*—Probably in sight of the guards; and *came and rolled back the stone*, &c.—“Jesus, by his miraculous power, could easily have rolled the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and therefore the descent of an angel was not necessary in order to that; but it was necessary, among other things, to throw the guards into a consternation before Jesus came forth, lest they should have been guilty of the impiety of offering to lay violent hands on him, as was done in the garden of Gethsemane, even after he had cast the whole party down on the ground. It is true, the divine wisdom and power could have intimidated the soldiers by a variety of methods, but the one pitched upon was certainly as proper as any.”—Macknight. *And sat upon it*—Luke and John speak of two angels that appeared; but it seems as if one only of them had appeared sitting on the stone without the sepulchre, and then, going into it, was seen with another angel, sitting, one where the head, the other where the feet of the body had lain.

Verses 3, 4. *His countenance was like lightning*—Coruscations of light darting from his face; and *his raiment white as snow*—Glittering with an extraordinary lustre, beyond what any human eyes could bear; and *for fear of him the keepers*—Though Romans and soldiers; *did shake, and became as dead men*—Falling down on their faces in a most helpless condition; for they were effectually frightened by the majestic appearance of the angel, and especially

A. M. 4037. 4 And for fear of him the keepers
A. D. 33. did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, * as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

* Chap. xii. 40; xvi. 21; xvii. 23; xx. 19.

by the lightning which flashed from his countenance. Quickly after, it appears, being recovered from their swoon, and finding the stone rolled away, and the sepulchre open, they fled to some distant place, to consult their own safety in so surprising an occurrence. This we have great reason to believe was the case, as nothing is said of any interview between them and the friends of Christ. It is not said at what particular instant Jesus arose, whether it was before the guards fell into this swoon, or after they recovered themselves and fled. Mark, indeed, by observing that Jesus appeared *first* to Mary Magdalene, may be thought to insinuate that the guards did not see him when he arose; yet the evangelist's words do not necessarily imply this, for his meaning may be, that he appeared to Mary Magdalene first of all the disciples only. Besides, if the guards even did see him arise, it was, properly speaking, no appearance of Christ to them. However, be this as it may, it is certain that Jesus was arisen and gone before any of the women arrived at the sepulchre.

Verses 5, 6. *And the angel said to the women, Fear not ye*—The resurrection of Christ, which is the terror and confusion of his enemies, is the joy and consolation of his friends; the ground of their confidence and hope, and the source of their comfort and felicity, for time and eternity. *For I know that ye seek Jesus that was crucified*—I know you are friends to the cause of your late great Master, and I do not come to frighten, but to encourage you. The angel mentions his being *crucified*, the more to commend their love to him. As if he had said, You seek him still, though he was crucified; you retain your regard and affection for him, notwithstanding that instance of his humiliation. Observe, reader, that true believers love and seek Jesus not only though he was crucified, but because he was so treated. *He is not here, for he is risen*—To be told, *He is not here*, would have been no welcome news to those who sought him, if it had not been added, *he is risen*. Observe, it is matter of comfort to those who seek Christ, and miss of finding him where they expected, that he is risen, and that by his resurrection a firm foundation is laid for their faith, a foundation on which they are invited to build, however unworthy, however guilty; and to whom, as to a living stone, though disallowed of men, all must come that would build for eternity, for *other foundation* than this *can no man lay*. *As he said*—He said he would rise, and you know he is truth itself, and therefore had reason to expect that he would rise: why then should you be backward to believe that which he told you would take place? Reader, let us never

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7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, † he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

† Chap. xxvi. 32; Mark xvi. 7.

be surprised at that, or think that strange, of which the word of Christ has raised our expectation, whether it has respect to the sufferings of this present time, or the glory that shall be revealed. If we remember what Christ hath *said* to us, we shall the less wonder at what he *doth* with us. This angel, when he said, *He is not here, he is risen*, makes it appear, that he preaches no other gospel than what they had already received; for he refers to the word of Christ as his authority for what he affirms; *he is risen, as he said*. *Come, see the place where the Lord lay*—Probably, in speaking that he rose up, and, going before the women into the sepulchre, said, *Come, see the place*. This clearly reconciles what St. John relates, (chap. xx. 12,) this being one of the two angels there mentioned.

Verse 7. *Go quickly, and tell his disciples*—Mark says, *and Peter*—Communicate these glad tidings to his mourning disciples, and particularly to Peter, who is so much overwhelmed with sorrow on account of his late fall; and assure them further, that he is *going before them into Galilee*; and that *there they shall see him*—In his appearance to them all together. But their gracious Lord would not be absent so long from the eleven and several others; he appeared to them several times before then. *Lo, I have told you*—A solemn confirmation of what he had said. This message, as well as that from Jesus himself, verses 9, 10, was sent to all the disciples, and not to the apostles in particular. The reason may have been this: our Lord intending to visit his apostles that very evening, there was no occasion to order *them* into Galilee to see him. But as most of his disciples were now in Jerusalem, celebrating the passover, it may easily be imagined, that on receiving the news of their Master's resurrection, many of them would resolve to tarry in expectation of meeting with him; a thing which must have been very inconvenient for them at that time of the year, when the harvest was about to begin, the sheaf of first-fruits being always offered on the second day of the passover-week. Wherefore, to prevent their being so long from home, the message mentioned was sent, directing them to return into Galilee, well assured that they should have the pleasure of seeing their Lord there, and by that means be happily relieved from the suspicion of his being an impostor, which no doubt had arisen in their minds when they saw him expire upon the cross. *And they departed quickly*, (Mark says, *They went out quickly, and fled*,) *from the sepulchre*—That is, after going into the tomb, as the angel desired them to do, that they might have full satisfaction respecting their Lord's

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A. M. 4037. 9 ¶ And as they went to tell his
 A. D. 33. disciples, behold, ^ε Jesus met them,
 saying, All hail. And they came and held
 him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid :

^ε Mark xvi. 9; John xx. 14.

resurrection: *with fear and great joy*—Fear, caused by the appearance of the heavenly messenger, and the extraordinary nature of the things which they had seen; and *great joy*, at the happy news which they had received, and were thus commissioned to communicate. Mark mentions only their fear, which he paints in strong colours, saying, *They trembled, were amazed, and sore afraid*. It is probable, however, from what Matthew says, and from the nature of the events which had caused this strange mixture of contrary passions, that their joy predominated: *And did run to bring his disciples word*—With all the speed possible, rejoicing to be the messengers of such glad tidings.

Verses 9, 10. *And as they went*—Or, *as they were going*, on their way, *Jesus met them*—These zealous, good women not only heard the first tidings of their Lord, but had the first sight of him after his resurrection. The angel directed those that would see him to go to Galilee; and gave none any hopes of seeing him till they came thither. But Jesus is often better to his people than his word; but never worse; he often anticipates, but never frustrates their believing expectations: *saying, All hail!*—The old English form of salutation is here used, wishing *all health*, as the expression signifies. The Greek word here used, χαίρετε, is literally, *Rejoice*; and answers to the form used by the Hebrews, *Peace be unto you*. *They came and held him by the feet*—As soon as they saw that it was Jesus, beginning to recover from their fear, they drew near to him, and in the most respectful manner, and with the greatest reverence, prostrated themselves before him, and embraced his feet, thus manifesting as well the affection they had to him as the greatness of the joy with which they were transported. This favour of embracing his knees Jesus granted to these women, because the angel's words having strongly impressed their minds with the notion of his resurrection, they might have taken his appearing for an illusion of their own imagination, had he not permitted them to handle him, and convince themselves by the united report of their senses. *Then said Jesus, Be not afraid*—Fear not being imposed upon by these repeated notices of my resurrection; nor fear any hurt, either by the appearance of a messenger from heaven, or of one coming from the dead; for the news brought you, though strange, is both true and replete with comfort. *Go tell my brethren*—For I still own them as such, though they so lately disowned and forsook me. John (chap. xx. 17) records our Lord's using similar language to Mary Magdalene alone, when he sent her to them with the same message. Doubtless these affectionate friends of Christ were exact in reporting this circumstance, that their injured Lord called them his

go tell ^b my brethren that they go in— A. M. 4037.
 to Galilee, and there shall they see me. A. D. 33.

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

^b John xx. 17; Rom. viii. 29; Heb. ii. 11.

brethren still: and both Matthew and John, to whom the glad tidings were immediately brought, felt it strike so powerfully on their hearts, that they could not but record it. He, no doubt, saw it needful to give it them now to encourage them, knowing how much ashamed and distressed they were for having deserted him in his sufferings. And the appellation was now peculiarly consolatory, not only in that it assured them that they were freely forgiven for their past cowardice, but also in that it opened before them a prospect of such glory and felicity as, it appears, they had before no conception of. For as Jesus was now, by his resurrection, declared with power to be the Son of God and heir of all things, by styling his disciples his brethren, he assures them that they were children of God too, and joint heirs with him of all his joys and glories. By this appellation he also pointed out their duty to each other; for, being all his brethren, they were, of consequence, brethren one to another, and must *love as brethren*. And as his owning them for his brethren put a great honour upon them, so it also gave them an example of humility in the midst of that honour.

Verse 11. *Now when, or while they were going*—While these extraordinary things were transacting, and the women were going to tell the disciples what they had heard and seen: *behold, some of the watch*—Some of the guards, who had fled from the sepulchre in great consternation, beginning a little to recollect themselves as to the excuse they should make for its being broken open, and the body being gone, as it would soon be known that it was; *came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all that was done*—That is, gave them an account of the earthquake, the vision, the rolling away of the stone: and moreover assured them that Jesus was actually risen from the dead. And they doubtless urged, at the same time, how impossible it was for them to make any opposition in the presence of the angel, who shook the very earth with the terror of his appearance, and therefore might be easily supposed to take away all power of resistance from them. Thus these ignorant and stupid heathen became, in effect, the first preachers of Christ's resurrection, and were witnesses of the truth of it to the most inveterate of his enemies. It is justly observed here, by Dr. Doddridge, that "such news, coming from such persons, must undoubtedly throw the priests into inexpressible confusion; but it is remarkable, that neither the soldiers nor the priests were converted, by what the one saw or the other heard. Perhaps the soldiers might think that Jesus was, like some of their fabulous heroes, the son of some deity, who brought him to life again; but instead of imagining themselves concerned in the purposes of his resurrection, they might perhaps

A. M. 4037. 12 And when they were assembled
A. D. 33. with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, 13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by

abuse their knowledge of it, to confirm their belief of some superstitious tales of their own priests, which bore some little resemblance to it; as those of Alcestis, Hippolytus, Hercules, and many others did. See Valer. Max., lib. i. cap. viii. § 12; and Plin., *Nat. Hist.*, lib. vii. cap. 52.

Verses 12-14. *And when they were assembled, &c.*—The chief priests, having received this report, called the whole senate together, and they consulted among themselves what they should do in this perplexing emergency: and in particular, as may be reasonably supposed, whether they should dismiss the guards with a charge to conceal the story they had told them, or should accuse them to the governor, and attempt to get them punished for neglect of duty. But, considering the manner in which the governor had appeared to be affected toward Jesus, and the many prodigies which had attended his death, and also knowing they had no positive proof of any negligence or treachery in the soldiers; they resolved to decline commencing a prosecution against them, and even to pass the affair over without any complaint; but, apprehending that the most effectual method they could take would be to endeavour to pervert the evidence of these soldiers, they gave them large money, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept—To prevail with them to propagate this lie, they would doubtless urge, that in whatever way this strange occurrence which they reported might be accounted for, whether by supposing some diabolical operation in the case, or an illusion of their senses, it was necessary for the public safety that it should be concealed, because that otherwise the whole nation would be deluded and undone. The priests certainly could not but foresee what judgment any reasonable persons would form of such a report. At best, it could only be considered as the conjecture of the soldiers, who, by their own confession, being asleep when the supposed fact was said to take place, could tell no more of it than other people; or, if they pretended to say more, it was absurd, for how could they know what was doing, and by whom, while they were asleep? or, knowing it, why did they not prevent it? But this lie implies divers other absurdities: 1st, It was not probable that a Roman guard should be off their watch at all, much less that they should be asleep, since for such a neglect of duty, according to the Roman military laws, if discovered, they would have been liable to be punished with death. 2d, If even some of them had slept, it was not credible that they all should, especially in the open air, and at one time. 3d, If so improbable a thing as that had happened, it was still more incredible that they should all fall into such a sound sleep that not one of them should be awaked by the noise which must necessarily have been made by removing so large a stone, and

a

night, and stole him away while we slept. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

carrying away the body; neither of which things could possibly have been done silently, or by men walking on tiptoes, to prevent discovery. 4th, It was equally incredible that our Lord's disciples, or any persons, should have had time to come to the sepulchre to do all this, and return, carrying away the body, without being perceived by any one, and that during the time of the passover, when it was full moon, and when Jerusalem was very full of people, great numbers of whom would doubtless be walking in the suburbs and environs of the city, at all hours of the night.

The absurdity of the tale, that the disciples took away the body, will still further and more clearly appear if we attend to their temper, and some other circumstances of the case. "Far from entertaining any expectation of their Master's rising again from the dead, they understood none of the predictions which he uttered concerning it. And when they were informed of it by the women, *their words appeared to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.* Nay, when Jesus himself came and stood in the midst of them, *they were terrified, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.* In this temper, is it probable that they would form the design of imposing upon the world the belief of their Master's resurrection; an event which they had not the least expectation of themselves? Further, when Jesus was apprehended, his disciples were so full of fears for their own safety, that *they all forsook him and fled.* One of the most courageous of them, who followed him into the high-priest's house, being asked if he was one of his disciples, was so terrified, that he denied three times, and with oaths, his having any knowledge of him. The rest, during his punishment, skulked among the crowd, except John, who ventured to appear among the women at his cross. In the whole, they were only eleven; a handful of men who had not been trained to arms. To suppose that a company of this sort either formed or executed the project of stealing away their Master's body, from a sepulchre hewn out of a rock, to which there was only one entry, and that guarded by a numerous band of armed soldiers, is altogether improbable. Again, the stealing away of the body by the disciples is absurd for this reason likewise, that though they had, contrary to all probability, been successful in their design, it would have answered no purpose in the world. The disciples had all along considered the Messiah as a great temporal prince; and they had followed their Master in hopes that he would become this great prince, and raise them to the first posts in his kingdom. Accordingly, when they saw him expire on the cross, their hopes were all blasted at once. This they themselves honestly confessed; *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.* Wherefore, to have stolen away the dead

A. M. 4037. 15 So they took the money, and did as
A. D. 33. they were taught: and this saying is
commonly reported among the Jews till this day.

¹ Chap. xxvi. 32;

body of their Master, could have served none of the views by which they were now actuated, even though thereby they could have imposed the belief of his resurrection upon the world. It did not raise him to universal dominion; it did not put them in possession of riches or power. And with respect to the use which they made afterward of their Master's resurrection, in converting the world, they had not the most distant conception of it at the time they fixed for his resurrection. Upon the whole, the stealing away of the body by the disciples while the guards slept, is, in all the lights wherein it can be viewed, the most idle, inconsistent, and improbable story imaginable."—Macknight.

Verse 15. *So they took the money*—They did not, either on the score of conscience, or on account of the palpable falsehood of the story they were to propagate, refuse the bribe that was offered them by the chief priests. Their love of money, as is common with wicked men, pushed them on headlong, so that they did not mind the many improbabilities implied in the lie, nor the horrid iniquity of it. And, though they had been greatly confounded with the vision of the angels, and the earthquake, the panic was by this time worn off. Besides, they did not consider the vision as connected with morality; or, if they did, the priests would endeavour to persuade them that it was nothing real, but the mere effect of their own imagination, terrified by seeing one rise from the dead. The only objection, therefore, made by the soldiers, to their complying with the desire of the priests, was, that by publishing such a story, they would acknowledge such a gross neglect of duty as would expose them to severe punishment, if the governor should hear of it. But to make them easy on this head, the priests promised to give such a representation of the matter to Pilate, that no harm should befall them. This only obstacle, therefore, being removed, the soldiers did as they were desired. They told everywhere the lie which the priests had put into their mouths: a lie the most impudent and barefaced that could be contrived, but which the priests and other members of the council were anxious to have propagated, because they hoped it would be swallowed by many without examination. Nor were they deceived in their expectation; for, improbable as the story was, it gained general credit among the enemies of Jesus, and was currently reported, as Matthew here tells us, at the time he wrote his gospel. Unluckily, however, for the cause of infidelity, it was only *some of the watch who came to the chief priests*; the rest had gone to their garrison, where no doubt they told their comrades what had happened. And even those who came to the chief priests would not be backward to speak of the extraordinary event as they passed along the streets, if they chanced to meet with any of their acquaintance. Far less

16 ¶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain
A. M. 4037. where Jesus had appointed them.
A. D. 33.

verse 7.

would they conceal the matter in the high-priest's palace, while they waited to be called in. None can doubt this who attend to the nature and operation of human passions, and the eagerness which all men naturally have to tell a wonderful story, not to mention the desire which these soldiers must have felt to justify themselves for quitting their posts. The truth, therefore, that Jesus was actually risen, in spite of all the endeavours of the chief priests to suppress it, came abroad, and doubtless became a subject of consideration and inquiry with many, who had not been Christ's disciples; and the more they considered the evidences of it, and compared it with the false story which the priests had prevailed on some of the guard to propagate, the more such as were unprejudiced must be inclined to believe the former and reject the latter, which latter it was evident the priests themselves did not believe. For if they had believed it, doubtless, with a view to prove it, and justify themselves in their hostility to Christ and his cause, they would have narrowly examined where the apostles had been all that night, and would have made search for Christ's body, which, if found, would at once have confuted the testimony of the apostles respecting his resurrection, and have proved their great guilt in endeavouring, by its removal, to palm a lie upon mankind, and establish an imposture of a most heinous nature and pernicious tendency. It is probable, therefore, that an impression in favour of the truth was made on the minds of many persons, and gained ground daily, and that this had considerable influence in preparing them for the reception of the gospel: which circumstance may, partly at least, account for the wonderful success of the ministry of Peter and the other apostles at and after the day of pentecost. To counteract, however, every impression of this kind, and confirm the Jews, whether in Jerusalem or elsewhere, in their prejudices against Christianity, the chief priests and elders were unwearied in their endeavours. "They even" (says Justin Martyr, *Dialog. cum Tryph.*, p. 368) "sent chosen men of considerable rank over all the world, not only in the general to represent the Christians as an impious sect, but to assert that the body of Jesus was torn out of his tomb by night, and the persons who thus fraudulently conveyed it away, took occasion from thence to report that he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven." Which message is spoken of as having been sent before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Verse 16. *Then*—Not immediately after what is related in the preceding verses, but after several appearances of Christ, and events connected therewith, recorded in the last chapter of Luke and Mark, and in the last two chapters of John; where see the notes: *the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, &c.*—That Christ promised after his resurrection to

A. M. 4037. 17 And when they saw him,
A. D. 33. they worshipped him: but some
doubted.

¹ Dan. vii. 13, 14; Chap. xi. 27; xvi. 28; Luke i. 32; x. 22; John iii. 35; v. 22; xiii. 3; xvii. 2; Acts ii. 36; Rom. xiv. 9;

go before them into Galilee, we read chap. xxvi. 32; thither the angel here, verse 7, and Christ himself, verse 10, direct them to go to see him; but there is not the least mention of any mountain in Galilee to which he bade them go to meet him; and therefore the following words, *where Christ had appointed them*, must refer, not to the mountain, but to Galilee; but there being a mountain which Christ had frequented, and on which he had been before transfigured, this, it seems, moved the disciples to go to that mountain. Moreover, it is observable that they did not go into Galilee till above eight days after Christ's resurrection, for Christ appeared to them at Jerusalem eight days after, John xx. 19; and when they went, doubtless, they went not alone, but the curiosity of those that were with them, Luke xxiv. 9, 33, would probably move them to go to the place where he had appointed to be seen. It is true, the evangelist does not say that there were more present at this appearance than the eleven; nevertheless, the circumstances of the case direct us to believe that it had many witnesses. "This appearance was known beforehand; the place where it was to happen was pointed out by Jesus himself; and it was represented in such a light as if the appearances which were to take place before it were of small importance in comparison of it. The report, therefore, of his being to appear in Galilee, must have spread abroad, and brought many to the place at the appointed time. In short, it is reasonable to think that most of the disciples now enjoyed the happiness of beholding personally their Master raised from the dead. What confirms this supposition is, that Paul says expressly, Jesus, after his resurrection, *was seen of above five hundred brethren at once*, 1 Cor. xvi. 6, for that number of witnesses mentioned by Paul agrees better to the appearance on the mountain in Galilee described by Matthew than to any other. Galilee having been the principal scene of Christ's ministry, the greatest part of his followers lived there; for which reason he chose to make what may be called his most solemn and public appearance after his resurrection on a mountain in that country; an appearance to which, as we have seen, a general meeting of all his disciples was summoned, not only by the angels who attended his resurrection, but by our Lord himself, the very day on which he arose."

Verse 17. *When they saw him, they worshipped*—The greatest part were so fully convinced that the person they saw was their Master, that they worshipped him; *but some doubted*—But with respect to a few, their joy, on seeing the Lord, put them into a kind of perturbation, and their desire that it might be him, made them afraid it was not. This reason is assigned by Luke for the unbelief of some on a former occasion, chap. xxiv. 41. *They believed not for joy and wonder*; and therefore it may fitly

18 ¶ And Jesus came and spake A. M. 4037.
unto them, saying, ¹ All power is A. D. 33.
given unto me in heaven and in earth.

1 Cor. xv. 27; Eph. i. 10, 21; Phil. ii. 9, 10; Heb. i. 2; ii. 8; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rev. xvii. 14.

be offered to account for the unbelief of others on this. "Besides, the thing is agreeable to nature, men being commonly afraid to believe what they vehemently wish, lest they should indulge themselves in a false joy, which they must soon lose. Hence the saying in Terence, *Misera mens incredula est: quo plus cupio, minus credo*. 'My anxious mind is incredulous: the more I wish, the less I believe.' The case of the disciples, whose desire and joy made them doubt the truth of what they saw, may be illustrated by the instance of the states of Greece and Asia, whose joy and surprise on hearing a Roman herald declare them all free, and at liberty to use their own laws, had a similar effect upon them, as the story is beautifully told by Livy, lib. xxxiii. cap. 35." The Prussian editors, however, who are followed by some others, render the clause thus,—*even those who had doubted*. "Probably at this appearance the apostles received orders to return to Jerusalem; for from Acts i. 3–12, compared with Luke xxiv. 50, it is plain that our Lord's discourses, before his ascension, related Mark xvi. 15, and Luke xxiv. 44, were delivered in or near to the city. Besides, he ascended from the mount of Olives, as we shall see in the subsequent evangelists. Wherefore, if the orders for the apostles to repair to Jerusalem were not given at this appearance, Jesus must have showed himself again, which indeed is not impossible, as it is evident from 1 Cor. xv. 7 that he showed himself somewhere, after his appearance to the five hundred brethren, to the Apostle James alone, though none of the evangelists have given the least hint of this appearance. Among the apostles there were two persons of that name: one the brother of John, who was killed by Herod, another the brother or cousin of Jesus. Perhaps it was to James the brother of John that our Lord appeared after his resurrection. His being to suffer martyrdom so early, might make this special favour necessary."

Verse 18. *And Jesus came and spake unto them*—Even unto those mentioned in the last clause, who at first doubted, but whose doubts were afterward fully removed, and probably by his drawing near, and speaking familiarly with them. "It tended much to the honour of Christ," says Henry, "that [some of] the disciples doubted before they believed, for, in consequence of this, it cannot be said that they were credulous, and willing to be imposed upon, inasmuch as they first questioned and proved all things, and then embraced and held fast that which they found to be true." Christ, however, on this occasion, came and spake, not only to them that had doubted, but to all the disciples then assembled, and particularly to the apostles, whom it especially concerned to be fully satisfied of his resurrection, of which they were to be witnesses to mankind, and their knowledge of the truth of which they were to

A. M. 4037. 19 ¹ Go ye therefore, and ² teach
A. D. 33. all nations, baptizing them in the

name of the Father, and of the Son, A. M. 4037.
and of the Holy Ghost; A. D. 33.

¹ Mark xvi. 15.—² Isa. lii. 10; Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38,

39; Rom. x. 18; Col. i. 23.—³ Or, *make disciples of all nations.*

seal with their blood, and to whom the following commission was chiefly given. He therefore did not stand at a distance, but came near and gave them all such convincing proofs of his resurrection, as both turned the wavering scale of such as were slow of heart to believe, making their faith to triumph over their doubts, and gave perfect and lasting confirmation to the faith of the rest, particularly of his chosen witnesses, who certainly from this time never called in question in any degree, either the resurrection of their Lord, or the nature and importance of the commission he now gave them. *Saying, All power is given unto me—Gr. πασα εξουσια, all authority.* It is manifest, as Beza observes, that “authority and power differ from each other; for many are not able to perform those things which they have a right to do; and, on the contrary, many have power to do those things which they have no right to do.” Our Lord’s authority, however, implies power also. It is the exaltation of our Lord’s human nature that is here chiefly intended, in union, however, with the divine. His meaning is fully explained in the following words: *Because he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: therefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at his name every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess him Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 7–11. God hath raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to (that is, for the benefit of) the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all, Eph. i. 20–23.* See the notes on these passages, and also on John v. 26, 27; and Rom. xiv. 9. The authority and power intended is that which Christ exercises as Son of man and Mediator; but it is evident, if he did not possess all divine perfections, he could not exercise it. Thus Dr. Whitby, “He to whom any office is duly committed, must have sufficient power and wisdom to discharge that office. Now to govern all things in heaven and earth belongs only to him who is the Lord and Maker of them, and therefore is known by this title, both in Scripture and by the heathen. To have power over death, and to be able to raise the dead, is to have that power which is proper to God alone: and to have power over the souls of men, and the knowledge of all hearts, belongs to God alone.” Our Lord, therefore, is invested with, and exercises this authority and power, although as the Son of man, yet not as a mere man, for as such it would have been impossible for him to exercise it, but as a man in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Now Christ being about to send out his apostles as his ambassadors to the nations, with authority to propose to them terms of peace and reconciliation; being about to deliver to them the great charter of his kingdom in the world, and commission them to go forth and gather subjects to him everywhere, and to give laws to and govern those subjects; or to feed and rule his flock; and being about to do these things as *Son of man*; he first, with great propriety, shows them by what authority he acts, and who gave him that authority. He had indeed said, in effect, more than once before, all he now says, (see Matt. xi. 27; John v. 20–29,) namely, that *all things were delivered unto him of his Father*; that the Father had given him authority to execute judgment; yea, had committed all judgment unto him, that all men should honour him, the Son, even as they honour the Father. But though he had a right to, and was invested with, this power before, even during the whole time of his personal ministry; yet, he was not in a condition to exercise it, nor could he have exercised it with propriety, while he was in his state of humiliation, and bore the form of a servant; as he was to exercise it now, being raised from the dead, clothed with immortality and glory, and immediately to be exalted to the right hand of the throne of the divine Majesty in the heavens, Heb. viii. 1.

Verse 19. *Go ye therefore, and teach—Greek, μαθητευσate, disciple, or make disciples of, or, as Dr. Doddridge renders it, proselyte all nations.* This includes the whole design of Christ’s commission. *Baptizing and teaching* are the two great branches of that general design, and these were to be determined by the circumstances of things; which made it necessary, in baptizing adult Jews or heathen, to teach them before they were baptized; in disciplining their children, to baptize them before they were taught, as the Jewish children in all ages were first circumcised, and after taught to do all God had commanded them. It must be observed, that the word rendered *teaching*, in the next verse, (namely, *διδασκοντες*;) though in our translation confounded with the word used in this verse, yet is a word of a very different sense, and properly implies *instructing*, which the word used in this verse does not necessarily imply, but, as has been observed, merely to *proselyte, or make disciples*. The argument, therefore, that some draw from this verse, as if our Lord enjoined all to be taught before they were to be baptized, is without foundation. Our Lord’s words, taken together, in both verses, distinctly enjoin three things, and that in the following order, *μαθητεειν, βαπτισειν, διδασκειν*, that is, to *proselyte men to Christ, to baptize, and to teach* them. It is true, however, that adult persons, before they can be made Christ’s disciples, or be proselyted, must be instructed and brought to *believe* the great essential truths of Christianity, and even to *profess* their faith in them. But the case is different with infants,

A. M. 4037. 20 ^a Teaching them to observe all
A. D. 33. things whatsoever I have command-

^a Acts ii. 42.

who may be admitted to baptism, as the children of the Jews were to the rite of circumcision, and be instructed afterward. And, as Dr. Doddridge justly observes, if Christ had sent out these missionaries to propagate Judaism in the world, he might have used the same, or similar language: "Go and proselyte all nations, circumcising them in the name of the God of Israel, and teaching them to observe all that Moses commanded." The whole tenor of the succeeding books of the New Testament shows, that Christ designed, by this commission, that the gospel should be preached to all mankind without exception; not only to the Jews, but to the idolatrous Gentiles: but the prejudices of the apostles led them, at first, to mistake the sense of it, and to imagine that it referred only to their going to preach the gospel to the Jews among all nations, or to those who should be willing to become Jews.

Baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c.—Concerning the general nature of baptism, see note on chap. iii. 6. But we are here instructed respecting the appropriation of this institution to the Christian dispensation, in its most complete form. The apostles, and their successors in the ministry of the word, are ordered to baptize those whom they made Christ's disciples, *εις το ονομα, into the name, (not names,) of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*—Words which have been considered, in all ages of the Christian Church, as a most decisive proof of the doctrine of the Trinity; implying not only the proper personality and Deity of the Father, but also those of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For it would be absurd to suppose that either a mere creature, or a mere quality, or mode of existence of the Deity, should be joined with the Father in the *one name* into which all Christians are baptized. "To be baptized into the name of any one implies a professed dependance on him, and devoted subjection to him; to be baptized, therefore, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, implies a professed dependance on these three divine persons, jointly and equally, and a devoting of ourselves to them as worshippers and servants. This is proper and obvious, upon the supposition of the mysterious unity of three coequal persons in the unity of the Godhead; but not to be accounted for upon any other principles."—Scott. "Our Lord," says Mr. Fletcher, "enjoining us to be equally baptized in the name (equally consecrated to the service) of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaches us to honour the Son as we honour the Father, and to honour the Holy Ghost as we do the Son; and when the Socinians assert that the Son is a mere man, they indirectly tell us, that he is as improperly joined with the Father to be the great object of our faith in baptism, as a taper would improperly be joined with the sun to enlighten the universe. And when they represent the Holy Ghost as a mere power, and a power whereby we

a

ed you: and, lo, I am with you alway, A. M. 4037.
even unto the end of the world. Amen. A. D. 33.

must not now hope to be influenced, they might as well tell us, that he is as unfit to have a place among the *Three who bear record in heaven*; as their power of motion, or the energy of their minds, would be absurdly mentioned as parties in a contract, where their names and persons are particularly specified.—Thus, they take from us the two Comforters, with whom we are particularly blessed under the gospel. If we believe them, the one is a mere man, who cannot hear us; and the other is a mere property, or an unconscious energy, by which we shall be noway benefited, and as insensible to our faith as to our unbelief: and when our Lord bids all nations to be *baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, (if the word *Son* do not mean the proper Son of God; if it mean only, the son of the carpenter, Joseph, and if the *Holy Ghost* be only the Father's energy, and an energy whereby we can neither be quickened nor comforted,) this gospel charter is far more extraordinary than would be the royal patents by which gentlemen are created lords, if they all began thus: Be it enacted, in the name, or by the supreme authority, of King George the Third, of Josiah the carpenter's son, and of the royal power or energy, that A. B., Esq., be numbered among the peers of the realm. Such is the wisdom displayed by philosophers, who call the divinity of the Son the leading corruption of Christianity, and who pretend to reform all the Reformed Churches!" See his Works, vol. ix. p. 26, octavo edit. Though perhaps, we ought not to assert that the use of these very words is essential to Christian baptism, yet surely, as Dr. Doddridge observes, "the expression must intimate the necessity of some distinct regard to each of the Sacred Three, which is always to be maintained in the administration of this ordinance; and consequently it must imply, that more was said to those of whose baptism we read in the Acts than is there recorded, before they were admitted to it. The Christian Church, in succeeding ages, has acted a wise and safe part in retaining these words; and they contain so strong an intimation that each of these persons is properly called *God*, and that worship is to be paid, and glory ascribed to each, that I cannot but hope they will be a means of maintaining the belief of the one, and the practice of the other, among the generality of Christians, to the end of the world."

Verse 20. *Teaching them to observe all things, &c.*—Here we have, 1st, The duty of the apostles and ministers of Christ, which is, to teach his disciples to observe all things that he has commanded; that is, they must instruct them in all the *doctrines* and *precepts* taught by Christ, and inculcate upon them the necessity of understanding and believing the former, and obeying the latter; and must assist them in applying Christ's general commands to particular cases. They must teach them, not their

own or any man's fancies and inventions, but the truths and institutions of Christ; to them they must religiously adhere, and in the knowledge of them must train up his followers. As Christ does not here command any thing to be taught which he himself had not taught, we may infer that every thing fundamental and essential to salvation may be found in the gospels, and that even the apostles themselves had not a right to teach any thing as necessary to salvation which Christ himself had not asserted to be so. 2d, The duty of Christ's disciples, of all that are dedicated to him in baptism; they must *observe all things whatsoever that he has commanded*, and in order thereto, must submit to the teaching of those whom he sends. Our admission into the visible church is in order to something further; namely, our being prepared for and employed in his service. By our baptism we are obliged, 1st, To make the doctrines of Christ the rule of our faith, and his commands the directory of our practice. We are *under the law to Christ*, and must obey, and in all our obedience must have an eye to the command, and do what we do as unto the Lord. 2d, To *observe all things that he hath commanded without exception*; all the moral duties, and all the instituted ordinances. Our obedience to the laws of Christ is not sincere if it be not universal; we must *stand complete in his whole will*. And, lo, I am with you *always*—Here our Lord gives his apostles, and all the ministers of his gospel, truly sent by him, an assurance of his spiritual presence with them in the execution of this commission unto the end of time; and this exceeding great and precious promise he ushers in with *lo, Lo! or behold!* to strengthen their faith and engage their regard to it. As if he had said, Take notice of this; it is what you may assure yourselves of and rely upon. "*I am with you*; I, the eternal Son of God; I, who have the angels at my command, and make the devils tremble by my frown; I, who in your sight have caused the storms to cease, the blind to see, the lame to walk, the dead to rise, only with the word of my mouth; I, who have *all power in heaven and earth* committed to me—*am with you*; not, *I will be with you*, but, *I am with you*, and that *always*, Gr. *πας τας ημερας*, *all the days*, or *every day*: Wheresoever you are, and whosoever you do any thing toward the executing of the commission which I have given you, I am with you in the doing of it, and that too *to the very end of the world*: that is, so long as I have a church upon earth, which shall be till my coming again to judge the world, all this while I promise to be with you, and consequently as long as the world shall last."—Bishop Beveridge, *On Christ's Presence with his Ministers*. Some would translate *ως της συντελειας του αιωνος*, *until the conclusion of the age*; understanding by the expression the dissolution of the Jewish state. But as Christ's presence with his surviving apostles and other ministers was as necessary after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the overthrow of the Jewish commonwealth, as before these events, nothing can be more unreasonable than to limit these words by such an interpretation. Nor indeed can they with any propriety be inter-

preted in any other than the most extensive sense; the influence of Christ's Spirit being essentially necessary to the success of the gospel in every age and nation; and our Lord, in the last discourse which he delivered to his disciples before his passion, having graciously promised it, saying, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter to abide with you; εις τον αιωνα, for ever*. Our Lord could not mean that this other Comforter should abide merely with the persons to whom he then spoke, they being to die quickly; but that he should abide with them during their lives, and with their successors afterward; or with them and all the ministers of the gospel in the several ages of the church; with all to whom this commission extends; with all, that, being duly called and sent, thus *baptize and thus teach*. When the end of the world is come, and the kingdom is delivered up to God even the Father, there will then be no further need of ministers and their ministration; but till then they shall continue, and the great intentions of the institution shall be answered. This is a most encouraging word to all the faithful ministers of Christ; that what was said to the apostles was, and is, said to them all. *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*. May this gracious promise cause us to gird up the loins of our minds, and increase our zeal, fervour, and diligence; inducing us to account no labour too great, no service too much, no suffering too severe, so that we may but *finish our course with joy*, and fulfil the ministry we are engaged in!

Two solemn farewells we find our Lord Jesus giving to his church; and his parting word at both of them is very encouraging; one was here, when he closed up his personal converse with them, and then his parting word was, *Lo, I am with you always*; I leave you, yet still I am with you. The other was, when he closed up the canon of the Scripture by the pen of his beloved disciple, and then his parting word was, *Surely I come quickly*. I leave you for a while, but I will be with you again shortly, Rev. xxii. 20. By this it appears that his love to his church continues the same, though she is deprived of his visible and bodily presence; and that it is his will we should maintain both our communion with him, and our expectation of him. The word *amen*, with which this gospel concludes, is wanting in four MSS., and in the Vulgate, Coptic, and Armenian versions. It is probable, however, that it was inserted by the evangelist, not only as an intimation of the conclusion of his book, but as an asseveration of the certain truth of the things contained in it. And, considering the connection of the word with the preceding promise, which was undoubtedly the greatest strength and joy of St. Matthew's heart, "it is very natural," says Dr. Doddridge, "to suppose that it has some such reference as this to that promise: 'Amen! blessed Jesus,—so may it indeed be; and may this important promise be fulfilled to us and to our successors to the remotest ages, in its full extent!' St. John uses the like term in more express language, in the last *verse* but one of the Revelation: *Surely I come quickly, Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*"

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF SAINT MARK.

IT is generally supposed by commentators, on the authority of ancient writers, that the person whom St. Peter speaks of, 1st epistle, chap. v. 13, and terms, "Marcus his son," was the author of this gospel; and that it was the second gospel that was written in order of time. Papias's testimony on the former of these points, preserved by Eusebius, (Hist. Eccl., lib. iii. cap. 39,) is very important; and, as he is the oldest witness, ought first to be produced. "This is what is related by the elder;" (that is, John, not the apostle, but a disciple of Jesus;) "Mark, being Peter's interpreter, wrote exactly whatever he remembered, not indeed in the order wherein things were spoken and done by the Lord; for he was not himself a hearer of our Lord, but he afterward, as I said, followed Peter, who gave instructions as suited the occasions, but not as a regular history of our Lord's teaching. Mark, however, committed no mistake in writing such things as occurred to his memory; for of this one thing he was careful, to omit nothing which he had heard, and to insert no falsehood in his narrative." Such is the testimony of Papias, which is the more to be regarded, as he assigns his authority, namely, John the elder, or presbyter, a disciple of Jesus, and companion of the apostles, by whom he had been intrusted with a ministry in the church. Now, what is advanced by Papias, on the authority of John, is contradicted by none. On the contrary, it is confirmed by all who take occasion to mention the subject. But it will be sufficient to insert here the account given by Irenæus, (Adv. Hær., lib. iii. cap. 1,) which is the rather subjoined to that of Papias, because it serves to ascertain another circumstance, namely, that the publication of Mark's gospel soon followed that of Matthew. After telling us that Matthew published his gospel while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, he adds, "After their departure, (*εξόδου*,) Mark also, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered us in writing the things which had been preached by Peter." The Greek word rendered "departure," in this sentence, like the English word by which it is so translated, may either denote death, or a departure out of the city. It is here probably used in the latter of these senses, because, according to the accounts given by some others, Mark's gospel was published in Peter's life-time, and had his approbation. But, not to insist on this, which cannot be now ascertained, it is sufficient for us that we know by whom this gospel was written, and whence the writer drew his information. Indeed this latter point has, from the earliest times, been considered as so well authenticated, that some have not scrupled to denominate this, "The Gospel according to Peter." Not that they intended thereby to dispute Mark's title to be esteemed the writer, but to express, in a stronger manner, that every thing here advanced had the sanction of that apostle's testimony, than whom no disciple more closely attended our Lord's ministry, from its commencement to its consummation.

Some have thought that the writer of this gospel was the person of whom mention is several times made in the Acts and some of Paul's epistles, called "John, whose surname is Mark," and whose mother's name was Mary, (Acts xii. 12,) of whom we are likewise told, (Col. iv. 10,) that he was sister's son to Barnabas. But, from the little that we are able to collect out of the apostolical writings, this appears rather improbable. Of John, surnamed Mark, one of the first things we learn is, that he attended Paul and Barnabas in their apostolical journeys, when these two travelled together, Acts xii. 25; xiii. 5. And when afterward there arose a dispute between them concerning him, insomuch that they separated, Mark accompanied his uncle Barnabas, and Silas attended Paul. When Paul was reconciled to Mark, which was probably soon after, we find him again employing Mark's assist-

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ance, recommending him, and giving him a very honourable testimony, Col. iv. 10 ; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24. But we hear not a syllable of his attending Peter as his minister, or assisting him in any capacity. This account is so different from that which the most ancient writers give of the Evangelist Mark, that, though they cannot be said to contradict each other, they can hardly be understood as spoken of the same individual. To the above may be added, that no ancient author, in speaking of this evangelist, ever calls him "John," (the name given to the nephew of Barnabas,) but always "Mark." In brief, the accounts given of Paul's attendant, and those of Peter's interpreter, concur in nothing but the name "Mark," or "Marcus;" too slight a circumstance from which to conclude the sameness of the person, especially when we consider how common the name was at Rome, and how customary it was for the Jews in that age to assume some Roman name when they went thither.

That Mark wrote his gospel in Greek, is as evidently conformable to the testimony of antiquity, as that Matthew wrote his in Hebrew. "Cardinal Baronius," says Dr. Campbell, "is the only person who has strenuously maintained the contrary, affirming that this evangelist published his work in Latin. I know no argument, worthy the name of argument, but one, that he produces in favour of his opinion. 'This gospel,' says he, 'was published at Rome for the benefit of the Romans. Can we then suppose it would be written in any other than the language of the place?' I shall admit that this gospel was published at Rome; though that is not universally believed, some rather supposing it to have been at Alexandria, after Mark had been intrusted with the superintendence of that church. But though the design of the publication had been the benefit of those residing at Rome, it would not have been exclusively intended for the natives. Let it be observed, that the ministry of Peter, to whom Paul tells us, Gal. ii. 7, the gospel of the circumcision was committed, was chiefly employed in converting and instructing his countrymen the Jews, who abounded at that time in the imperial city. Now, it was customary with such of the Jews as went abroad, (I may say, generally with travellers of all nations, especially from the East,) to make themselves masters of the Greek tongue, which was become a kind of universal language, and was more used by strangers at Rome, than the language of the place. It was with such that the first Christian missionaries were principally concerned. The Apostle Paul, accordingly, wrote to them in Greek, and not in Latin, which would not have been done, if the former language had not then been better understood in the Christian congregation than the latter. Now, if there was no impropriety in Paul's writing them a very long epistle in Greek, neither was there any in Mark's giving them his gospel in that language.

"From this gospel, as well as from the former, we should readily conclude that the author was by birth and education a Jew. The Hebraisms in the style, or examples of what has been called the idiom of the synagogue, are very evident throughout the whole. At the same time, as some critics have observed, there are several expressions here used which clearly indicate that the writer had been accustomed for some time to live among the Latins. Not only does he use the Latin words which are to be found in the other gospels, and seem to have been current in Judea, as, *λεγων*, 'legion,' and *δηναριον*, 'a denarius;' but he employs some which are peculiar to himself, as *κεντυριον*, 'centurion,' and *σπεκελατωρ*, 'sentinel.' These have been pleaded as evidences that the original was Latin; but, in fact, they are much stronger marks of a Greek writer who had lived some years among the Latins, and had been accustomed to use such names of offices as were familiarly known in the place.

"Augustine considers this evangelist as the abridger of Matthew: *Marcus Matthæum subsecutus tanquam pedissequus et breviator ejus videtur*. It is indeed true that Mark sometimes copies the very expressions used by Matthew. That he is not, however, to be considered as an abridger, may be evinced by the following reasons: First, he omits altogether several things related by Matthew,—our Lord's pedigree, his birth, the visit of the Magians, Joseph's flight into Egypt, the cruelty of Herod. As his intention appears to have been to give, in brief, the history of our Lord's ministry, he begins very properly with the preaching of the Baptist. Again: there are some other things in Matthew, whereof, though they fall within the time to which Mark had confined himself, he has taken no notice; and some things are mentioned by Mark which had been overlooked by Matthew. Further: he has not always followed the same arrangement with his predecessor; and his relation of some facts, so far from being an abridgment of Matthew's, is the more circumstantial of the two. His style, in general, instead of being more concise, is more diffuse. That he had read Matthew's gospel, cannot be doubted. For their exact conformity in expression in several places, Grotius has an in-

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genious manner of accounting. He supposes that Mark had carefully read Matthew's gospel in the original Hebrew, before it was translated into Greek; and that he had the particulars fresh in his memory, when he was occupied in writing his gospel. Again: he supposes that the translator of Matthew into Greek has thought it safest to adopt the expressions of Mark, wherever they would suit the Hebrew, from which he was translating. But this, it must be confessed, though not implausible, is mere conjecture. It is generally our Lord's discourses which are abridged by Mark. As to his miracles, he has rather more fully related them. The additional circumstances and incidents recorded in his gospel appear to rest upon the authority of the apostles, but principally on that of Peter."

As to the travels and labours of this evangelist, it is said that for some time he preached the gospel, in conjunction with St. Peter, in Italy and at Rome. Afterward, he was sent by him into Egypt, fixing his chief residence at Alexandria, and the places thereabouts; where he was so successful in his ministry, that he converted multitudes, both men and women, to the Christian faith. He afterward removed westward, toward the parts of Lybia, going through the countries of Marmorica, Pentapolis, and others thereabouts, where, notwithstanding the barbarity and idolatry of the inhabitants, he planted the gospel. Upon his return to Alexandria, he ordered the affairs of the church, and there suffered martyrdom in the following manner: About Easter, at the time the solemnities of Serapis were celebrated, the idolatrous people, being excited to vindicate the honour of their deity, seized St. Mark, when engaged in the solemn celebration of divine worship; and, binding his feet with cords, dragged him through the streets and most craggy places to the Bucelus, a precipice near the sea, and then for that night shut him up in prison, where he had the comfort of a divine vision. Early the next morning the tragedy began again: they dragged him about in the same manner, till, his flesh being raked off, and his blood run out, his spirits failed, and he expired. Some add that they burned his body, and that the Christians decently interred his bones and ashes near the place where he used to preach. This is supposed to have happened A. D. 68. Some writers assert, that the remains of St. Mark were afterward, with great pomp, translated from Alexandria to Venice. However, he is the tutelary patron of that republic, and has a very rich and stately church erected to his memory. See the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

a

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

S A I N T M A R K.

CHAPTER I.

We have in this chapter, (1.) The ministry and success of John the Baptist, answerable to the predictions of the prophets, 1-8. (2.) Christ's baptism by John, and attestation from heaven, 9-11. (3.) His temptation by Satan, and assistance from angels in the wilderness, 12, 13. (4.) His labours in preaching, 14, 15, 21, 22, 38, 39; and prayer, 35. (5.) His calling of disciples, 16-20. (6.) His rebuking and casting out an unclean spirit, to the astonishment of the spectators, 23-28. (7.) His curing Peter's mother-in-law of a fever, 29-31. (8.) His healing all that came to him, 32-35. (9.) His healing a leper, and charging him to conceal the cure, 40-45.

A. M. 4030. **T**HE beginning of the gospel of
A. D. 26. Jesus Christ, ^a the Son of God;

2 As it is written in the prophets, ^b Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee;

3 ^c The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

^a Matt. xiv. 33; Luke i. 35; John i. 34.—^b Mal. iii. 1; Matt. xi. 10.—^c Isa. xl. 3; Matt. iii. 3; Luke

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, A. M. 4030.
make his paths straight. A. D. 26.

4 ^d John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance, ¹ for the remission of sins.

5 ^e And there went out unto him all the land

iii. 4; John i. 15, 23.—^d Matt. iii. 1; Luke iii. 3; John iii. 23.—¹ Or, unto.—^e Matt. iii. 5.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1-3. *The beginning of the gospel*—That is, of the gospel history; of *Jesus Christ, the Son of God*—Who was, or is, in the bosom of the Father, John i. 18, and came down from heaven, John iii. 13, to reveal his Father's will unto us, to confirm his doctrine by a great variety of astonishing miracles, to set us a perfect example of every branch of piety and virtue, to expiate our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and to abolish death, with respect to such as believe aright in him, by rising from the dead as the first-fruits of them that sleep. The evangelist speaks with strict propriety in this sentence, for *the beginning of the gospel* is in the account of John the Baptist, contained in the first paragraph; the gospel itself in the rest of the book. Thus the verse must be considered as being connected with the following, and as signifying that *the gospel of Jesus Christ* began, according to the prediction of the prophets, with the preaching and baptism of John the Baptist. In styling Jesus the *Son of God*, while the other evangelists describe him chiefly as the *Son of man*, Mark gives him a title the most likely, as being the most august, to engage the attention and obedience of the Romans, those lords of the earth, to the religion which was promulgated by him. *Behold, I send my messenger, &c.*—See notes on Mal. iii. 1; Matt. xi. 10. *The voice of one, &c.*—See notes on Isa. xl. 3; Matt. iii. 3.

Verse 4. *John*—Who was the very person spoken

of by those prophets, being sent of God for that end; *did baptize in the wilderness*—Which lay east from Jerusalem, along the river Jordan and the lake Asphaltites, also called *the Dead sea*. By wilderness, in the Scriptures, it is plain that we are not always to understand what is commonly denominated so with us, a region either uninhabitable or uninhabited. No more seems to have been denoted by it than a country fitter for pasture than for agriculture, mountainous, woody, and but thinly inhabited. These *ερημοι, wildernesses*, did not want their towns and villages. *And preach the baptism of repentance*—That is, preach repentance, and baptize as a sign and means of it. Thus John endeavoured to prepare men for the coming of that Messiah who was to *save his people from their sins*. See notes on Matt. iii. 2, 3. This baptism, says Dr. Lightfoot, may belong to children, though it be *the baptism of repentance*, and they know not what repentance means; for it requireth not their repentance at the receiving of this sacrament, but it engageth them to it for the time to come, namely, when they shall come to the use of reason, and the knowledge of the engagement. And so was it with the children that were circumcised; for they by that sacrament became debtors to observe the whole law, Gal. v. 3, when they knew not what obedience or the law meant; but that bound them to it when they came to years of knowledge and discretion.

Verses 5-8. *There went out to him all Judea, &c.*

A. M. 4030. of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and A. D. 26. were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was ^f clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat ^e locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, ^h There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 ⁱ I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you ^k with the Holy Ghost.

9 ¶ ^l And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

^f Matt. iii. 4.—^e Lev. xi. 22.—^h Matt. iii. 11; John i. 27; Acts xiii. 25.—ⁱ Acts i. 5; xi. 16; xix. 4.—^k Isa. xlv. 3; Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 4; x. 45; xi. 15, 16; 1 Cor. xii. 13.—^l Matt. iii.

—So disposed were the people to receive his baptism. See note on Matt. iii. 5. *The latchet of whose shoes, &c.*—That is, whose servant I am not worthy to be, or to perform for him the meanest offices. *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost*—The promise of which is made to you and your children, Acts ii. 39; where see the note, and on Matt. iii. 11.

Verses 9-11. *It came to pass in those days*—Of John's baptism at the river Jordan; *that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee*—Where he lived for many years in a retired manner, with his parents; *and was baptized of John in Jordan*—Near Bethabara. John i. 28. See on Matt. iii. 13-17.

Verses 12, 13. *Immediately the Spirit driveth him*—Gr. *εβαλλει, thrusteth him out, or, sends him away, as the same word signifies, verse 43.* Luke says, *ηγετο, he was moved, or led;* Matthew, *ανηχθη, he was led up, namely, from the plain of Jordan.* *He was forty days tempted of Satan*—Invisibly. After this followed the temptation by him in a visible shape, related by Matthew. These forty days, says Dr. Lightfoot, the holy angels ministered to Christ visibly, and Satan tempted him invisibly; at the end of them, Satan puts on the appearance of an angel of light, and pretends to wait on him as they did. See on Matthew iv. 2-11. *And was with the wild beasts*—Though they had no power to hurt him. Mark, we may observe, not only gives us a compendium of Matthew's gospel, but likewise several valuable particulars, which he and the other evangelists have omitted; especially such particulars as might enable the Romans, or Gentiles in general, better to understand him. Thus, as a Roman might not know how wild and uninhabited the deserts of Arabia were, in which Christ was tempted, he adds here, *that he was with the wild beasts.*

Verses 14, 15. *After John was put in prison*—By Herod; *Jesus came into Galilee, preaching, &c.*—Till that time, say the fathers, *ανεμεινε αυτον μαρτυρησας*

10 ^m And straightway coming up A. M. 4031. out of the water, he saw the heavens A. D. 27. ⁿ opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, ^o Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

12 ¶ ^p And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; ^q and the angels ministered unto him.

14 ¶ ^r Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, ^s preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

13; Luke iii. 21.—^m Matt. iii. 16; John i. 32.—ⁿ Or, *cloven, or, rent.*—^o Psa. ii. 7; Matt. iii. 17; Ch. ix. 7.—^p Matt. iv. 1; Luke iv. 1.—^q Matt. iv. 11.—^r Matt. iv. 12.—^s Matt. iv. 23.

περι αυτου, he waited for John's testimony concerning him. Accordingly, St. Peter represents Christ as beginning thus to preach from Galilee, *after the baptism which John preached* was ended, Acts x. 37. Now hence it is evident, that his coming into Galilee, mentioned Luke iv. 14, must refer to the same time, that so all the evangelists may agree. *The time is fulfilled*—The time of my kingdom, foretold by Daniel, and expected by you, is *fully come.* *The kingdom of God is at hand*—That kingdom which God is about to erect by the Messiah, (foretold by Daniel, chap. ii. 44; and vii. 14.) whereby he will rescue men from the dominion of Satan and of sin, of the world and of the flesh, and constitute them his loyal subjects and obedient servants; whereby he will reign in them, as well as over them, ruling their hearts by his grace as well as their lives by his laws; that kingdom, *which is not in word, but in power,* 1 Cor. iv. 20, which is *righteousness, internal and external, love to God and all mankind, and obedience flowing therefrom; peace with God and peace of conscience, consequent on deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, and joy in the Holy Ghost, arising from the Holy Spirit's influences assuring us of our adoption into the family of God, inspiring us with a lively hope of his glory, Gal. iv. 6; Rom. v. 2; and giving us an earnest of our future inheritance in our hearts, Eph. i. 14.* See note on Rom. xiv. 17. This kingdom of God, of which believers are possessed on earth, is at once a preparation for, and an earnest of, the kingdom of God in heaven. *Repent ye, and believe the gospel*—That you may be Christ's loyal subjects in time and in eternity, and be made partakers of this two-fold kingdom. Observe well, reader, the one, only way leading to the kingdom of God on earth and in heaven, is, *repentance toward God, productive of fruits worthy of repentance, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,* and in the great truths and precious promises of his holy gospel. See on Matt. iii. 2; John i. 12; and iii. 16.

A. M. 4034. 15 And saying, * The time is fulfilled, and † the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

16 ¶ Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway † they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 † And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

* Dan. ix. 25; Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10.—† Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17. † Matt. iv. 18; Luke v. 4.—‡ Matthew xix. 27; Luke v. 11.

Verses 17-20. *Come, and I will make you fishers of men*—I will enable you to draw them into my true church by the net of my gospel. *And straightway*—Upon his call; *leaving their nets, they followed him*—From this time they forsook their employ, and constantly attended him. Happy they who follow Christ at the first call! *When he had gone thence, he saw James*—See on Matt. iv. 21. *Mending their nets, which they had washed, Luke v. 2.* The Greek word, *καρπιζοντας*, here rendered *mending*, or *refitting*, signifies also *preparing*, or *making*.

Verses 21, 22. *And they went into Capernaum*—When our Lord had thus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John, they all left the side of the lake, and entered with him into the city of Capernaum. *And straightway on the sabbath day*—Doubtless the next sabbath, which was probably the very next day. The word for *sabbath day*, *τοῖς σαββάσι*, is in the plural number, and the expression is frequently the same where it is evidently to be understood of a particular day, as Matt. xii. 1; xxviii. 1; Acts xiii. 14. *And taught*—Declared the important truths which he was in so extraordinary a manner commissioned to reveal and vindicate. *And they were astonished at his doctrine*—Were again struck with amazement at it, as they had been when he first came to preach among them. See Luke iv. 23, and note on Matt. vii. 28. There seems to have been something in the discourses, as well as in the miracles of this last sabbath that he spent among them at this time, which raised their wonder, and affected them in a peculiar manner, as appears from the multitude of sick people which were brought to him that evening, verses 32, 33; Luke iv. 40; Matt. viii. 16.

Verses 23-28. *And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit*—Luke, which had a spirit of an unclean devil. *And he cried out*—Luke, with a loud voice. As soon as the devil saw Jesus, dreading his power, and expecting to be dispossessed,

20 And straightway he called them: A. M. 4034. and they left their father Zebedee in A. D. 30. the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 * And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught.

22 * And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 ¶ † And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

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

† Matt. iv. 21.—‡ Matt. iv. 13; Luke iv. 31.—‡ Matt. vii. 28.—‡ Luke iv. 33.—‡ Matt. viii. 29.

he cried out in great terror: *saying, in the name of all the rest, Let us alone, &c. Art thou come to destroy us*—By driving us out of our abodes on earth to the regions of darkness? *I know thee*—Under all the disadvantages of thy present appearance, I can sufficiently discern *who thou art, the Holy One of God*—Whom he hath sanctified and sent into the world for the destruction of my kingdom, and therefore I dread thee. It seems plain, from what is said afterward, verse 27, that the other persons then present did not know Jesus to be the Son of God; how then should the demoniac know this if he had been only mad, as some vainly suppose, and not really possessed by an evil spirit? This case was so remarkable, that, as the evangelist adds, *immediately our Lord's fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.* However, though madmen might not know Christ, the devils could not be ignorant of him, from the time of his baptism, when the voice from heaven said, *This is my beloved Son, &c.*, and therefore Satan soon after, in one of his temptations, says, *If thou be the Son of God, &c.*, Matt. iv. 6. *And Jesus rebuked him*—Not being willing to receive any testimony from Satan. *When the unclean spirit had torn him*—Or convulsed him, as *σπαράξεν* seems here to mean. Accordingly, *σπαράγμων*, as Grotius has observed, is sometimes used to signify a *convulsion*. It is certainly much more natural, as Doddridge observes, to understand the expression thus, than to suppose the devil to have torn him, according to the common meaning of the word *torn*, which leaves the reader to imagine that he grievously wounded him, when Luke expressly says, *he hurt him not. And cried with a loud voice*—Or, *noise*, rather, for he was forbidden to speak. Christ would neither suffer those evil spirits to speak in opposition, nor yet in favour of him. He needed not their testimony, nor would encourage it, lest any should infer that he acted in concert with them. Luke says, *When*

A. M. 4035. 25 And Jesus ^d rebuked him, saying, A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31. Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit ^e had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority ^f commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

29 ¶ ^g And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand,

and lifted her up; and immediately A. M. 4035.
the fever left her, and she ministered A. D. 31.
unto them.

32 ¶ ^h And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and ⁱ suffered not the devils ^j to speak, because they knew him.

35 ¶ And ^k in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.

^d Verse 34.—^e Chapter ix. 20.—^f Matt. viii. 14; Luke iv. 38.—^g Matt. viii. 16; Luke iv. 40.

^h Chap. iii. 12; Luke iv. 41; See Acts xvi. 17, 18.—ⁱ Or, ^j say that they knew him.—^k Luke iv. 42.

the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him—It is remarkable, that in all the cures of this sort which our Lord performed, the person to be cured was seized with the disorder in its violence at the time of the cure, and raised from the stupor of the fit to perfect health in an instant. The reason was, that thus the reality and greatness both of the disorder and the cure were fully proved, to the conviction of every beholder. *And they were all amazed*—At so miraculous a cure; *insomuch that they questioned among themselves*—Inquired of each other, and reasoned together, *saying, What new doctrine is this?*—Luke, *τις ὁ λόγος στος, what a word is this!* How powerful is this man's word, or command! *for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits*—An indubitable proof that his doctrine was attended with an extraordinary power: *and immediately his fame*—Raised by this signal miracle, *spread abroad throughout all the region*—And made way for his reception in the progress which he afterward took into every place of the neighbouring country.

Verses 29–34. *They entered into the house of Simon*—That is, of Peter. See the notes on Matt. viii. 14–17. *And all the city was gathered together at the door*—Namely, of the house in which Jesus was; some coming as humble petitioners for themselves or their friends, others as spectators of the surprising miracles which he wrought, and some probably to hear and be instructed by his discourses. O what a fair prospect was here! Who could then have imagined that all these blossoms would die away without fruit? *And he healed many*—Luke says, chap. iv. 40, *He laid his hands on every one of them and healed them.* The sight of so many of the human kind in distress, moved him; and he took pity on

them, and cured them all. *And he suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him*—Luke, *knew that he was the Christ*—That is, according to the hypothesis of those who consider the Scriptural demoniacs as being only diseased persons, *he suffered not the diseases to speak, because they knew him!* The fact seems to have been this, the demons, in addressing Jesus, honoured him with the title of the Messiah. This, his enemies said, they never would have done, had he not been in compact with them. Therefore, our Lord would not have their testimony, because it was a real and intended defamation of him; and because he foresaw that it would be made a bad use of by men of evil minds.

Verses 35–39. *And in the morning, a great while before day*—*Ἐννεχου λιαν, When the night was very far advanced, or, when it was yet deep night, he went out, &c.*—Thus diligently did the Son of God labour for us! After the preceding day had been spent in preaching, and the evening in working miracles, Jesus allowed himself but a very short repose. *And departed into a solitary place*—Withdrawing not only from the multitude, but even from his disciples; for the company of the best friends is not always seasonable nor acceptable. There are times and cases when a true Christian would not be willing that his dearest friends should be witnesses of what passes between God and his soul. By retiring thus early in the morning for prayer, our Lord teaches that the morning is a fit season, yea, the *best season*, for private duties. Then our spirits are most fresh, and our minds most free, before the cares and distractions of the day have broken in upon us. It is better to go from prayer to business, than from business to prayer. But not only early in the morning, but at other convenient times, we find

A. M. 4035. 38 And he said unto them, ^k Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for ^l therefore came I forth.

39 ^m And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 ¶ ⁿ And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immedi-

^k Luke iv. 43.—^l Isa. lxi. 1; John xvi. 28; xvii. 4.—^m Matt. iv. 23; Luke iv. 44.—ⁿ Matt. viii. 2; Luke v. 12.

our Lord retiring to pour out his soul in prayer to his heavenly Father, hereby showing all his followers the great importance of cultivating communion with God in private: and those who are employed in his public service should especially attend to this, lest, while they keep the vineyard of others, their own should be neglected and impoverished. *And Simon, &c., followed after him*—When the day was somewhat advanced, and crowds of people came to inquire after him, Peter, and *they that were with him*—That is, those who have been already mentioned as his partners and companions, guessing where he was, went out and followed after him; and *said, All men seek for thee*—They were glad that their Master was become so popular already, and wished him to appear in public yet more in that place, because it was their own city, and men are apt to be partial to the places with which they are particularly acquainted, and in which they feel themselves peculiarly interested. *And he said, Let us go into the next towns*—The villages in the neighbourhood; *that I may preach there also*—And work miracles there; *for therefore came I forth*—Not to be constantly resident in one place, but to go about doing good. It being Christ's design to propagate the gospel everywhere, he would not confine his ministry to any particular place, no, not to the great city of Capernaum; but resolves to preach the word in the smallest towns and villages. Herein he set ministers an instructive example, showing them that they must be as willing to preach the gospel in the

ately the leprosy departed from him, A. M. 4035. and he was cleansed. A. D. 31.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things ^o which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 ^p But he went out, and began to publish *it much*, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: ^q and they came to him from every quarter.

^o Lev. xiv. 3, 4, 10; Luke v. 14.—^p Luke v. 15.—^q Chapter ii. 13.

smallest villages as in the largest cities, when God calls them thereunto. Let the place be never so obscure and mean, and the congregation never so small and poor, the greatest must not think it beneath them to go and instruct them, though but a handful of people. *And he preached throughout all Galilee*—Not drawn from his purpose by the persuasions, however importunate, of his friends. *And cast out devils*—Working also divers miracles to illustrate and confirm his doctrine. See on Matt. iv. 23.

Verses 40–44. *And there came a leper, &c.*—Concerning the miracle recorded in these verses, see the notes on Matt. viii. 2–4.

Verse 45. *But he went out, and began to publish it much, &c.*—But the man, instead of concealing the cure, was so overjoyed at the suddenness and greatness of the blessing, and of the divine mercy manifested toward him in so miraculous a deliverance, that he could not forbear publishing it everywhere; *insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city*—Namely, of Capernaum: to prevent which inconvenience, as well as for the other reasons mentioned in the note on Matt. viii. 4, our Lord had enjoined him silence: *but was without, in desert places*—Was obliged to retire into a neighbouring wilderness, to refresh his body with rest, and his spirit with meditation and prayer. *And they came to him from every quarter*—Even into the wilderness, remote as it was from the habitations of many of them.

CHAPTER II.

In this chapter we have, (1.) Christ's healing a man that was sick of the palsy, 1–12. (2.) His calling Matthew from the receipt of custom, and his eating upon that occasion with publicans and sinners, and justifying himself in so doing, 13–17. (3.) His justifying his disciples in not fasting so much as those of the Pharisees did, 18–22. (4.) His justifying them in plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath day, 23–28. All which passages we had before, Matt. ix. and xii.

A man sick of

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

AND again ^a he entered into Capernaum, after *some* days; and ^{it was} noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 ¶ And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto

him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemously, saying, I forgive sins?

^a Matt. ix. 1;

Luke v. 18.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. *And again*—After having been in desert places for some time, he returned privately to Capernaum. *It was noised that he was in the house*—The rumour immediately spread, that he was come to the city, and was in Peter's house. *And straightway many were gathered together*—His arrival was no sooner known than such a multitude was gathered together that the house could not contain them; nor even the court before the door. Hitherto the general impression on their hearts continued. Hitherto, even at Capernaum, most of those who heard, received the word with joy. *And he preached the word unto them*—He preached to as many as could hear him; and among the rest, as we learn, Luke v. 17, to many Pharisees and teachers of the law, who on the report of his miracles were come from all quarters to see his works, and judge of his pretensions.

Verses 3-4. *And they come, bringing one sick of the palsy*—See on Matt. ix. 2, &c. *Which was borne of four*—One at each corner of the sofa or couch. *And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press*—The great crowd of people collected together, and feared a delay might lose so precious an opportunity, they uncovered the roof—Of the apartment where he was—Which was a room that had no chamber over it, the houses in the East being low, having generally a ground floor only, or one upper story. This house also, like other houses in that country, had doubtless a flat roof with a battlement round it, (Deut. xxii. 8,) and a kind of trap-door, by which persons within could come out upon it to walk and take the air, or perform their devotions. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 12; Acts x. 9.) This door, when shut, lying even with the roof, made a part of it, and was probably well fastened to secure the house against thieves. The bearers therefore of the paralytic, prevented from bringing him in at the door by the crowd, bear him up by some other stair to the roof of this room, and finding this trap-door fastened below, were obliged to break it open before they could get entrance; and probably also, in order to let down the sick man and his couch, to make the opening wider, which they might do, either by removing the frame of the trap-door, or some of the tiles adjoining to it, with the laths supporting them; all which Mark fitly expresses by the words, *ανε-*

γαδαν την σκεπην οπου ην, και, εξορυξαντες χαλωσι τον κραββατον, they took up the covering, and having broken, or pulled up, namely, as much of the frame or adjoining tiles as was necessary, they let down the couch, which they held by the corners, or by ropes fastened to the corners of it, and so placed him before Jesus while he was preaching to the people who were within, and to as many of those who stood without in the court as could hear.

Some think a more satisfactory interpretation of this passage may be given by referring to Dr. Shaw's account of the houses in the East. "They are built," he says, "round a paved court, into which the entrance from the street is through a gateway, or passage-room, furnished with benches, and sufficiently large to be used in receiving visits, or transacting business. The stairs, which lead to the roof, are never placed on the outside of the house in the street, but usually in the gateway or passage-room to the court, and sometimes at the entrance within the court. This court is called in Arabic, the middle of the house, and answers to the *midst*, in Luke. It is customary to fix cords from the parapet-walls (Deut. xxii. 8) of the flat roofs across this court, and upon them to expand a veil or covering, as a shelter from the heat. In this area, probably, our Saviour taught. The paralytic was brought upon the roof by making a way through the crowd to the stairs in the gateway, or by the terraces of the adjoining houses. They rolled back the veil, and let the sick man down over the parapet-wall of the roof into the area or court of the house before Jesus." This interpretation, however, seems hardly consistent with the original expressions used by Mark and Luke, particularly the latter, who says, chap. v. 19, *Δια των κεραμων καθηκαν αυτον συν τω κλινιδιω, They let him down through the tiling with his couch.*

Verses 5-12. *When Jesus saw their faith*—The faith of the bearers of the paralytic, as well as of the paralytic himself, manifested by their making these extraordinary efforts to bring him to Jesus, he had compassion on the afflicted person, and, previously to his cure, declared publicly that his sins were forgiven. *But there were certain of the scribes, &c.*—See whence the first offence cometh!—As yet not one of the plain, unlettered people, were offended. They all rejoiced in the light, till these *men of learning* came, to put darkness for light, and light

A. M. 4035. mies? ^b who can forgive sins but A. D. 31. God only?

8 And immediately ^o when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 ^d Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*; or to say, *Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk*?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, *Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house.*

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, *We never saw it on this fashion.*

^b Job xiv. 4; Isa. xliii. 25.—^c Matt. ix. 4.—^d Matt. ix. 5. ^e Matt. ix. 9.—^f Matt. ix. 9; Luke v. 27.—^g Or, at the place

for darkness. Wo to all such blind guides! Good had it been for these if they had never been born. O God, let me never offend one of thy simple ones! Sooner let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth! These scribes, hearing what Christ said, were exceedingly provoked. And though they did not openly find fault, they said in their own minds, or, perhaps, whispered to one another, *Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies?*—“The word *βλασφημία*, *blasphemy*, in profane writings, signifies slander, calumny, or any kind of opprobrious language. But in Scripture it denotes opprobrious speeches against God’s being, attributes, or operations, such as when we ascribe to God the infirmities of men, or to men the perfections and operations of God; it signifies also irreverent speeches, addressed immediately to God, such as when we curse God, as Job’s wife desired him to do.”—Macknight. The meaning of the word here is, *Why doth this fellow arrogantly assume to himself what belongs to God? a sense which it has Matt. xvi. 65, and in other passages.* These Pharisees and teachers of the law, being ignorant of our Lord’s divinity, thought he was guilty of blasphemy in pretending to forgive the man his sins, because it was an assuming of what God had declared to be his incommunicable prerogative, Isa. xliii. 25. Whereupon Jesus, knowing all that passed, immediately reasoned with them on the subject of their thoughts, by which he gave them to understand that it was impossible for any thought to come into their minds without his knowledge, and consequently proved himself to be endued with the omniscient Spirit of God. He next demonstrated, by what he said to them, that the power he claimed did really belong to him, demanding, *Whether is it easier to say*—Namely, with authority, so as to effect what is said; *Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, (to command,*

13 ¶ ^o And he went forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

14 ^f And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alpheus sitting ¹ at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, *Follow me.* And he arose and followed him.

15 ¶ ^e And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, *How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?*

17 When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, ^h They that are whole have no need of the

where the custom was received.—^e Matt. ix. 10.—^h Matt. ix. 12, 13; xviii. 11; Luke v. 31, 32; xix. 10; 1 Tim. i. 15.

as the word *επιστη* often signifies,) *Arise, and walk*—That is, whether is easier, to forgive sins, or to remove that which is inflicted as their punishment? The Pharisees could not but be sensible that these things were one and the same, and therefore they ought to have acknowledged that the power which did the one could really do the other also. If it be objected to this, that the prophets of old wrought miraculous cures of diseases, but never claimed the power of forgiving sins, neither could claim it; the answer is, that the cases are widely different; none of the prophets ever pretended to work miracles by his own power, as Jesus did. The Pharisees making no answer, Jesus, without troubling himself any further, (except to tell them, that what he was about to do would demonstrate his power on earth to forgive sins,) turned to the paralytic, and bade him rise up and carry away his bed. And the words were no sooner pronounced, than the cure was accomplished: the man was made active and strong in an instant. He arose, took up his bed with surprising vigour, and went off, astonished in himself, and raising astonishment in all who beheld him. The Pharisees indeed, it seems, were only confounded; but the rest of the people were not only struck with amazement, but affected with a high degree of reverence for God, and admiration of his power and goodness, glorifying him, and saying, *We never saw it on this fashion!*

Verses 13–17. *And all the multitude resorted unto him*—Namely, by the sea-side. *And he taught them*—As readily there as if he had been in a synagogue. *And as he passed by he saw Levi*, that is, Matthew, sitting, &c.—See on Matt. ix. 9–13. *Many publicans and sinners sat with Jesus*—Some of them, doubtless, invited by Matthew, moved with compassion for his old companions in sin. But the next words, *For they were many, and they followed*

A. M. 4035. physician, but they that are sick: I
A. D. 31. came not to call the righteous, but
sinners to repentance.

18 ¶¹ And the disciples of John and of the
Pharisees used to fast: and they come and
say unto him, Why do the disciples of John
and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples
fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the chil-
dren of the bride-chamber fast, while the
bridegroom is with them? As long as they
have the bridegroom with them, they cannot
fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bride-
groom shall be taken away from them, and
then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of ² new
cloth on an old garment: else the new piece
that filled it up taketh away from the old, and
the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old
bottles: else the new wine doth burst the
bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bot-

¹ Matt. ix. 14; Luke v. 33.—² Or, raw, or, unwrought.—³ Matt.
xii. 1; Luke vi. 1.

him, seem to imply that the greater part, encouraged
by his gracious words and the tenderness of his be-
haviour, and impatient to hear more, stayed for no
invitation, but pressed in after him, and kept as
close to him as they could. *And the scribes and
the Pharisees said*—So now the wise men, being
joined by the saints of the world, went a little fur-
ther in raising prejudices against our Lord. In his
answer he uses, as yet, no harshness, but only calm,
dispassionate reasoning. *I came not to call the
righteous*—Therefore if these were righteous, I
should not call them. But now they are the very
persons I came to save.

Verses 18-22. *The disciples of John and of the
Pharisees used to fast*—The evangelist here relates
another occurrence, which happened while Jesus

was in Levi's house, and bore some resemblance to
the former. But of this see the notes on Matt.
ix. 14-17, where the whole passage occurs.

23 ¶¹ And it came to pass, that he went
through the corn-fields on the sabbath day;
and his disciples began, as they went, ¹ to
pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold,
why do they on the sabbath day that which is
not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never
read ² what David did, when he had need,
and was a hungered, he and they that were
with him?

26 How he went into the house of God, in
the days of Abiathar the high-priest, and did
eat the show-bread, ³ which is not lawful to eat,
but for the priests, and gave also to them which
were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath
was made for man, and not man for the sab-
bath:

28 Therefore ⁴ the Son of man is Lord also
of the sabbath.

¹ Deut. xxiii. 25.—² 1 Sam. xxi. 6.—³ Ex. xxix. 32, 33;
Lev. xxiv. 9.—⁴ Matt. xxii. 8.

was in Levi's house, and bore some resemblance to
the former. But of this see the notes on Matt.
ix. 14-17, where the whole passage occurs.

Verse 23. *He went through the corn-fields*—This
passage we had Matt. xii. 1-8, where it was largely
explained. *In the days of Abiathar the high-priest*—
From the passage in the history referred to, (1 Sam.
xxi. 1-9,) it appears that Abimelech, the father of
Abiathar, was then high-priest; Abiathar himself not
till some time after. This phrase, therefore, only
means, *In the time of Abiathar*, who was afterward
high-priest. *The sabbath was made for man*—And
therefore must give way to man's necessity. *The
Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath*—Being the
supreme Lawgiver, he has power to dispense with
his own laws, and with this in particular

CHAPTER III.

This chapter coincides with Matt. x. and xii. (1.) *The Pharisees, hating him, consult together how they may destroy him
for his healing a man's withered hand on the sabbath*, 1-6. (2.) *Great multitudes resort to him from all parts, having
been informed of his astonishing miracles: the sick are healed, and devils are dispossessed and forbidden to confess him*,
7-12. (3.) *He ordains twelve disciples to be his constant attendants, and to preach the gospel*, 13-21. (4.) *He refutes
the blasphemous pretence that he wrought his miracles by collusion with the devil; and warns the blasphemers of their
danger*, 22-30. (5.) *He declares his disciples to be his nearest and dearest relations*, 31-35.

A. M. 4035. **AND** * he entered again into the
A. D. 31. synagogue; and there was a man
there which had a withered hand;

2 And they watched him whether he would
heal him on the sabbath day; that they might
accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the
withered hand, ¹ Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do

* Matt. xii. 9; Luke vi. 6.—¹ Or, Arise, stand

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1-5. *He entered again into the synagogue*—Luke says, *On another sabbath*. The synagogue seems not to have been at Capernaum, but in some city which lay in his way as he went through Galilee. *And there was a man which had a withered hand*—His hand was not only withered, but contracted, as appears from verse 5. See the notes on Matt. xii. 10-18. *And they*—The scribes and Pharisees, *watched him*—These men, being ever unfriendly to the Saviour, carefully attended to every thing he said and did, with an expectation of finding some matter of blame in him, by which they might blast his reputation with the people. Their pride, anger, and shame, after being so often put to silence, began now to ripen into malice. Luke observes, *He knew their thoughts, their malicious designs*. We may therefore see, in this instance, the greatness of our blessed Lord's courage, who resolutely performed the benevolent action he had undertaken, notwithstanding he knew it would expose him to the fiercest resentment of these wicked men. *And said to the man, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst*. He ordered him to stand forth and show himself to the congregation, that the sight of his distress might move them to pity him; and that they might be the more sensibly struck with the miracle, when they observed the wasted hand restored to perfect soundness in an instant. *Then Jesus said, Is it lawful to do good, &c.*—That he might expose the malice and superstition of these scribes and Pharisees, he appealed to the dictates of their own minds, whether it was not more lawful to *do good on the sabbath days, than to do evil; to save life, than to kill*. He meant, more lawful for him to save men's lives, than for them to plot his death without the least provocation. But it is justly observed here by Dr. Campbell, that in the style of Scripture, the mere negation of any thing is often expressed by the affirmation of the contrary. Thus, Luke xiv. 26, *not to love, or even to love less, is called, to hate*; Matt. xi. 25, *not to reveal, is to hide*; and here, *not to do good, when we can, is to do evil; not to save, is to kill*. From this, and many other passages of the New Testament, it may be justly deduced, as a standing principle of Christian ethics, that not to do the good which we have the opportunity and power to do, is, in a certain degree, the same as to do the contrary evil; and not to prevent mischief, when

good on the sabbath days, or to do
evil? to save life, or to kill? But they
held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on
them with anger, being grieved for the ² hard-
ness of their hearts, he saith unto the man,
Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it
out: and his hand was restored whole as the
other.

forth in the midst.—² Or, blindness.

we can, the same as to commit it. Thus, also, Dr. Whitby: "Hence it seems to follow, that he who doth not do good to his neighbour when he can, doth evil to him; it being a want of charity, and therefore evil, to neglect any opportunity of doing good, or showing kindness to any man in misery; and that not to preserve his life when it is in danger, is to transgress that precept which saith, *Thou shalt not kill*." Our Lord's words contained a severe, but just rebuke, which in the present circumstances must have been sensibly felt. Yet these men, pretending not to understand his meaning, *held their peace*—Being confounded, though not convinced, therefore he answered them with an argument which the dulness of stupidity could not possibly overlook, nor the peevishness of cavilling gainsay: *What man that shall have one sheep, &c.*—See on Matt. xii. 11. Having uttered these convincing arguments and cutting reproofs, *he looked round about on them, (Luke, on them all,) with anger, grieved at their hardness of their hearts*—Showing at once his indignation at their wickedness, and his grief for their impenitence. See on Matthew as above. He knew his arguments did not prevail with them, because they were resisting the convictions of their own minds; and was both angry at their obstinacy, and grieved on account of the consequences of it; showing these just affections of his righteous spirit by his looks, that if possible an impression might be made either on them or on the spectators. He might in this, likewise, propose to teach us the just regulation of the passions and affections of our nature, which are not sinful in themselves, otherwise he who was without sin could not have been subject to them. The evil of them lies in their being excited by wrong objects, or by right objects in an improper degree. Thus Dr. Whitby: "Hence we learn that anger is not always sinful; this passion being found in him in whom was no sin. But then it must be noted, that anger is not properly defined by philosophers, *ορεσις αντι-λυπησεως, a desire of revenge, or, of causing grief*, to him who hath provoked or hath grieved us; for this desire of revenge is always evil; and though our Saviour was angry with the Pharisees for the hardness of their hearts, yet had he no desire to revenge this sin upon them, but had a great compassion for them, and desire to remove this evil." Mr. Scott, who quotes a part of the above note

A. M. 4035. 6 ^b And the Pharisees went forth, A. D. 31. and straightway took counsel with ^c the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, ^d and from Judea,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the

^b Matt. xii. 14.—^c Matt. xxii. 16.—^d Luke vi. 17.—^e Or, rushed.—^f Chap. i. 23, 24; Luke iv. 41.

properly adds, "Our Lord's anger was not only not sinful, but it was a holy indignation, a perfectly right state of heart, and the want of it would have been a sinful defect. It would show a want of filial respect and affection for a son to hear, without emotion, his father's character unjustly aspersed. Would it not, then, be a want of due reverence for God, to hear his name blasphemed, without feeling and expressing an indignant disapprobation? Vengeance belongs to the ruler exclusively; and he may grieve at the necessity imposed on him of thus expressing his disapprobation of crimes; but it is his duty. Eli ought to have shown anger as well as grief when informed of the vile conduct of his sons; and to have expressed it by severe coercive measures. Thus parents and masters, as well as magistrates, may sin, in not feeling and expressing just displeasure against those under their care: and anger is only sinful when it springs from selfishness and malevolence; when causeless, or above the cause; and when expressed by unhallowed words and actions."

Verses 6–12. *And the Pharisees went forth, &c.*—From Matthew's observing that *they held a council against him*, it seems probable that those of them, with the scribes, who were present at this miracle, were members of the sanhedrim, or great council; *with the Herodians*—As bitter as they and the Pharisees usually were against each other. *How they might destroy him*—For to such a pitch was their anger raised, that nothing but his life would satisfy them. *But Jesus withdrew himself*—Knowing their designs, he retired into Galilee, where he preached the word, and wrought so many miracles, that his fame was spread abroad more than ever, and great multitudes were gathered round him from all parts; not only from Judea, but from Idumea, the natives of which had now professed the Jewish religion above one hundred and fifty years; and from beyond Jordan—The regions that lay east of that river; and they about Tyre and Sidon—The Israelites who lived in those coasts. *And he spake, that a small ship should wait on him*—Should be in

multitude, lest they should throng A. M. 4035. him. A. D. 31.

10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they ³ pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 ^e And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, ^f Thou art the Son of God.

12 And ^g he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

13 ¶ ^h And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should

³ Matt. xiv. 33; Chap. i. 1.—^e Chap. i. 25, 34; Matt. xii. 16 ^h Matt. x. 1; Luke vi. 12; ix. 1.

readiness near him; *because of the multitude* which was now flocking around him; *lest they should throng him*—Namely, in a manner that would be very inconvenient to him, and would prevent great numbers from either seeing his miracles or hearing his discourses. *For he had healed many*—Matthew, *he healed them all*, namely, that applied to him. *Insomuch that they pressed upon him*—Gr. *ωστε επιπιπτειν αυτην*, so that they rushed, or fell upon him. The expression signifies, that they were ready to drive each other upon him, so that those nearer him could hardly stand, being pressed forward by those behind. *For to touch him, as many as had plagues*—Gr. *μαστιγας*, scourges, as the word properly signifies. Those very painful and afflictive disorders seem to be intended, which were frequently sent, or at least permitted of God, as a scourge or punishment of sin. *And unclean spirits*—That is, those who were possessed by them—*when they saw him*—Even though they had been entire strangers to him; *fell down before him*—In a posture of submission and homage; and *cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God*—That is, the true Messiah that was to come into the world. *And he charged them that they should not make him known*—It was not the time yet; nor were they fit preachers. For a further explanation of this passage, see notes on Matt. xii. 14–21.

Verse 13. *He goeth up into a mountain*—Thus Luke also represents him as retiring to a mountain for solemn prayer, and indeed continuing all night in that duty, before he made choice of twelve out of his disciples, and appointed them to be apostles: thereby showing, that much consideration and prayer ought to precede and accompany the choice and ordination of persons for ministers, and that nothing in so important a business should be done rashly. *And calleth unto him whom he would*—With regard to the eternal states of men, God always acts as a merciful Saviour and just Lawgiver, Governor, and Judge. But with regard to numberless other things, he seems to us to act as a mere Sovereign.

Verses 14–16. *He ordained*, Gr. *επισημασε*, he made,

A. M. 4035. be with him, and that he might
A. D. 31. send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses,
and to cast out devils:

16 And Simon ⁱ he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John
the brother of James, (and he surnamed them
Boanerges, which is, The sons of Thunder,)

ⁱ John i. 42.

constituted, or appointed, twelve—The word is elsewhere used for appointing to an office. See I Sam. xii. 6—Greek; Heb. iii. 2. Henry thinks our Lord appointed them by imposition of hands, but of this there is no proof. Indeed, this appointment seems to have been made some time before they were sent out to preach, or entered properly on their office. They were now called and appointed merely to be *with him*, that is, not only to attend on his public ministry, but to enjoy the benefit of his private conversation and daily instructions, that they might thereby be better fitted for the great work in which they were to be employed. If, as is generally supposed, our Lord, in appointing *twelve*, had a reference to the twelve patriarchs, and twelve tribes of Israel, and therefore, on the death of Judas, another was chosen to make up the number, this was only a piece of respect paid to that people, previous to the grand offer of the gospel to them. For, when they had generally rejected it, two more, Paul and Barnabas, were added, without any regard to the particular number of *twelve*. *That he might send them forth to preach*—His gospel, and thereby make way for his own visits to some places where he had not been; and *to have power to heal sicknesses, &c.*—And thereby to show that they were sent of God, and that he approved and confirmed their doctrine. After their election, these twelve accompanied Jesus constantly, lived with him on one common stock as his family, and never departed from him unless by his express appointment.

Verse 17. *James and John he surnamed Boanerges*—“This word,” says Dr. Hammond, “is the corruption of the Hebrew בְּנֵי רָגַח, *benei ragnash*, sons of earthquake, tempest, or any other commotion, such as is here styled, θρονη, *thunder*. And the meaning of this title may seem to be, that those two sons of Zebedee were to be special, eminent ministers of the gospel, which is called, Heb. xii. 26, φωνη την γην σαλευουσα, *a voice shaking the earth*, taken from Haggai ii. 7, which is directly the periphrasis of θυν, which is here rendered *thunder*, in the notion wherein φωνη, voice, and θρονη, thunder, are promiscuously used for the same thing.” If the learned reader will consult Dr. Lightfoot and Grotius, he will receive further information concerning the derivation of the word *Boanerges*. Whitby thinks, “Christ gave James and John this name from a foresight of the heat and zeal of their temper, of which they quickly gave an instance in their desire to call down fire from heaven to con-

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and A. M. 4035.
Bartholomew, and Matthew, and A. D. 31.

Thomas, and James the *son* of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him; and they went ⁴ into a house.

20 ¶ And the multitude cometh together again, ^k so that they could not so much as eat bread.

⁴ Or, *home*.—^k Chap. vi. 31.

sume the Samaritans. Hence we find, in the Acts, Peter and John are the chief speakers and actors in the defence and propagation of the gospel; and the zeal of James and Peter seems to be the reason why the one was slain by Herod, and the other imprisoned in order to the like execution.” Doubtless our Lord, in giving them this name, had respect to three things: the warmth and impetuosity of their spirits, their fervent manner of preaching, and the power of their word.

Verses 19–21. *And they went into a house*—It appears, from the manner in which Mark here connects this with the names of the apostles, that it happened very quickly after their being chosen. The other evangelists, indeed, inform us of some previous events which happened in the meantime, but they might be despatched in a few hours. *And the multitude cometh together*—Assembled again about the doors and windows of the house, and pressed so eagerly upon him; *that they*—Christ and his disciples, or the members of the family—*could not so much as eat bread*—Or take any sustenance, though it was the proper hour for it. *And when his friends heard of it*—Greek, οι παρ αυτου; “a common phrase,” says Dr. Campbell, “for denoting *sui*, (so the Vulgate,) *his friends, propinqui, cognati, his kinsmen or relations*. I prefer,” says he, “the word *kinsmen*, as the circumstances of the story evince that it is not his disciples who are meant.” This interpretation of the expression the doctor defends very ably by a critical examination of the original text, and an elaborate exposition of the verse; but which is too long to be inserted here. *They went*—Or, *went forth*, namely, from their own homes; to *lay hold on him*—Namely, says Grotius, “that they might take him away from that house, in which he was pressed, to another place:” *for they said*, Οτι εσενη, *that he faints*, or, *may faint*; so Grotius, Dr. Whitby, and some others, understand the word, thinking it “absurd to say, that Christ did, either in his gestures or in his actions, show any symptoms of transportation or excess of mind; nor could his kindred, they think, have any reason to conceive thus of him, who had never given the least symptoms of any such excess, though those of them who believed not in him, might have such unworthy thoughts of him.” Dr. Hammond, however, justly observes that the word here used “doth, in all places of the New Testament but this and 2 Cor. v. 13, signify being *amazed*, or *astonished*, or in some sudden perturbation of mind, depriving a person of

A. M. 4035. 21 And when his ⁶ friends heard
A. D. 31. of it, they went out to lay hold on
him: ¹for they said, He is beside himself.

22 ¶ And the scribes which came down from
Jerusalem said, ²He hath Beelzebub, and by
the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 ³And he called them unto him, and said
unto them in parables, How can Satan cast
out Satan?

24 And if a kingdom be divided against it-
self, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if a house be divided against itself,
that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and

⁶ Or, *kinemen*.—John vii. 5; x. 20.—¹ Matt. ix. 34; x. 25;
Luke xi. 15; John vii. 20; viii. 48, 52; x. 22.

the exercise of his faculties. And in the place just referred to, it is opposed to *σωφροσιν*, sobriety, or temper. And thus in the Old Testament it is variously used for excess, vehemency, or commotion of mind. Psa. xxxi. 22, we read, *I said in my haste, &c.*, where the Greek is, *εν τη εκρασει μου, in the excess, or vehemence of my mind.* Accordingly, here he supposes the word may be most fitly taken for a *commotion, excess, vehemence, or transportation of mind, acting or speaking in zeal, (above what is ordinarily called temper and sobriety;)* or in such a manner as they were wont to act or speak who were moved by some extraordinary influence, as the prophets, and other inspired persons, according to that of Chrysostom, *Τοτο μαντρως ιδιον το εφεσηκεναι, It belongs to prophets to be thus transported, which sense of the word is suited to the place, for in this chapter Christ begins to show himself in the full lustre of his office; he cures on the sabbath day, which the Pharisees conceived to be unlawful; looks about him with anger, or some incitation of mind; is followed by great multitudes; heals the diseased, and is flocked to for that purpose; is called openly the Son of God by the demoniacs; makes twelve disciples, and commissions them to preach and to do cures. Upon this the Pharisees and Herodians take counsel against him, and those of their faction say, He acts by Beelzebub, and is possessed by him, that is, that he was actuated by some principal evil spirit, and did all his miracles thereby; and so was not to be followed, but abhorred by men. And they who uttered not these high blasphemies against him, yet thought and said, οτι εφεση, that he was in an excess, or transportation of mind, and this, it seems, was the conceit of his own kindred. They had a special prejudice against him, chap. vi. 4; and did not believe on him, John vii. 5; and accordingly, hearing a report of his doing these extraordinary things, they came out, κρατησαι, to lay hold on, or get him into their hands, and take him home with them, for they said he was guilty of some excesses." The above interpretation supposes the sense of the expression to be nearly the same with*

be divided, he cannot stand, but hath
an end.

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

27 ^oNo man can enter into a strong man's
house, and spoil his goods, except he will
first bind the strong man, and then he will
spoil his house.

28 ^pVerily I say unto you, All sins shall be
forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphe-
mies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the
Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in
danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean
spirit.

^o Matt. xii. 25.—^p Isa. xlix. 21; Matt. xii. 29.—^r Matt. xii. 31;
Luke xii. 10; 1 John v. 16.

that which is given by our translators, *He is beside himself*, which has the sanction of the Vulgate, *in furorem versus est*, and which, as has been noticed, is fully justified by Dr. Campbell, who concludes his defence of it in the following words: "I cannot help observing, on the whole, that in the way the verse is here rendered, no signification is assigned to the words which it is not universally allowed they frequently bear; no force is put upon the construction, but every thing interpreted in the manner which would most readily occur to a reader of common understanding, who, without any preconceived opinion, entered on the study. On the contrary, there is none of the other interpretations which does not, as has been shown, offer some violence to the words or to the syntax; in consequence of which, the sense extracted is far from being that which would most readily present itself to an unprejudiced reader. It hardly admits a doubt, that the only thing which has hindered the universal concurrence of translators in the common version, is the unfavourable light it puts our Lord's relations in. But that their disposition was, at least, not always favourable to his claims, we have the best authority for asserting."

Verse 22. *The scribes (and Pharisees, Matt. xii. 22) who had come down from Jerusalem, &c.*—Purposely, on the devil's errand; and not without success. For the common people now began to drink in the poison from these learned, good, honourable men! *He hath Beelzebub*—At command; is in league with him: *And by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils*—How easily may a man of learning elude the strongest proof of a work of God! How readily can he account for every incident, without ever taking God into the question! See note on Matt. ix. 34, and xii. 22–32, where this passage occurs, and is explained at large.

Verse 30. *Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit*—That is, because they said, *he hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth out devils*, verse 22. Is it not astonishing that men who have ever read these words should doubt

A. M. 4035. 31 ¶ ^a There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him; and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who

is my mother, or my brethren? A. M. 4035.

34 And he looked round about

on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

^a Matt. xii. 46;

Luke viii. 19.

what is the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? Can any words declare more plainly that it is "the ascribing those miracles to the power of the devil, which Christ wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost?"

Verses 31-35. *There came then his brethren and his mother*—Having at length made their way through the crowd, so as to come to the door. *His brethren* are here named first, as being first and most earnest in the design of taking him; *for neither did these of his brethren believe on him. They sent*

to him, calling him—They sent one into the house, who called him aloud by name. *Looking round on them who sat about him*—With the utmost sweetness: *he said, Behold my mother and my brethren*—In this preference of his true disciples even to the Virgin Mary, considered merely as his mother after the flesh, he not only shows his high and tender affection for them, but seems designedly to guard against those excessive and idolatrous honours which he foresaw would, in after ages, be paid to her. See the notes on Matt. xii. 46-50.

CHAPTER IV.

ere we have, (1.) *The parable of the seed and of the four sorts of ground, 1-9; with the exposition, 10-20; and the application of it, 21-25.* (2.) *The parable of the seed growing gradually but insensibly, 26-29.* (3.) *The parable of the grain of mustard-seed, and a general account of Christ's parables, 30-34.* (4.) *The miracle of Christ's suddenly stilling a storm at sea, 35-44.* This chapter coincides with Matt. xiii.

A. M. 4035. AND ^a he began again to teach by the sea-side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea, on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables, ^b and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow.

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it

sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, ^c and did yield fruit that sprang up, and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

^a Matt. xiii. 1; Luke viii. 4.

^b Chap. xii. 38.—^c John xv. 5; Col. i. 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1-9. *And he began to teach by the sea-side*—See notes on Matt. xiii. 1-17. *He taught them many things by parables*—After the usual manner of the eastern nations, to make his instructions more agreeable to them, and to impress them the more upon attentive hearers. A parable signifies not only a simile, or comparison, and sometimes a proverb,

but any kind of instructive speech, wherein spiritual things are explained and illustrated by natural. Prov. i. 6, *To understand a proverb and the interpretation.* The proverb is the literal sense, the interpretation is the spiritual; resting in the literal sense killeth, but the spiritual giveth life. *Hearken*—This word he probably spoke with a loud voice, to stop the noise and hurry of the people.

A. M. 4035. 10 ¶^d And when he was alone, they that were about him, with the twelve, asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto ^o them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

12 ^f That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 ¶^e The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way-side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

^d Matt. xiii. 10; Luke viii. 9, &c.—^e 1 Cor. v. 12; Col. iv. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 7.—^f Isa. vi. 9; Matt. xiii. 14; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26; Rom. xi. 8. ^e Matt. xiii. 19.—^h 1 Tim. vi. 9, 17.—ⁱ Matt. v. 15; Luke viii. 16; xi. 33.

Verses 10-12. *When he was alone*—That is, retired apart from the multitude. *Unto them that are without*—So the Jews termed the heathen: so our Lord terms all obstinate unbelievers; for they shall not enter into the kingdom; they shall abide in outer darkness. *So that seeing they may see, and not perceive*—They would not see before; now they could not, God having given them up to the blindness which they had chosen.

Verses 13-20. *Know ye not this parable*—Which is, as it were, the foundation of all those that I shall speak hereafter; and is so easy to be understood? See notes on Matt. xiii. 19-23. *The desires of other things choke the word*—A deep and important truth! The desire of any thing, otherwise than as it leads to happiness in God, directly tends to barrenness of soul. *Entering in*—Where they were not before. Let him therefore who has received and retained the word, see that no other desire then enter in, such as perhaps till then he never knew. *It becometh unfruitful*—After the fruit had grown almost to perfection.

Verses 21-25. *And he said, Is a candle, &c.*—As

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred.

21 ¶ⁱ And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22 ^k For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23 ^l If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he saith unto them, Take heed what ye hear: ^m with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear, shall more be given.

25 ⁿ For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

26 ¶ And he said, ^o So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

ⁱ The word in the original signifieth a less measure, as Matt. v. 15.—^k Matt. x. 26; Luke xii. 2.—^l Matt. xi. 15; verse 9.—^m Matt. vii. 2; Luke vi. 38.—ⁿ Matt. xiii. 12; xxv. 29; Luke viii. 18; xix. 26.—^o Matt. xiii. 24.

if he had said, I explain these things to you, I give you this light, not to conceal, but to impart it to others. And if I conceal any thing from you now, it is only that it may be more effectually manifested hereafter. *Take heed what ye hear*—That is, attend to what you hear, that it may have its due influence upon you. *With what measure ye mete*—That is, according to the improvement you make of what you have heard, still further assistances shall be given. *And to you that hear*—That is, with improvement, shall more be given. *For he that hath*—That improves whatever he has received, to the good of others, as well as of his own soul.

Verse 26. *So is the kingdom of God*—The gospel dispensation, whereby God overthrows the kingdom of Satan, collects subjects to himself, and erects and establishes his own kingdom. The grace of God in the soul is also included, erecting that kingdom which is within men, and is *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xi. 17. *As if a man should cast seed into the ground*—The seed of God's word a preacher of the gospel casts into the field of the world, and into the hearts of the penitent and be-

A. M. 4035. 27 And should sleep, and rise night
A. D. 31. and day, and the seed should spring
and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is ²brought forth, immediately ³he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 ¶ And he said, ⁴Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 *It is* like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 ⁵And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

* Or, ripe.—² Rev. xiv. 15.—³ Matt. xiii. 31; Luke xiii. 18; Acts ii. 41; iv. 4; v. 14; xix. 20.

lieving. And sleeps and rises night and day—That is, he has it continually in his thoughts. Meantime, it springs and grows up, he knows not how—Even he that sowed it cannot explain how it grows. Here we are taught, “that as the husbandman does not, by any efficacy of his own, cause the seed to grow, but leaves it to be nourished by the soil and the sun; so Jesus and his apostles, having taught men the doctrines of true religion, were not by any miraculous force to constrain their wills; far less were they, by the terrors of fire and sword, to interpose visibly for the furthering thereof, but would suffer it to spread by the secret influences of the Spirit, till at length it should obtain its full effect. Moreover, as the husbandman cannot, by the most diligent observation, perceive the corn in his field extending its dimensions as it grows, so the ministers of Christ cannot see the operation of the gospel, [and of divine grace,] upon the minds of men; the effects, however, of its operation, when these are produced, they can discern, just as the husbandman can discern when his corn is fully grown and fit for reaping. In the mean time, the design of the parable is not to lead the ministers of Christ to imagine that religion will flourish without due pains taken about it. It was formed to teach the Jews in particular, that neither the Messiah nor his servants would subdue men by the force of arms, as they supposed he would have done; and also, to prevent the apostles from being dispirited when they did not see immediate success following their labours.”—Macknight. *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself*—Greek, *αυτομαρ, spontaneously*. For, as the earth,

34 But without a parable spake he A. M. 4035.
not unto them: and when they were A. D. 31.
alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

35 ¶ ⁶And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

* Matthew xiii. 34; John xvi. 12.—⁶ Matthew viii. 18, 23; Luke viii. 22.

by a certain curious kind of mechanism which the greatest philosophers cannot fully comprehend, does, as it were, spontaneously, without any assistance from men, carry the seed through the whole progress of vegetation, and produce first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; so will the gospel gradually spread in the world; and so the penitent, believing soul, in an inexplicable manner, brings forth first weak graces, then stronger, then full holiness: and all this of *itself*, as a machine whose spring of motion is within itself. Yet, observe the amazing exactness of the comparison: the earth brings forth no corn, (as the soul no holiness,) without both the care and toil of man, and the benign influence of Heaven. *When the fruit is brought forth*—That is, when the corn is full and ripe; *he putteth in the sickle*—God cutteth down and gathereth the fruit into his garner.

Verses 30–34. *Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xiii. 31, 32. *He spake the word unto them as they were able to hear it*—Adapting it to the capacity of his hearers, and speaking as plainly as he could without offending them. A rule never to be forgotten by those who instruct others. *But without a parable, &c.*—See note on Matt. xiii. 34, 35.

Verses 35–41. *The same day, when the even was come*—See note on Matt. viii. 18. *They took him even as he was in the ship*—They carried him immediately, in the same vessel from which he had been preaching to the people. *And there arose a great storm*—See note on Matt. viii. 23–27. *He was asleep in the hinder part of the ship*—So we trans-

A. M. 4035. 41 And they feared exceedingly,
A. D. 31. and said one to another, What man-

ner of man is this, that even the wind
A. M. 4035. and the sea obey him? A. D. 31.

late the words *ενι τη πρυμνη*, for want of a proper English expression for that particular part of the vessel near the rudder, on which he lay. *Peace—*

Cease thy tossing; *be still*—Cease thy roaring. The Greek word, *πεφμωσο*, is, literally, *Be thou gagged.*

CHAPTER V.

In this chapter we have, (1,) *Christ's casting a legion of devils out of a man possessed by them, and suffering them to enter into the swine, 1-20.* (2,) *His healing the woman with the bloody issue, in the way, as he was going to raise Jairus's daughter to life, 21-43.* Of these three miracles we had an account before, *Matt. viii. 28, &c., and ix. 18; but they are more fully related here.*

A. M. 4035. **A**ND they came over unto the
A. D. 31. other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8 (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.)

*Matt. viii. 28;

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verses 1-17. *They came into the country of the Gadarenes*—Called Gergesenes, *Matt. viii. 28.* Gadara and Gergasa being towns near each other, and their inhabitants, and those of the country adjacent, taking their name indifferently from either. *There met him a man with an unclean spirit*—Matthew mentions two. Probably this, so particularly spoken of here, was the most remarkably fierce and ungovernable. This whole story is explained at large, *Matt. viii. 28-34.* *My name is Legion, for we are many*—But all these seem to have been under one commander, who accordingly speaks, all along, both

a

9 And he asked him, What is thy
A. M. 4035. name? And he answered, saying, A. D. 31. My name is Legion: for we are many.

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

16 And they that saw *it* told them how it

Luke viii. 26.

for them and for himself. *They that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city*—The miracle, issuing in the destruction of the swine, was immediately reported in the town and country by the affrighted keepers, who as they fled had fallen in, it seems, with Jesus and his company, and learned from them the cause of what had happened. *And they went out to see what was done*—Thus the whole people had ocular demonstration of the power of Jesus, and were rendered inexcusable in not believing on him; and they see *him that was possessed of the devil sitting*—At the feet of Jesus, to receive his instructions; and clothed—With the raiment that had

A. M. 4035. befell to him that was possessed with
A. D. 31. the devil, and also concerning the
swine.

17 And ^b they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, ^c he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him. And all men did marvel.

21 ¶ ^d And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

22 ^e And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

24 And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 ¶ And a certain woman, ^f which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had,

^b Matt. viii. 34; Acts vi. 39.—^c Luke viii. 38.—^d Matt. ix. 1; Luke viii. 40.—^e Matt. ix. 18; Luke viii. 41.—^f Lev. xv.

been given him; and in his right mind—Perfectly composed and restored to the use of his reason; and they were afraid—Instead of rejoicing that a human being was delivered from so great an evil as had long afflicted him, they were thrown into the utmost consternation, and, being conscious of their wickedness, dreaded the further effects of Christ's power, which, probably, if they had not done, they would have offered some rudeness, if not violence, to him.

Verses 18–20. He that had been possessed, prayed that he might be with him—To enjoy the further benefit of his instructions. Perhaps he feared lest, if Jesus left him, he should relapse into his former condition, the terrors of which he dreaded. Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not—Judging it proper to leave him in that country as a witness of the power and goodness of his deliverer, and of the folly and wickedness of these Gadarenes, who rejected such a Saviour. Go home to thy friends—To thy relations and neighbours; and tell them how great things

and was nothing bettered, but rather ^g grew worse, A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment:

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that ^h virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, ⁱ thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 ¶ ^j While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

25; Matt. ix. 20.—^g Luke vi. 19; viii. 46.—^h Matt. ix. 22; Chap. x. 52; Acts xiv. 9.—ⁱ Luke viii. 49.

the Lord hath done for thee—This was peculiarly needful there, where Christ did not go in person. He began to publish in Decapolis, &c.—Not only at home, but in all that country where Jesus himself did not come.

Verses 22–28. There cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue—Probably that at Capernaum. The rulers of the synagogue were three persons chosen out of ten, who were obliged constantly to attend the public worship over which they presided, and determined such disputes as happened in the synagogue. For an explanation of this whole paragraph, see notes on Matt. ix. 18–26.

Verses 29, 30. She felt in her body that she was healed of that plague—Or distemper, with which she had been chastised; for this is the plain meaning of the word *μαστιγος* here used, which properly means a stroke, scourge, or correction. And Jesus turned about in the press, and said, Who touched, &c.—The woman, having obtained her wish, would have retired unobserved: but Jesus, who had secretly per-

A. M. 4035. 37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but ^ksleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn. ^lBut, when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them

^k John xi. 11.—^l Acts ix. 40.—^m Matt. viii. 4; ix. 30;

formed the cure, by the concurring efficacy of his will, which sent forth the healing virtue, thought fit, on this occasion, to show that it had not escaped his notice, and to take the opportunity of illustrating and commending the faith of the woman for the encouragement of others to confide in his power and love.

Verse 37. *John, the brother of James*—John is thus described here, because, when Mark wrote his gospel, not long after our Lord's ascension, the memory of James, lately beheaded, was so fresh, that his name was more known than that of John himself.

Verses 38–42. *He seeth the tumult*—The crowd of people that wept and wailed greatly—Greek *αλαλαζοντας πολλα*, *howling much*, as some render the word. “From several passages of Scripture, (see Jer. ix. 17, and xvi. 6, 7; Ezk. xxiv. 17,) it appears that the people of the East used to bewail the dead by tearing their hair, and cutting their flesh, and crying most bitterly. Nor did the relations of the deceased content themselves with these expressions of violent grief. They hired persons of both sexes, whose employment it was to mourn over the dead in the like frantic manner, and who besides sung doleful ditties, in which honourable mention was made of the age, the beauty, the strength, the

that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

A. M. 4035.

A. D. 31.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi: which is, being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise.

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of *the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And ^mhe charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

xii. 16; xvii. 9; Chap. iii. 12; Luke v. 14.

courage, the virtues, and the actions of the deceased, with an intention to increase the sorrow of the afflicted relations. In process of time they accompanied these lamentations with music, particularly of flutes, (Josephus, *Bell.*, iii. 8,) a custom which prevailed likewise in the West. Ovid, *Fast.*, lib. 6, *Cantabant mæstis tibia funeribus*. But the Jews were forbidden to tear their hair and cut their flesh in mourning for the dead, (Lev. xix. 28; Deut. xiv. 1,) because such expressions of grief were inconsistent with resignation to the divine will, and looked as if they had no hope of their friends' resurrection. Hence the apostle's precept, 1 Thess. iv. 13, *Sorrow not as others which have no hope*. Besides, these rites were practised by the heathen, as a kind of sacrifices to the manes of the dead.”—Macknight.

Verse 43. *He charged them that no man should know it*—That he might avoid every appearance of vain-glory, might prevent too great a concourse of people, and might not further enrage the scribes and Pharisees against him; the time for his death, and for the full manifestation of his glory, not being yet come. *He commanded that something should be given her to eat*—So that when either natural or spiritual life is restored, even by immediate miracle, all proper means are to be used in order to preserve it.

CHAPTER VI.

Christ's wisdom and mighty works astonish his countrymen, and yet he is contemned by them, because he was one of them, and they knew his origin and kindred, 1–4. Their unbelief prevents his working many miracles among them, but he teaches in their villages, 5, 6. He sends forth his disciples by two and two to preach, giving them power to confirm their doctrine by miracles, 7–13. The opinion of Herod, and others, concerning Christ, 14–16. The story of the martyrdom of John the Baptist, 17–29. Christ retires into a desert place with his disciples, and is followed by crowds of people, 30–34. He feeds five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, 35–44. He sends away his disciples by sea to Bethsaida, and retires himself to a mountain to pray, 45, 46. The disciples are overtaken by a storm and in great distress, and Christ comes unto them, walking on the water, 47–52. He performs many cures in the land of Gennesaret, 53–56. The chapter coincides partly with Matt. xiii. 53, &c., and xiv.

A. M. 4035. **AND** ^a he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, ^b From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, ^c the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with

^a Matt. xiii. 54; Luke iv. 16.—^b John vi. 42.—^c Matt. xii. 46; Gal. i. 19.—^d Matt. xi. 6.—^e Matt. xiii. 57; John iv. 44. ^f Gen. xix. 22; xxxii. 25; Matt. xiii. 58; Chap. ix. 23.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI

Verses 1-6. *And he came into his own country, &c.*—For an explanation of this paragraph, see the notes on Matt. xiii. 53-58. *Is not this the carpenter's son?*—There can be no doubt that Jesus in his youth wrought with his supposed father Joseph. *He could there do no mighty work*—Not consistently with his wisdom and goodness; it being inconsistent with his wisdom to work miracles there, where he knew the prejudices of the people would certainly prevent any good effect they might otherwise have had in promoting the great end he had in view in coming into the world; and with his goodness, seeing that he well knew his countrymen would reject whatever evidence could be given them of his being the Messiah, or a divinely-commissioned teacher. And, therefore, to have given them greater evidence would only have increased their guilt and condemnation. *And he marvelled because of their unbelief*—He wondered at their perverseness in rejecting him upon such unreasonable grounds as the meanness of his parentage. It is justly observed here by Dr. Macknight, that "the Jews in general seem to have mistaken their own prophecies, when they expected the Messiah would exalt their nation to the highest pitch of wealth and power, for this was an end unworthy of so grand an interposition of Providence. When the eternal Son of God came down from heaven, he had something infinitely more noble in view: namely, that by suffering and dying he might destroy him who had the power of death; that by innumerable benefits he might overcome his enemies; that by the bands of truth he might restrain the rebellious motions of men's wills; that by the sword of the Spirit he might slay the monsters of their lusts; and that by giving them the spiritual armour he might put them in a condition to fight for the incorruptible inheritance, and exalt them to the joyful possession of the riches and honours of immortality. Wherefore, as these characters of the Messiah were in a great measure unknown to the Jews, he who possessed them was not the object of their expectation. And, though he

us? And they ^d were offended at ^e him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, ^f A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 ^g And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

6 And ^h he marvelled because of their unbelief. ⁱ And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 ^j And he calleth *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two;

^g Isa. lix. 16.—^h Matt. ix. 35; Luke xiii. 22.—ⁱ Matt. x. 1. ^j Chap. iii. 13, 14. Luke ix. 1.

laid claim to their submission by the most stupendous miracles, instead of convincing them, these miracles made him who performed them obnoxious to the hottest resentment of that proud, covetous, sensual people. It seems they could not bear to see one so low in life as Jesus was, doing things which they fancied were peculiar to that idol of their vanity, a glorious, triumphant, secular Messiah. Our Lord, therefore, having made this second trial with a view to see whether the Nazarenes would endure his ministry, and to show to the world that his not residing with them was owing to their stubbornness and wickedness, he left them, and visited the towns and villages in the neighbourhood where he expected to find a more favourable reception. Thus the unbelief of these Nazarenes obstructed Christ's miracles, deprived them of his preaching, and caused him to withdraw a second time from their town. In which example the evil and punishment of misimproving spiritual advantages, is clearly set forth before all who hear the gospel."

Verse 7. *He calleth unto him the twelve*—While Jesus preached among the villages in the neighbourhood of Nazareth, he sent his twelve apostles through the several cities of Galilee, to proclaim that God was about to establish the kingdom of the Messiah, wherein he would be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and instead of all external rites and ceremonies, would accept nothing but repentance, faith, and sincere obedience. Moreover, to confirm their doctrine, he gave them power to work miracles of healing, which also would tend to procure them acceptance. See Luke ix. 1, 2. *By two and two*—We may suppose that Matthew had an eye to this circumstance in the catalogue which he has given of the apostles; for, chapter x. 2-4, he has joined them together in pairs; very probably just as they were sent out now by their Master. Jesus ordered his disciples to go by two and two, doubtless that they might encourage each other in their work. The history of their election and commission is given, Matt. x. 1, &c.; where see the notes. But it seems they were not actually sent till now, when

A. M. 4035. and gave them power over unclean
A. D. 31. spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no ¹ money in *their* purse:

9 But ² be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 ¹ And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 ² And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, ³ shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom ² and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

¹ The word signifieth a piece of brass money, in value somewhat less than a farthing, Matt. x. 9, but here it is taken in general for money, Luke ix. 3.—² Acts xii. 8.—³ Matt. x. 11; Luke

Jesus intended forthwith to enlarge the scene of his ministry. He, therefore, on this occasion renewed their powers, and repeated the principal things contained in the instructions formerly given.

Verses 8, 9. *He commanded that they should take nothing for their journey*—That they might be always unencumbered, free, ready for motion. *Save a staff only*—He that had one might take it; but he that had not, was not to provide one. *No scrip, no bread*—Our Lord intended by this mission to initiate them into their apostolic work. And it was, doubtless, an encouragement to them all their life after, to recollect the care which God took of them when they had left all they had, and went out quite unfurnished for such an expedition. In this view our Lord himself leads them to consider it, Luke xxii. 35, *When I sent you forth without purse or scrip, lacked ye any thing?* See the note on Matt. x. 9, 10; where the particular directions here given are explained at large.

Verses 10, 11. *In what place soever ye enter*—See these verses explained, Matt. x. 11–15.

Verses 12, 13. *They went, and preached that men should repent*—They went away and published everywhere the glad tidings of the approach of the Messiah's kingdom, and exhorted men on that consideration to turn to God in true repentance, forsaking all their sins in temper, word, and work, and in all respects bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance. *They cast out many devils, &c.*—And did many other miracles. *And anointed with oil many that were sick*—Which St. James gives as a general direction, (chap. v. 11, 15,) adding those peremptory words, *And the Lord shall heal him.* He shall be restored to health: not by the natural efficacy of the oil, but by the supernatural blessing of God. And it seems, this was the great standing means of healing desperate diseases in the Christian Church, long before *extreme unction* was used or heard of, which

12 And they went out, and preached A. M. 4035a.
that men should repent. A. D. 31.

13 And they cast out many devils, ° and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

14 ¶ And king Herod heard of him, (for his name was spread abroad,) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

15 ° Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 ¶ But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and

ix. 4; x. 7, 8.—² Matt. x. 14; Luke x. 10.—³ Acts xiii. 51; xviii. 6.—⁴ Gr. or.—⁵ Jam. v. 14.—⁶ Matt. xiv. 1; Luke ix. 7.—⁷ Matt. xvi. 14; Ch. viii. 28.—⁸ Mat. xiv. 2; Luke iii. 19.

bears scarcely any resemblance to it; the former being used only as a means of health; the latter, only when life is despaired of. It is not said how long they were out on this their first expedition; but it is probable they spent a considerable time in it, for Luke says, chap. ix. 6, *they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.*

Verses 14–16. *And King Herod* (the tetrarch; see notes on Matt. ii. 1, and xiv. 1) *heard of him*—While the apostles were making their circuit about the country, proclaiming everywhere the glories of their great Master, and working miracles in his name, information concerning him and his marvellous works came to the ears of King Herod; *for his name was spread abroad*—And reached many places far more distant than the court of Herod, Matt. iv. 24, 25. *And he said, that John the Baptist was risen from the dead*—This his own guilty conscience suggested, and he could not forbear speaking of it to those that were about him. Others said, *That it is Elias; and others, That it is a prophet*—It is easy to account for the opinion of those who, upon Christ's appearing in this part of the country, began to take notice of his miracles, and, being struck with them, imagined that he was Elias, or one of the prophets. For they expected that Elias would actually descend from heaven, and usher in the Messiah, Matt. xvi. 14; and that one of the prophets was to be raised from the dead for the same end. *But when Herod heard thereof*—Of their various judgments concerning Jesus; *he still said, It is John, whom I beheaded, &c.*—The suggestions of his guilty conscience were too powerful to be removed by the flattery of his servants; and he persevered in affirming that it was certainly John whom he had beheaded, and that he was risen from the dead.

Verses 17–26. *For Herod had laid hold on John, &c.*—See the note on Matt. xiv. 3–7. *Herodias had*

A. M. 4034. laid hold upon John, and bound him
A. D. 30. in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, * It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had ³a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20 For Herod [†]feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and a holy, and [‡]observed him: and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

A. D. 32. 21 [‡] And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on [‡]his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, [‡]Whatsoever

* Lev. xviii. 16; xx. 21.—³Or, an inward grudge.—[†]Matt. xiv. 5; xxi. 6.—[‡]Or, kept him, or, saved him.

a quarrel against him—This princess was the granddaughter of Herod the Great, by his son Aristobulus, and had formerly been married to her uncle Philip, the son of her grandfather, by Mariamne, and brother to Herod the tetrarch. Some time after that marriage this Herod, happening in his way to Rome to lodge at his brother's house, fell passionately in love with Herodias, and on his return made offers to her; which she accepted, deserting her husband, who was only a private person, that she might share with the tetrarch in the honours of a crown. On the other hand, he, to make way for her, divorced his wife, the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia. Wherefore both parties being guilty of incest as well as adultery, they were reproved by the Baptist, with a courage highly becoming the messenger of God. For though he had experienced the advantage of the tetrarch's friendship, he was not afraid to displease him when his duty required it. This freedom Herod resented to such a degree, that he laid his monitor in irons. But if Herod's resentment of the liberty which John took with him was great, that of Herodias was much greater. The crime she was guilty of being odious, she could not bear to have it named, and far less reproved. She was, therefore, enraged to the highest pitch, and nothing less than the Baptist's head would satisfy her: and ever since he had offended her, she had been plotting against his life, but had not yet been able to get her purpose accomplished. *For Herod feared John*—Great and powerful as the king was, he stood in awe of John, though in low life, and for a while durst not attempt any thing against him; *knowing that he*

thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

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

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me, by and by, in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.

26 [‡] And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent [‡]an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison;

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

[‡]Matt. xiv. 6.—[‡]Gen. xl. 20.—[‡]Esth. v. 3, 6; vii. 2. [‡]Matt. xiv. 9.—[‡]Or, one of his guard.

was a just man and holy—Such force has virtue sometimes upon the minds of the highest offenders! *And observed him*—Or rather, *preserved*, or *protected him*, (as *συντηρηει*, it seems, should rather be rendered) namely, against all the malice and contrivances of Herodias. *And when he heard him*—Probably sending for him occasionally; *he did many things*—Recommended by him; *and heard him gladly*—Delusive pleasure, while he continued in the practice of known sin! Thus it often happens that they who do not truly fear God and turn to him, will go certain lengths in obedience to his commandments, provided something be remitted to them by way of indulgence. But when they are more straitly pressed, throwing off the yoke, they not only become obstinate but furious, which shows us, that no man has any reason to be satisfied with his conduct because he obeys many of the divine laws, unless he has learned to subject himself to God in every respect, and without exception. *When a convenient day was come*—Convenient for her purpose; *that Herod made a supper for his lords, high captains, and chief estates*—Greek, *τοις χιλιαρχοις και τοις πρωτοις, the tribunes* (or commanders of one thousand men each) and principal men of Galilee: that is, to the great men of the court, the army, and the province. *When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced*—See notes on Matt. xiv. 6-12. *For his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her*—Herod's honour was like the conscience of the chief priests, Matt. xxvii. 6. To shed innocent blood wounded neither the one nor the other!

A. M. 4036. 30 ¶ ^a And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and

told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 ^b And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for ^c there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 ^d And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 ^e And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and ^f he began to teach them many things.

35 ^g And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This

^a Luke ix. 10.—^b Matt. xiv. 13.—^c Chap. iii. 20.—^d Matt. xiv. 13.—^e Matt. ix. 36; xiv. 14.—^f Luke ix. 11.—^g Matt. xiv. 15; Luke ix. 12.—^h Num. xi. 13, 22; 2 Kings iv. 43.

Verse 30. *The apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus*—Namely, at, or quickly after the time of the awful event of the Baptist's death, related above; and told him all things, &c.—Recounted to him; both what miracles they had done—In his name and by his power; and what doctrine they had taught—According to his direction. *And he said, Come ye yourselves apart, &c.*—Come with me into the neighbouring desert; and rest a while—After the fatigue of your journey, and let us endeavour to improve this awful dispensation by suitable meditations. *For there were many coming and going, &c.*—To and from the public place in which they then were; and they had no leisure so much as to eat—Namely, without interruption. And much less had they leisure for religious retirement and recollection. *And they departed into a desert place privately*—Across a creek of the lake; and the people—Who had been attending on his ministry; saw them departing, and many knew him—Though he was at some distance; and observing how he steered his course, and guessing right as to the place at which he intended to land, they ran afoot thither out of all cities—By which they passed, thereby increasing their numbers continually. *And with such eagerness did they pursue their journey, that they outwent them that had taken ship, and getting round to the shore where he was to land, they stood ready there to receive him in a large body. And Jesus, when he came out*—Of the ship; seeing much people—Collected together, and considering what pains they had taken to meet him

a

is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:

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

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, ^b Shall we go and buy two hundred ^c penny-worth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, ^d Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves, and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, ^e and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

^a The Roman penny is seven pence halfpenny sterling; as Matt. xviii. 28.—^b Matt. xiv. 17; Luke ix. 13; John vi. 9; Matt. xv. 34; Chap. viii. 5.—^c 1 Sam. ix. 13; Matt. xxvi. 26.

there, and the strong desire which they had thus manifested to receive religious instruction; and reflecting, likewise, how sadly they were neglected by those who ought to have been their spiritual guides; and how they were forced to wander from place to place, as sheep having no shepherd—To feed and take care of them; he was moved with such compassion toward them—That though he had come thither for retirement, he neither dismissed nor forsook them, but, on the contrary, receiving them in a most kind and condescending manner, began, immediately, to teach them many things—Namely, concerning the kingdom of God, Luke ix. 11; healing also as many sick as were brought to him.

Verses 35–44. *When the day was far spent, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xiv. 15–21, where the circumstances of the miracle here recorded are explained at large. *And they sat down in ranks*—Or rather, in squares, as Campbell renders *πρᾶσιαι*, observing, “The word denotes a small plat, such as a flower-bed in a garden. It has this meaning in Eccles. xxiv. 31. I do not find it in the LXX., or in any other part of the New Testament. These beds were in the form of oblong squares. The word is therefore very improperly rendered either *ranks* or *rows*.” Thus, also, Dr. Macknight, “They sat down in oblong squares. The word *συμπόσιον*, used here by Mark, signifies a company of guests at a table, but *κλίσια*, the word in Luke, denotes properly as many of them as reclined on one bed, according to the eastern manner of eating. By Christ's order,

A. M. 4036. 42 And they did all eat, and were
A. D. 32. filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

45 ¶¹ And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before ⁷ unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

47 ^m And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and ⁿ would have passed by them.

49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out.

50 (For they all saw him, and were troubled.)

¹ Matt. xiv. 22; John vi. 17.—⁷ Or, over against Bethsaida.
^m Matt. xiv. 23; John vi. 16, 17.—ⁿ Luke xxiv. 28.

therefore, the people were to sit down to this meal in companies, consisting some of fifty persons, some of a hundred, according as the ground would admit. The members of each company, I suppose, were to be placed in two rows, the one row with their faces toward those of the other, as if a long table had been between them. The first company being thus set down, the second was to be placed beside the first in a like form, and the third by the second, till all were set down, the direction of the ranks being up the hill. And as the two ranks of every division were formed into one company, by being placed with their faces toward each other; so they were distinguished from the neighbouring companies, by lying with their backs turned to their backs. And the whole body thus ranged, would resemble a garden plot, divided into seed-beds, which is the proper signification of *πρασιαι*, the name given by Mark to the several companies after they were formed."

It has been observed, in the note on Matt. xiv. 19, &c., that the meat must have extended its dimensions, not in our Lord's hands only, but in the hands of the multitude likewise, a circumstance which suggests further reasons for the people's being set down in the manner above explained. "For as they were fed on a mountain, we may reasonably suppose that the ground was somewhat steep, and that they lay with their heads pointing up the hill,

And immediately he talked with them, A. M. 4036.
and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: A. D. 32.
it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For ^o they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves; for their ^p heart was hardened.

53 ¶^q And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that ^r they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched ^s him were made whole.

^o Chap. viii. 17, 18.—^p Chap. iii. 5; xvi. 14.—^q Matt. xiv. 34.
^r Matt. ix. 20; Chap. v. 27, 28; Acts xix. 12.—^s Or, it.

in such a manner, that reclining on their elbows, they were almost in a sitting posture, and had their eyes fixed on Jesus, who stood below them, in a place that was more plain, at a little distance from the ends of the ranks. Without doubt, therefore, they all heard his thanksgiving and prayer for the miracle, saw him give the disciples the meat, and were astonished above measure when they perceived that instead of diminishing it increased under his creating hands. Moreover, being set down in companies, and every company being divided into two ranks, which lay fronting each other, the ranks of all the companies were parallel, and pointed toward Jesus, and so were situated in such a manner that the disciples could readily bring the bread and fish to them that sat at the extremities of the ranks. To conclude, by this disposition there must have been such a space between the two ranks of each company, that every individual in it could easily survey the whole of his own company, as well those above him as those below him; and therefore, when the meat was brought, and handed from one to another, they would all follow it with their eyes, and see it swelling, not only in their own hands, but in the hands of their companions likewise, to the amazement and joy of every person present."

Verses 45-56. For an explanation of these verses, see the notes on Matt. xiv. 22-36.

CHAPTER VII.

In this chapter we have, (1,) Christ's dispute with the scribes and Pharisees about eating meat with unwashed hands, 1-13. (2,) The needful instructions he gave to the people upon that occasion, and further explained to his disciples, 14-23. (3,) His curing the woman of Canaan's daughter that was possessed by an evil spirit, 24-30. (4,) The relief of a man that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech, 31-37. This chapter coincides with Matt. xv.

A. M. 4036. **T**HEN ^a came together unto him
A. D. 32. the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with ¹defiled (that is to say, with unwashed) hands, they found fault.

^a Matt. xv. 1.—¹ Or, common.—³ Or, diligently: in

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verses 1, 2. *Then came the Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem*—They probably came on purpose to find occasion against him. For some of them followed him from place to place, looking on every thing he did, even on his most innocent, yea, and most benevolent and holy actions, with an evil and censoring eye. Accordingly, here they ventured to attack him for allowing his disciples to eat with unwashed hands, thereby transgressing, they said, the tradition of the elders, which they thought to be a very heinous offence. *When they saw his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed, hands*—The Greek word here rendered *defiled*, literally signifies *common*. It was quite in the Jewish idiom to oppose *common* and *holy*; the most usual signification of the latter word, in the Old Testament, being, separated from common and devoted to sacred use. As we learn from antiquity that this evangelist wrote his gospel in a pagan country, and for the use of Gentile converts, it was proper to add the explanation, *that is, unwashed*, to the epithet *common*, or *defiled*, which might have otherwise been misunderstood. *They found fault*—The law of Moses, it must be observed, required external cleanness as a part of religion; not, however, for its own sake, but to signify with what carefulness God's servants should purify their minds from moral pollutions. Accordingly, these duties were prescribed by Moses in such moderation as was fitted to promote the end of them. But in process of time they came to be multiplied prodigiously: for the ancient doctors, to secure the observation of those precepts which were really of divine institution, added many commandments of their own as fences unto the former. And the people, to show their zeal, obeyed them. For example: Because the law, Lev. xv. 11, saith, *Whomsoever he toucheth, that hath the issue, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, &c.*, the people were ordered to wash their hands immediately on their return from places of public concourse, and before they sat down to meat, lest, by touching some unclean person in the crowd, they might have defiled themselves. The Pharisees, therefore, being very zealous in these trifles, would not eat at any time unless they washed their hands with the greatest care. From this source came that

3 For the Pharisees, and all the A. M. 4036.
Jews, except they wash *their hands* A. D. 32.

² oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to

the original, with the fist: Theophylact, up to the elbow.

endless variety of purifications not prescribed in the law, but ordained by the elders. These ordinances, though they were of human invention, came at length to be looked upon as essential in religion; they were exalted to such a pitch, that, in comparison of them, the law of God was suffered to lie neglected and forgotten, as is here signified.

Verses 3-5. *For the Pharisees, &c., except they wash their hands oft*—Greek, *εαν μη πλυση νηφουταις τας χειρας*, *except they wash their hands with their fist*: or, as some render it, *to the wrist*. Theophylact translates it, *unless they wash up to their elbows*; affirming that *πλυση* denotes the whole of the arm, from the bending to the ends of the fingers. But this sense of the word is altogether unusual. For *πλυση*, properly, is the hand, with the fingers contracted into the palm, and made round. "Theophylact's translation, however," says Macknight, "exhibits the evangelist's meaning. For the Jews, when they washed, held up their hands, and, contracting their fingers, received the water that was poured on them by their servants, (who had it for a part of their office, 2 Kings iii. 11.) till it ran down their arms, which they washed up to their elbows. *To wash with the fist*, therefore, is to wash with great care." A MS. termed *Codex Bezae*, instead of *πλυση*, *the fist*, or *wrist*, has *πικνη*, frequently. *And when they come from the market, except they wash*—Greek, *βαπτισωμαι*, *bathe themselves*, as the word probably ought here to be rendered, (see Lev. xv. 11.) *they eat not*—Having the highest opinion of the importance of these institutions. Indeed, some of their rabbis carried this to such a ridiculous height, that one of them determined the neglect of washing to be a greater sin than whoredom; and another declared, it would be much better to die than to omit it. See many instances of this kind in Hammond and Whitby on the place. The Pharisees, therefore, viewing these washings in this important light, did not doubt but our Lord, by authorizing his disciples to neglect them, would expose himself to universal censure, as one who despised the most sacred services of religion; services to which a sanction was given by the approbation and practice of the whole nation. Accordingly, they asked him, *Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders?*—Hast thou taught them to de

A. M. 4036. hold, as the washing of cups and
A. D. 32. ³ pots, brazen vessels, and of ⁴ tables.

5 ^b Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, ^c This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye ⁵ reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

^a Sextarius is about a pint and a half.—⁴ Or, beds.—^b Matt. xv. 2.—^c Isa. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 8.—^d Or, frustrate.

spise these institutions? But while they pretended nothing but a sorrowful concern for the contempt which the disciples cast on institutions so sacred, their real intention was to make Jesus himself to be detested by the people as a deceiver. But the charge of impiety which they thus brought against him and his disciples, he easily retorted upon them with ten-fold strength. For he shows clearly, that notwithstanding their pretended regard for the duties of godliness, they were themselves guilty of the grossest violations of the divine law. And as they thus transgressed, not through ignorance, but knowingly, they were the worst of sinners, mere hypocrites, who deserved to be abhorred by all good men; and the rather, as God had long ago testified his displeasure against them, in the prophecy which Isaiah had uttered concerning them. *He answered, Well hath Esaias prophesied, &c.*—See note on Matt. xv. 7-9.

Verses 9-13. *And he said, Full well*—*καλως, fairly, wholly; ye reject, &c.*—Or, reading the word separately, *Finely done!* How praiseworthy is your conduct! A strong irony. *Ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition*—The words, *your own*, are emphatical, distinguishing the commandments of men, the corrupt traditions of the Pharisees, from the commandments of God. *For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother*—“Lest the charge, which our Lord brought against the Pharisees, should be thought without foundation, because it contained an imputation of such gross profaneness, he supported it by an instance of an atrocious kind. God, saith he, has commanded children to honour their parents, that is, among other things, to maintain them when reduced to

10 For Moses said, ^d Honour thy ^e father and thy mother; and, ^e Whoso ^f curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* ^f Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

12 And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

14 ¶ ^g And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Harken unto me every one *of you*, and understand.

15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

^d Ex. xx. 12; Deut. x. 16; Matt. xv. 4.—^e Ex. xxi. 17; Lev. xx. 9; Prov. xx. 20.—^f Matt. xv. 5; xxiii. 18.—^g Matt. xv. 10.

poverty, as the word *honour* signifies, 1 Tim. v. 17, promising life to such as do so, and threatening death against those that do otherwise. Nevertheless, ye Pharisees, presumptuously making light of the divine commandment, affirm that it is a more sacred duty to enrich the temple than to nourish one's parents, though they be in the utmost necessity; pretending that what is offered to the great Parent is better bestowed than that which is given for the support of our parents on earth; as if the interest of God were different from that of his creatures. Nay, ye impiously teach that a man may lawfully suffer his parents to starve, if he can say to them, *It is corban*, (a gift,) &c., *by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me*—That is, that which should have succoured you, is given to the temple. Thus ye hypocrites have, by your frivolous traditions, made void the commandment of God, though of immutable and eternal obligation; and disguised with the cloak of piety the most horrid and unnatural action that a man can easily be guilty of.”—See Macknight, and the note on Matt. xv. 4-6.

Verses 14-16. *When he had called all the people unto him*—See note on Matt. xv. 10, 11. *He said, Harken unto me, every one of you*—As if he had said, Hear how absurd the precepts are which the scribes inculcate upon you, and understand the true differences of things. These hypocrites, anxious about trifles, neglect the great duties of godliness and righteousness, which are of unchangeable obligation. They shudder with horror at hands unwashed, but are perfectly easy under the guilt of impure minds, although *not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, in the sight of God, but that which cometh out of the mouth*; because, in the

A. M. 4036. 16 ^b If any man have ears to hear, A. D. 32. let him hear.

17 ⁱ And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him :

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats ?

^b Matt. xi. 15.—ⁱ Matt. xv. 15.—^k Gen. vi. 5 ; viii. 21 ; Matt.

sight of God, cleanness and uncleanness are qualities, not of the body, but of the mind, which can be polluted by nothing but sin. Our Lord did not at all mean to overthrow the distinction which the law had established between things clean and unclean, in the matter of man's food. That distinction, like all the other emblematical institutions of Moses, was wisely appointed ; being designed to teach the Israeites how carefully the familiar company and conversation of the wicked is to be avoided. He only affirmed, that in itself no kind of meat can defile the mind, which is the man, though by accident it may : as when a man eats what is pernicious to his health, or takes an improper quantity of food or liquor. And a Jew might have done it by presumptuously eating what was forbidden by the Mosaic law, which still continued in force: yet in all these instances, the pollution would arise from the wickedness of the heart, and be just proportionable to it, which is what our Lord here asserts.

Verses 17-23. *When he was entered into the house*—And was apart from the people ; *his disciples asked him*—Namely, Peter, in the name of the rest, (Matt. xv. 15,) *concerning the parable*—So they term the declaration which our Lord had just uttered, because it appeared to them to be mysterious and needing explanation, which, that it should, seems very strange. And he saith, *Are ye so without understanding*—So dull of apprehension, so ignorant of the nature of true holiness? see note on Matt. xv. 15-20, where most of the particulars contained in this paragraph are explained. *From within proceed evil thoughts, &c.*—The things here mentioned as coming from the heart, and defiling the man, are all either sins committed against the second table of the law, as they are reckoned up by St. Paul, Rom. xiii. 9 ; or the dispositions which incline men to them. *Covetousness*—Gr. *πλεονεξια*, *covetousness*, or irregular and inordinate desires ; *wickedness*, *Πονηρια*, ill-nature, cruelty, inhumanity, and all malevolent affections ; *an evil eye*—An envious, grudging disposition ; *pride*—*ὕπερηφανα*, that pride which makes us contemn and overlook others, as unworthy of our regard, and highly to resent the least affront, or seeming injury ; *foolishness*—*αφροσυνη*, foolish, ungovernable passion ; the word stands

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 ^k For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, ⁶ covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness ;

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 ¶ ^l And from thence he arose, and went

xv. 19.—⁶ Gr. *covetousnesses, wickednesses.*—^l Matt. xv. 21.

directly opposed to *σωφροσυνη*, or sobriety of thought and discourse ; and therefore particularly signifies all kinds of wild imaginations and extravagant passions. "It is remarkable, that three of the crimes here mentioned, as pollutions of the mind, namely, murder, false witness, and blasphemy, were, on this very occasion, committed by the persons who charged our Lord with impiety because he neglected such ceremonial precepts of religion as were of human invention. For, while they feigned the highest reverence for the divine law, they were making void its most essential precepts. At the very time that they condemned the disciples for so small an offence as eating with unwashed hands, contrary only to the traditions of the elders, the scribes and Pharisees were murdering Jesus by their calumnies and false witnessings, notwithstanding it was the only study of his life to do them all the good possible!" *All these evil things come from within*—The Lord Jesus "represents these evil things as proceeding out of the mouth, (Matt. xv. 18,) not so much by way of contrast to meats, which enter by the mouth into a man, as because some of them are committed with the faculty of speech, such as false witness and blasphemy ; and others of them are helped forward by its assistance, namely, adultery, deceit, &c.—Thus our Lord defended his disciples by a beautiful chain of reasoning, wherein he has shown the true nature of actions, and loaded with perpetual infamy the Jewish teachers and their brood, who in every age and country may be known by features exactly resembling their parents, the main strokes of which are, that by their frivolous superstitions they weaken, and sometimes destroy, the eternal and immutable rules of righteousness."—Macknight.

Verses 24-26. *From thence he arose, and went into the borders*—*Εἰς τα μεθωρια*, into the parts which bordered upon, or rather lay between, Tyre and Sidon ; *and entered into a house, and would have no man know it*—Namely, that he was there, or, *know him*. Jesus, knowing that the Pharisees were highly offended at the liberty which he had taken in the preceding discourse, in plucking off from them the mask of pretended piety, wherewith they had covered their malevolent spirit and conduct, and

A. M. 4036. into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house, and would have no man know *it*: but he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

26 (The woman was a ⁷Greek, a Syro-phenician by nation,) and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

⁷ Or, *Gentile*.—^m Matt. xv. 29.—ⁿ Matt. ix. 32;

not ignorant of the plots which they were forming against his reputation and life, he judged it proper to retire with his disciples into this remote region, with a view to conceal himself a while from them. We learn from Josh. xix. 28, 29, that Tyre and Sidon were cities in the lot of Asher; which tribe having never been able wholly to drive out the natives, their posterity remained even in our Lord's time. Hence he did not preach the doctrine of the kingdom in this country, because it was mostly inhabited by heathen, to whom he was not sent. See on Matt. x. 5. Neither did he work miracles here with that readiness which he showed everywhere else, because, by concealing himself, he proposed to shun the Pharisees. *But he could not be hid*—It seems he was personally known to many of the heathen in this country, who, no doubt, had often heard and seen him in Galilee. And, as for the rest, they were sufficiently acquainted with him by his fame, which had spread itself very early through all Syria, Matt. iv. 24. *For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him*—This person was a descendant of the ancient inhabitants, and probably by religion a heathen. She "is called, Matt. xv. 21, *a woman of Canaan*; here, *a Syro-Phenician*, and *a Greek*. There is in these denominations no inconsistency. By birth, she was of *Syro-Phenicia*, so the country about Tyre and Sidon was denominated; by descent, of *Canaan*; as most of the Tyrians and Sidonians originally were; and by religion, *a Greek*, according to the Jewish manner of distinguishing between themselves and idolaters. Ever since the Macedonian conquest, *Greek* became a common name for *idolater*, or, at least, one uncircumcised, and was equivalent to *Gentile*. Of this we have many examples in Paul's epistles, and in the Acts. *Jews and Greeks*, *Ἕλληνες*, are the same with *Jews and Gentiles*."—Campbell. Nevertheless, though a heathen, this woman had conceived a very great, honourable, and

29 And he said unto her, For this saying, go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31 ¶ ^m And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32 And ⁿ they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and ^o he spit, and touched his tongue:

Luke xi. 14.—^p Chap. viii. 23; John ix. 6.

just notion, not only of our Lord's power and goodness, but even of his character as Messiah; the notion of which she had probably learned by conversing with the Jews. For when she heard of his arrival, she came in quest of him, and meeting him, it seems, as he passed along the street, she fell at his feet, addressing him by the title of son of David, and besought him to cast the evil spirit out of her daughter. See the story related more at large, and explained, Matt. xv. 22–28.

Verses 31–36. *He came unto the sea of Galilee, &c.*—See note on Matt. xv. 29–31. *They bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment, &c.*—Greek *Μογιλαλον*: "He was not absolutely dumb, but stammered to such a degree, that few understood his speech, verse 35. However, the circumstance of his being able to speak in any manner, shows that his deafness was not natural, but accidental. He had heard formerly, and had learned to speak, but was now deprived of hearing, perhaps, through some fault of his own, which might be the reason that Jesus sighed for grief when he cured him. *And they beseech him to put his hand upon him*—His friends interceded for him, because he was not able to speak for himself, so as that any one could understand him. His desire of a cure, however, may have prompted him to do his utmost in speaking, whereby all present were made sensible of the greatness of the infirmity under which he laboured. Our Lord's exuberant goodness easily prompted him to give this person the relief which his friends begged for him. Yet he would not do it publicly, lest the admiration of the spectators should have been raised so high as to produce bad effects; for the whole country was now following him, in expectation that he would soon set up his kingdom. Or, as Gadara, where his miracle upon the demoniacs had been so ill received, was part of this region, (see on Luke viii. 26,) he might shun performing the miracle publicly, because it would have no effect

A. M. 4036. 34 And ^p looking up to heaven,
A. D. 32. ^a he sighed, and saith unto him,
Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 ^r And straightway his ears were opened,
and the string of his tongue was loosed, and
he spake plain.

36 And ^s he charged them that they should

^p Chap. vi. 41; John xi. 41, xvii. 1.—^a John xi.

upon so stupid a people. Whatever was the reason, he took the man with his relations aside from the crowd; and, because the deaf are supposed to have their ears shut, and the dumb their tongues so tied, or fastened to the under part of their mouth, as not to be able to move it, (see verse 35,) he put his fingers into the man's ears, and then touched or moistened his tongue with his spittle, to make him understand that he intended to open his ears, and loose his tongue."—Macknight. This, perhaps, was the only reason for these symbolical actions, or our Lord might have other reasons for doing them, of which we are ignorant. "If any should ask," says Dr. Doddridge, "why our Lord used these actions, when a word alone would have been sufficient; and such means (if they may be called means) could in themselves do nothing at all to answer the end, I frankly confess I cannot tell, nor am I at all concerned to know. Yet I am ready to imagine it might be intended to intimate, in a very lively manner, that we are not to pretend to enter into the reasons of all his actions; and that where we are sure that any observance whatever is appointed by him, we are humbly to submit to it, though we cannot see why it was preferred to others, which our imagination might suggest. Had Christ's patients, like Naaman, (2 Kings v. 11, 12,) been too nice in their exceptions on these occasions, I fear they would have lost their cure; and the indulgence of a curious or a petulant mind would have been but a poor equivalent for such a loss." *And looking up to heaven*—That the deaf man whom he could not instruct by words might consider from whence all benefits proceed; *he sighed*—Probably the circumstances above mentioned, or some others, to us unknown, made this dumb person a peculiar object of pity. Or by this example of bodily deafness and dumbness, our Lord might be led to reflect on the spiritual deafness and dumbness of men. But whatever was the cause, Christ's sighing on this occasion evidently displayed the tender love he bore to our kind. For certainly it could be nothing less which moved him to condescend to our miseries, whether general or particular, in so affectionate a manner. *And saith unto him, Ephphatha*—This was a word of SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY, not an address to God for power to heal. Such an address was needless, for Christ had a perpetual fund of power residing in himself, to work all miracles whenever he pleased, even to the raising of the dead, John v. 21, 26. *And straightway his ears were opened*—The word had an immediate effect,

a

tell no man: but the more he charged ^s
A. M. 4036. them, so much the more a great
A. D. 32. deal they published it;

37 And were beyond measure astonished,
saying, He hath done all things well; he
maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb
to speak.

33, 38.—^r Isa. xxxv. 5, 6; Matt. xi. 5.—^s Chap. v. 43.

and all obstructions to his hearing distinctly, and speaking articulately and plainly, were instantly removed. And, as those bodily impediments vanished before the word of Christ's power, the impediments of the mind to spiritual acts and duties are removed by the Spirit of Christ. He opens the internal ear, the heart, as he did Lydia's, to understand and receive the word of God; and opens the mouth in prayer and praise. *And he charged them that they should tell no man*—When Jesus formerly cured the demoniac in this country, he ordered him to return to his own house, and show, namely, to his relations and friends, how great things God had done for him. But, at this miracle, the deaf and dumb man's relations seem to have been present. Wherefore, as they had no need to be informed of the miracle, he required it to be concealed, probably for the reasons assigned in the note on chap. v. 43. Neither the man, however, nor his friends, obeyed Jesus in this; *but the more he charged them*—To conceal it; *so much the more they published it*—So greatly were they struck with the miracle, and so charmed with the modesty and humility which Christ manifested, especially the man, who, having the use of his speech given him, was very forward to exercise it in praise of so great a benefactor.

Verse 37. *And were beyond measure astonished*—Both at what was done, and at the amiable spirit of him who did it. *And said, He hath done all things well*—Performed the most extraordinary cures in the most humble and graceful manner. *He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak*—And that, not only in this, but in many other instances. Whereas there were many that hated and persecuted him, as an *evil doer*; these are ready to witness for him, not only that he has done no evil, but that he has done a great deal of good, and has done it well, modestly, humbly, devoutly, and all perfectly gratis, *without money and without price*; circumstances which greatly added to the lustre of his good works. "Happy would it be if all his followers, and especially his ministers, would learn of him, who was thus meek and lowly; neither acting as in their own strength, when they attempt a spiritual cure, nor proclaiming their own praise when they have effected it. Then would they likewise *do all things well*; and there would be that beauty in the manner, which no wise man would entirely neglect, even in those actions which are in themselves most excellent and great."—Doddridge.

CHAPTER VIII.

In this chapter we have, (1,) Christ's miraculously feeding four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes, 1-9. (2,) His refusing to give the Pharisees a sign from heaven, 10-13. (3,) His cautioning his disciples to take heed of the leaven of Pharisaism and Herodianism, 14-21. (4,) His giving sight to a blind man at Bethsaida, 22-26. (5,) Peter's confession of him, 27-30. (6,) The notice he gave his disciples of his own approaching sufferings, 31-33; and the warning he gave them to prepare for suffering likewise, 34-38. This chapter coincides with Matt. xv. 32-39; and xvi.

A. M. 4036. **I**N those days, ^a the multitude being
A. D. 32. very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and saith unto them,

2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3 And if I send them away fasting to their

^a Matt. xv. 32.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verses 1-4. *In those days, the multitude being very great*—The multitude mentioned Matt. xv. 30; *and having nothing to eat*—They had, as on a former occasion, consumed all the provision they had brought with them; *Jesus said—I have compassion*, Greek, σπλαγχνίζομαι, *my bowels yearn*, or, *are moved, toward the multitude*—Who thus flock eagerly about me, and express such zeal in their attendance, as to expose themselves thereby to many inconveniences and hardships. It is pleasing to observe the strong compassion which our blessed Lord continually discovered in all his actions toward mankind. *Because they have now been with me three days*—It is probable that the multitude, intent on hearing Christ and seeing his miracles, had lodged two nights together in the fields, as the season of the year was pleasant, this event happening quickly after the passover; and besides, the great number of the cures which had been wrought but just before, might animate them to continue with him, concluding, perhaps, that the miraculous power of Christ, which was displayed in so many glorious instances around them, would either preserve their health from being endangered by the large dews which fell in the night, or restore them from any disorder they might contract by their eagerness to attend on his ministry. *If I send them away fasting, they will faint, &c.*—Our Lord by his power could as easily have preserved them from fainting without food, as have created food by multiplying the loaves and fishes for their support, but he chose to take the latter method. *For divers of them came from far*—This our Lord knew, and he knew also that they were but ill furnished for procuring provisions, or accommodations abroad, for themselves. *His disciples answered, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread, &c.*—The disciples, it seems, did not reflect on the miracle which Christ had lately wrought for the relief of the five thousand, or they did not imagine he would repeat such a miracle; or perhaps they thought that Christ proposed to feed this great multitude in the natural

own houses, they will faint by the way: A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32. for divers of them came from far.

4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?

5 ^b And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down

^b Matt. xv. 34; Chap. vi. 38.

way, and, therefore, thus intimated their surprise that he should think of doing a thing so impracticable. Jesus did not reprove them for their forgetfulness of what he had so lately done, or for their wrong notions, but meekly asked what meat they had, and upon their telling him, he ordered it to be brought, and out of seven loaves and a few little fishes made a second dinner for an immense multitude by a miracle, few or none of them having been present at the former dinner. They seem to have been mostly such as followed Jesus from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and the neighbouring heathen country; hence they are said, on seeing his miracles, to have glorified the God of Israel. This dinner was in all respects like the first, except in the number of loaves and fishes of which it was made, the number of persons who were present at it, and the number of baskets that were filled with the fragments that remained. "One cannot but remark," says Dr. Macknight, "with what wisdom Jesus chose to be so much in deserts during this period of his ministry. He was resolved, in the discharge of the duties of it, to make as little noise as possible, to avoid crowds, and to be followed only by such as had dispositions proper for profiting by his instructions. And, to say the truth, not a great many others would accompany him into solitudes, where they were to sustain the inconveniences of hunger, and the weather, for several days together. As the multitude on this and the like occasions remained long with Jesus, doubtless his doctrine distilled upon them all the while like dew, and as the small rain upon the tender herb. If so, what satisfaction and edification should we find in the divine discourses which he then delivered, were we in possession of them! The refreshment we receive from such of them as the inspired writers have preserved, raises an ardent desire of the rest. At the same time it must be acknowledged, that we are blessed with as much of Christ's doctrine as is fully sufficient to all the purposes of salvation."

Verses 6-9. *He commanded the people to sit down*—The evangelists having, in the account of the

A. M. 4036. on the ground : and he took the seven
A. D. 32. loaves, and gave thanks, and brake,
and gave to his disciples to set before them ;
and they did set *them* before the people.

7 And they had a few small fishes ; and ° he
blessed, and commanded to set them also be-
fore *them*.

8 So they did eat, and were filled : and they
took up of the broken *meat* that was left, seven
baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four
thousand : and he sent them away.

10 ¶ And ^dstraightway he entered into a
ship with his disciples, and came into the parts
of Dalmanutha.

* Matt. xiv. 19 ; Ch. vi. 41.—^d Matt. xv. 39.—^o Matt. xii. 38 ;

former dinner, described the manner in which the
multitude was set down, thought it needless on this
occasion to say any thing of that particular, probably
because they were ranged as before, in companies
by hundreds and fifties. *And he took the seven
loaves, and gave thanks*—He gave thanks for the
fishes separately, and distributed them separately.
So they did eat—Matthew, *they did all eat, and were
filled* ; were abundantly satisfied. *And they took
up of the broken meat, &c.*—Which Jesus ordered
them to gather up, that he might thus convince
them, in the strongest manner, of the greatness of
the miracle ; and teach them also, at the same time,
to use a prudent frugality in the midst of plenty.
This miracle, and also the former of the same kind,
recorded chap. vi. 40, &c., were intended to demon-
strate, that Christ was the true bread which cometh
down from heaven ; for he who was almighty to
create bread without means to support natural life,
could not want power to create bread without means
to support spiritual life. And this heavenly bread
we stand so much in need of every moment, that
we ought to be always praying, “ Lord, evermore
give us this bread.”

Verses 10–13. *He entered into a ship, and came
into the parts of Dalmanutha*—Matthew says that,
having fed the multitude, he *took ship, and came
into the coasts of Magdala* : but the evangelists
may easily be reconciled, by supposing that Dal-
manutha was a city and territory within the district
of Magdala. *The Pharisees came forth and began
to question with him*—The Pharisees, having heard
of the second miraculous dinner, and fearing that
the whole common people would acknowledge him
for the Messiah, resolved to confute his pretensions
fully and publicly. For this purpose, they came
forth with the Sadducees, (see Matt. xvi. 1,) who,
though the opposites and rivals of the Pharisees in
all other matters, joined them in their design of op-
pressing Jesus, and, along with them, demanded of
him a *sign from heaven, tempting*, that is, *trying
him*. See note on Matt. xvi. 1. Some think the

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11 ° And the Pharisees came forth, A. M. 4036.
and began to question with him, seek- A. D. 32.
ing of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and
saith, Why doth this generation seek after a
sign ? Verily I say unto you, There shall no
sign be given unto this generation.

13 And he left them, and entering into the
ship again, departed to the other side.

14 ¶ ^fNow *the disciples* had forgotten to
take bread, neither had they in the ship with
them more than one loaf.

15 ^gAnd he charged them, saying, Take
heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,
and of the leaven of Herod.

xvi. 1 ; John vi. 30.—^f Mat. xvi. 5.—^g Mat. xvi. 6 ; Lu. xii. 1.

Jews, “ understanding the prophecy, Dan. vii. 13,
literally, expected the Messiah would make his first
public appearance in the clouds of heaven, and
take unto himself glory and a temporal kingdom ;”
and that, therefore, “ when the Pharisees desired
Jesus to show them a sign from heaven, they cer-
tainly meant that he should demonstrate himself to
be the Messiah, by coming in a visible and miracu-
lous manner from heaven with great pomp, and
by wresting the kingdom out of the hands of the
Romans.” These hypocrites craftily feigned an
inclination to believe, if he could but give them
sufficient evidence of his divine mission. However,
their true design was, that by his failing to give the
proof which they required, he should expose himself
to general blame. *And he sighed deeply in his
spirit*—Feeling the bitterest grief on account of the
incurable disposition. *And said, Why
doth this generation seek after a sign*—When so
many signs, so many incontrovertible proofs of my
mission from God have been already given, and
continue to be given daily ? *Verily there shall no
sign be given*—None such as they seek ; *to this
generation*—See note on Matt. xvi. 3, 4. The origi-
nal expression here, *ei δοθησεται σημειον*, if a sign
shall be given, is an elliptical form of an oath, as is
evident from Heb. iii. 11. In ordinary cases, it may
be supplied out of the ancient forms of swearing,
thus : *God do so to me, and more also, if a sign
shall be given*. But, in the mouth of God, such an
oath must be supplied thus : *Let me not be true, if
they shall enter into my rest ; if a sign shall be
given, &c.* Or, as in Ezek. xiv. 16, *ζω εγω, ει υιοι, η
θυγατρες σωθησονται, I live not, if sons or daughters
be delivered*.

Verses 14–21. *The disciples had forgotten to take
bread, &c.*—For an explanation of this paragraph,
see note on Matt. xvi. 5–12. *Beware of the leaven
of the Pharisees and of Herod*—By the leaven of
Herod the doctrine of the Sadducees is intended,
which was, in almost every point, in direct opposi-
tion to that of the Pharisees. Of the two sects, see

A. M. 4036. 16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* ^h because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it*, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? ⁱ perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

19 ^k When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

20 And ^l when the seven among four thou-

^h Matt. xvi. 7.—ⁱ Chap. vi. 52.—^k Matt. xiv. 20; John vi. 13.

the note on Matt. iii. 7. *And they reasoned among themselves*—They talked privately among themselves about the meaning of their Master's exhortation, and agreed that it was a reproof for their neglecting to take bread along with them. *When Jesus knew it*—Which he did immediately, for the thoughts of their minds, as well as the words of their tongues, were all observed by him; *he saith, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread?* Why should your neglecting to take bread with you make you put such an interpretation upon my words? *Perceive ye not yet, &c.*—After having been so long with me, are ye still ignorant of my power and goodness? *Have ye your heart yet hardened?* Is no abiding impression made yet upon your minds by the many and great miracles I have performed, and the many discourses which you have heard me deliver? *Having eyes, see ye not, &c.*—As if he had said, My miracles being all the objects of your senses, no extraordinary degree of capacity was requisite to enable you to judge of them. How came it then, that, having the senses of sight and hearing entire, you were not struck with the two miracles of the loaves and fishes, so as to remember them, and derive instruction from them? Our Lord here, it must be observed, affirms of all the apostles, (for the question is equivalent to an affirmation,) that their *hearts were hardened*: that, *having eyes they saw not, having ears they heard not*; that they *did not consider, neither understand*; the very same expressions that occur in the xiiith of Matthew. And yet it is certain that they were not *judicially hardened*. Therefore all these strong expressions do not necessarily import any thing more than the *present want* of spiritual understanding.

Verses 22–26. *And he cometh to Bethsaida*—Where he had done many mighty works, without their producing the desired effect, the people remaining in impenitence and unbelief, Matt. xi. 21. The following miracle, it may be observed, is recorded by Mark only; a plain proof that he is not to be considered as a mere abridger of Matthew. *And they bring him a blind man, and besought him to touch him*—Here appears the faith of those that

sand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, ^m Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that ⁿ ye do not understand?

22 ¶ And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when ^a he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking.

^l Matt. xv. 37.—^m Chap. vi. 52; Verse 17.—ⁿ Chap. vii. 33.

brought him; they doubted not but one touch of Christ's hand would restore his sight; but the man himself did not show that earnest desire for, or expectation of, a cure, that many others did. *He took and led him out of the town*—Declaring hereby, that those of Bethsaida, who had seen so many miracles in vain, were unworthy to behold this: for had our Lord herein only designed privacy, he might have led him into a house, or into an inner chamber, and have cured him there. *And when he had spit on his eyes, &c.*—Our Lord could have cured this man, as he did some others, with a word's speaking, but he was pleased thus to use signs, as he did on some other occasions, probably with a view to assist the man's faith, which it seems was very weak; it was evident, however, that the signs which he used had no natural tendency to effect a cure, nor indeed had any of the signs which our Lord ever used on such occasions: *He asked him if he saw aught, &c.*—Jesus did not, as on other occasions of a like nature, impart the faculty of sight to this blind man all at once, but by degrees: for the man at first saw things obscurely, and could not distinguish men from trees, otherwise than that he could discern them to move. His expression may be easily accounted for, on supposition that he was not born blind, but had lost his sight by some accident; for if that was the case, he might have retained the idea both of men and trees. By a second imposition of Christ's hands he received a clear sight of every object in view. Our Lord's intention in this might be to make it evident that in his cures he was not confined to one method of operation, but could dispense them in what manner he pleased. In the mean time, though the cure was performed by degrees, it was accomplished in so small a space of time, as to make it evident that it was not produced by any natural efficacy of our Lord's spittle or touch, but merely by the exertion of his miraculous power. Christ perhaps intended, by restoring the man's sight gradually, to signify in what way those who are by nature spiritually blind, are generally healed by his grace. At first, their knowledge of divine things is indistinct, obscure, and confused; they see

A. M. 4036. 25 After that he put *his* hands
A. D. 32. again upon his eyes, and made him
look up: and he was restored, and saw every
man clearly.

26 And he sent him away to his house, say-
ing, Neither go into the town, ° nor tell *it* to
any in the town.

27 ¶ ^p And Jesus went out, and his disciples,
into the towns of Cesarea Philippi: and by
the way he asked his disciples, saying unto
them, Who do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, ° John the Baptist:
but some *say*, Elias; and others, One of the
prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But who say ye
that I am? And Peter answereth and saith
unto him, ° Thou art the Christ.

° Matt. viii. 4; Chap. v. 43.—^p Matt. xvi. 13; Luke ix. 18.
° Matt. xiv. 2.—^r Matt. xvi. 6; John vi. 69; xi. 27.

men as trees walking; but afterward, by a second or third imposition of the Saviour's hands, a further degree of spiritual discernment is communicated, and they see all things clearly. Their light, like that of the morning, shines more and more unto the perfect day. Let us, then, inquire if we have any sight of, or acquaintance with, those things of which faith is the evidence; and if, through grace, we have any true knowledge of them, we may hope that it will increase more and more, till we are fully translated out of our natural darkness of ignorance and folly, into the marvellous light of truth and wisdom. *And he sent him away, saying, Neither go into the town*—Where probably some who had seen Christ lead him out of the town, were expecting to see him return; but who, having been eye-witnesses of so many miracles, had not so much as the curiosity to follow him. Such therefore were not to be gratified with the sight of him when he was cured, that would not show so much respect to Christ as to go a step out of the town to see the cure wrought. *Nor tell it to any in the town*—Christ does not forbid him to tell it to others, but he must not tell it to any of the inhabitants of Bethsaida. Observe, reader, the slighting of Christ's favours is forfeiting them; and he will make those know the worth of their privileges by the want of them, that would not know them otherwise. Bethsaida, in the day of her visitation, would not know the things that belonged to her peace, and therefore they are now hid from her eyes.

Verses 27-30. *And Jesus went into the towns of Cesarea Philippi*—These verses are explained at large in the notes on Matt. xvi. 13-20. *He charged them that they should tell no man of him*—He enjoined on them silence for the present, 1st, That he might not encourage the people to set him up for a temporal king; 2d, That he might not provoke the scribes and Pharisees to destroy him before the time; and, 3d, That he might not forestall the brighter

30 ° And he charged them that they
should tell no man of him. A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32.

31 ¶ And ° he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 ¶ And when he had called the people unto *him*, with his disciples also, he said unto them, ° Whosoever will come after me, let him

° Matt. xvi. 20.—^r Matt. xv. 21; xvii. 22; Luke ix. 22.
° Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24; Luke ix. 23; xiv. 27.

evidence which was to be given of his divine character after his resurrection.

Verses 31-33. *And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer*—The disciples being now convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and having made confession of him as such, they were prepared to receive this further and equally important discovery, which they could not have borne before, without being so offended as to forsake him; and which, perhaps, they could hardly have borne now, had they thoroughly understood, and fully believed, Christ's words; for they certainly still expected that he would assume external pomp and power, and *restore the kingdom of Israel*, an expectation which they held fast, even till the day of his ascension into heaven. *And he spake that saying openly*—Παρρησια, plainly, namely to the apostles. Our Lord frequently after this repeated the prediction of his sufferings; for instance, Matt. xvii. 22; xx. 18; xxvi. 2; Luke xxii. 15. But it is remarkable that on none of those occasions was the prophecy delivered to any but the twelve, and a few select women, one instance excepted, namely, Luke xvii. 25, when it was expressed in terms somewhat obscure. The multitude of the disciples were never let into the secret, because it might have made them desert Christ, as they had not, like the apostles, raised expectations of particular preferments in his kingdom, to bias their understandings, and hinder them from perceiving the meaning of the prediction. It is true, he foretold his resurrection from the dead more publicly; for oftener than once he appealed to it as the principal proof of his mission, even in the presence of the priests, as is evident from their mentioning it to Pilate, Matt. xxvii. 63. It seems the priests had often been our Lord's hearers. See the notes on Matt. xvi. 21-23.

Verses 34-38. *When he had called the people unto him*—To hear a truth of the last importance, and

A. M. 4036. deny himself, and take up his cross,
A. D. 32. and follow me.

35 For ²whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

² John xii. 25.—⁷ Matt. x. 33; Luke ix. 26; xii. 9.

one that equally concerned them all; *whosoever will come after me*—And be a disciple of mine, entitled to all the privileges and blessings which belong to my disciples in this world and the next; *let him deny himself*—His own will, in all things, great and small, however pleasing, and that continually; *and take up his cross*—Embrace the will of God, however painful, daily, hourly, continually. Thus only can he *follow me* in holiness to glory. See on Matt. xvi. 24–26. *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me*—Poor, despised, and a man of sorrows though I

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

38 ⁷ Whosoever therefore ² shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

² Rom. i. 16; 2 Tim. i. 8; ii. 12.

am; *and of my words*—That is, of avowing by word and action whatever I have said, particularly this my precept of self-denial, and taking up the daily cross: and whosoever is not heartily willing to sustain the scoffs of a wicked world, to which the profession and practice of my religion may expose him; *of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, &c.*—He shall be ashamed to acknowledge one for his disciple who has acted in a manner so unlike his Master, and so unworthy of his religion. See on Matt. x. 32, 33.

CHAPTER IX.

In this chapter we have, (1,) Christ's transfiguration on the mount, 1–13. (2,) His casting the devil out of a child, when the disciples could not do it, 14–29. (3,) His prediction of his own sufferings and death, 30–32. (4,) The reproof he gave to his disciples for their carnal ambition, 33–37. (5,) And to John for rebuking one who cast out devils in Christ's name, and did not follow with them, 38–41. (6,) His discourse with his disciples of the danger of offending one of his little ones, 42; and of indulging that in ourselves which is an offence, and an occasion of sin to us, 43–50. This chapter coincides with Matt. xii. and xviii.

A. M. 4036. AND he said unto them, ^a Verily I
A. D. 32. say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen ^b the kingdom of God come with power.

2 ¶ ^c And after six days, Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them.

3 And his raiment became shining, exceed-

^a Matt. xvi. 28; Luke ix. 27.—^b Matt. xxiv. 30, xxv. 31: Luke xxii. 18.

ing ^d white as snow; so as no fuller A. M. 4036. on earth can white them. A. D. 32.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6 For he wist not what to say: for they were sore afraid.

^c Matt. xvii. 1; Luke ix. 28.—^d Dan. vii. 9; Matt. xxviii. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1. *Some that stand here shall not taste of death, &c.*—See on Matt. xvi. 28; till they see the kingdom of God come with power—So it began to do when three thousand were converted to God at once.

Verses 2–10. *Jesus taketh with him Peter, &c., apart by themselves*—That is, separate from the

multitude, apart from the apostles; *and was transfigured before them*—The word μεταμορφωθη, here used, seems to refer to the form of God, and the form of a servant, mentioned by St. Paul, Phil. ii. 6, 7, and may intimate that the divine rays, which the indwelling Deity let out on this occasion, made the glorious change from one of these forms into the other. *White as snow, as no fuller on earth can whiten*—

A. M. 4036. 7 And there was a cloud that over-
A. D. 32. shadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at naught.

13 But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

14 And when he came to his disciples, he

saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him, saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away; and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not.

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming.

* Matt. xvii. 9.—† Mal. iv. 5; Matt. xvii. 10.—‡ Psa. xxii. 6; Isa. liii. 2, &c.; Dan. ix. 26.—¹ Luke xxiii. 11; Phil. ii. 7. ² Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 12; Luke i. 17.

* Matt. xvii. 14; Luke ix. 37.—¹ Or, among yourselves? ² Matt. xvii. 14; Luke ix. 38.—³ Or, dasheth him.—⁴ Chap. i. 26; Luke ix. 42.

Such as could not be equalled either by nature or art: *And there appeared Elias*—Whom they expected: *Moses*—Whom they did not. See the whole paragraph explained and improved, Matt. xvii. 1–13.

Verses 12, 13. *Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things, and how it is written*—That is, *And*, he told them, *how it is written*. As if he had said, *Elijah's coming is not inconsistent with my suffering. He is come; yet I shall suffer.* The first part of the verse answers their question concerning *Elijah*; the second refutes their error concerning the *Messiah's continuing for ever*.

Verses 14–19. *When he came to his disciples he saw a great multitude*—Probably this multitude had remained there all night, waiting till Jesus should return from the mountain, *and the scribes questioning*—Greek, *συζητοῦντας*, *disputing with them*, namely, with the nine who remained on the plain. Doubtless they took the opportunity of their Master's absence to expose and distress them. *And all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed*—At his coming so suddenly, so seasonably, so unexpectedly: perhaps, also, at some unusual rays of majesty and glory, which yet remained on his countenance; as, it seems, *Moses's face shone several hours after he had been with God on the mount. And running to him, saluted him*—With the greatest marks of respect and affection. The scribes and Pharisees, however, without regarding his return, continued their ill-natured attacks on his

disciples. *And he asked the scribes*—Namely, when the salutations of the multitude were over. *What question ye with them?*—What is the subject of your dispute with them? What is the point you are debating so warmly? The scribes gave no answer to our Lord's question. They did not care to repeat what they had said to his disciples: but *one of the multitude said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, &c.*—From the narrative which this man gives, in answer to what Jesus said to the scribes, it appears that they had been disputing about the cure of this youth, which the disciples had unsuccessfully attempted. And probably their want of success had given the scribes occasion to boast that a devil was found that neither the disciples nor their Master was able to cast out. See notes on Matt. xvii. 14–21. *Which hath a dumb spirit*—A spirit that takes his speech from him; *and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him*—Or rather convulseth him, *and he foameth*—At the mouth; *and gnasheth with his teeth*—In extremity of anguish; *and pineth away*—Though in the bloom of his age. *And I spake to thy disciples*—Entreated them to cast him out; *and they could not*. The Lord Jesus permitted this for wise reasons, chiefly, perhaps, to keep them humble, and sensible of their entire dependance on him for all their power to perform cures, or do any manner of thing that was good.

Verses 20–22. *And when he saw him*—When the

A. M. 4036. 21 And he asked his father, How
A. D. 32. long is it ago since this came unto
him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the
fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if
thou canst do any thing, have compassion on
us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, ^a If thou canst be-
lieve, all things are possible to him that be-
lieveth.

24 And straightway the father of the child
cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe;
help thou mine unbelief.

^a Matt. xvii. 20; Chap. xi. 23; Luke

child saw Jesus, being brought to him by his father: when his deliverance was at hand; *immediately the spirit tore him*—Made his last, grand effort to destroy him. Is it not generally so, before Satan relinquishes his power over a soul of which he has long had possession? *And he* (Christ) *asked, How long is it, &c.*—The Lord Jesus made this inquiry for the same reason for which he suffered Satan to make the violent attack upon the youth just mentioned, namely, that the spectators might be impressed with a more lively sense of his deplorable condition. *And he said, From a child*—Greek, *παιδιθεν*, from his childhood, or, as some render it, from his infancy. *And oftentimes it*—The evil spirit; *hath cast him into the fire, &c., to destroy him*—Such is the power it has over him, and such its infernal rage and malice! *But if thou canst do any thing*—In so desperate a case; *have compassion on us*—On me as well as him; *and help us*—The afflicted father, greatly discouraged by the inability of our Lord's disciples, and dispirited by the sight of his son's misery, and by the remembrance of its long continuance, was afraid this possession might surpass the power of Jesus himself, and therefore spoke thus, expressing his doubts and fears in a manner very natural, and yet strongly pathetic, and obliquely interesting the honour of Christ in the issue of the affair.

Verses 23–27. *Jesus said, If thou canst believe, &c.*—As if he had said, The question is not respecting my power, but thy faith. I can do all things: canst thou believe? *If thou canst believe*—Canst rely with confidence on my power, love, and faithfulness, and be persuaded that I can and will grant thy request, the deliverance which thou desirest will surely be effected; for *all things are possible*—To God, and all things of this kind, such as the deliverance of a person's soul or body from the power of Satan, or the recovery of a person from sickness, or from any calamity or trouble, are possible to him that believeth—In the power and goodness of God, and makes application to him in prayer, *lifting up holy hands, as without wrath*, and every unkind temper, so without doubting. *And straightway the father*—Touched to the very heart to think that his dear son might possibly lose the cure through the

25 When Jesus saw that the peo- A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32. ple came running together, he re-
buked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.*

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 ° And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

xvii. 6; John xi. 40.—° Matt. xvii. 19.

weakness of his faith; *cried out with tears, Lord, I believe*—That thy power and goodness are unlimited; yet such is my frailty, that when I look on my child, and consider the miserable condition he is in, my faith is ready to fail me again: therefore, *help thou mine unbelief*—That is, help me against my unbelief, by mitigating the circumstances of the trial, or communicating suitable strength to my soul. The Greek is, *βοηθει μοι τη απιστια*, which Dr. Campbell renders, *Supply thou the defects of my faith*, observing, "It is evident from the preceding clause, that *απιστια* denotes here a *deficient faith*, not a total want of faith. I have used the word *supply*, as hitting more exactly what I take to be the sense of the passage." Grotius justly expresses it, *Quod fiducia mee deest, bonitate tua supple*: "What is wanting to my faith, supply by thy goodness." *When Jesus saw the people running together*—The vehemence with which the father of the child spake, occasioned by the greatness of his grief, brought the crowd about them. Jesus, therefore, to prevent further disturbance, immediately commanded the unclean spirit to depart from the youth, *saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit*—So termed because he made the child deaf and dumb: when Jesus spake, the devil heard, though the child could not: *I charge thee*—I myself, now; not my disciples; *come out of him, and enter no more into him*—Leave him instantly, and presume not any more to trouble or disquiet him as long as he lives. *And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, &c.*—Scarcely had Jesus uttered the word when the devil came out of the child, making a hideous howling, and convulsing him to such a degree, that he lay senseless and without motion, as one dead, till Jesus took him by the hand, instantly brought him to life, and then delivered him to his father perfectly recovered.

Verses 28, 29. *When he was come into the house, his disciples asked him, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xvii. 19–21. *This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting*—"Some doubts have been raised in regard to the meaning of the words, *this kind*. The most obvious interpretation is, doubtless, that which refers them to the word *demon*, immediately preceding. But as, in the parallel

A. M. 4036. 29 And he said unto them, This
A. D. 32. kind can come forth by nothing, but
by prayer and fasting.

30 ¶ And they departed thence, and passed
through Galilee; and he would not that any
man should know it.

31 ^p For he taught his disciples, and said
unto them, The Son of man is delivered into
the hands of men, and they shall kill him;
and after that he is killed, he shall rise the
third day.

^p Matt. xvii. 22; Luke ix. 44.—^q Matt. xviii. 1; Luke

passage in Matt. xvii. 19, mention is made of *faith*, as the necessary qualification for dispossessing *demons*, Knatchbull and others have thought that *this kind*, refers to the *faith* that is requisite. But it is an insurmountable objection to this hypothesis, that we have here the same sentiment, almost the same expression, and ushered in with the same words, *this kind*, though, in what goes before, there is no mention of *faith*, or of any thing but *demon*, to which it can refer. It would be absurd to suppose, that the pronouns and relatives in one gospel refer to antecedents in another. Every one of the gospels does indeed give additional information, and in various ways serves to throw light upon the rest. But every gospel must be a consistent history by itself; otherwise, to attempt an explanation would be in vain. Now the argument stands thus: The story related in both gospels is manifestly the same: that the words in question may refer to *demon* in Matthew, no person who attentively reads the passage can deny; that they cannot refer to *faith*, but must refer to *demon*, in Mark, is equally evident. Either, then, they refer to *demon* in both, or the evangelists contradict one another. Some have considered it as an objection to the above explanation, that it supposes different kinds of *demons*; and that the expulsion of some kinds is more difficult than that of others. This objection is founded entirely on our own ignorance. Who can say that there are not different kinds of *demons*? or that there may not be degrees in the power of expelling? Revelation has not said that they are all of one kind, and may be expelled with equal ease.—Campbell.

Verses 30–32. *And they departed thence*—From the country of Cesarea Philippi; and passed through Galilee—Not through the cities, but by them, in the most private ways; for he would not that any man should know it—Lest the important conversation into which he then intended to enter with his disciples should be interrupted by company; for he purposed to converse freely with them, and instruct them fully concerning his sufferings. *For he taught his disciples, &c.*—The evangelist here assigns this as the reason why he desired his journey to be private, namely, that he might have an opportunity to talk over this subject at large. *And said, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men*—It is as sure as if it were done already. This declaration,

32 But they understood not that A. M. 4036.
saying, and were afraid to ask him. A. D. 32.

33 ¶ And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves who *should be* the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be

ix. 46; xxii. 24.—^r Matt. xx. 26, 27; Chap. x. 43.

according to Luke, he prefaced by saying, *Let these sayings sink down into your ears*, signifying hereby, not only their certain truth, but their unspeakable importance, and that they ought to be seriously considered and laid to heart. *But they understood not that saying*—They could not comprehend how he, who was to abide on earth for ever, and was to deliver others from the universal destroyer, should himself fall under his stroke: Or, they could not reconcile his death, nor consequently his resurrection, which supposed his death, with their notions of his temporal kingdom: Luke says, *And it was hid from them*, namely, by their own prejudices and misconceptions concerning the Messiah. For, seeing he spake of *rising again the third day*, they were not able to divine any reason for his dying at all, being ignorant, as yet, of the nature and ends of his death. *And they were afraid to ask him*—Taking no comfort from the mention that was made of his resurrection, the prediction raised such fears in their minds, that they durst not ask him to explain it; especially as they remembered that he had often inculcated it, and had reprimanded Peter for being unwilling to hear it.

Verses 33–37. *Being in the house*—With his apostles, with a view to introduce the discourse he intended; he asked, *What was it that ye disputed among yourselves, &c.*—Our Lord's late prediction concerning his sufferings had made the disciples exceeding sorry, Matt. xvii. 23; but their grief soon went off, or their ignorance quickly got the better of it; for in a day or two after, some of them, forming a separate company, fell a disputing about the chief posts of honour and profit in their Master's kingdom. This debate Jesus overheard; and though he said nothing to them at the time, yet afterward, when they were alone in the house, he did not fail to inquire about it. They were at first silent, not caring to discover the matter to him. Therefore, *he sat down, and called the twelve*—Namely, to stand round him, and attend to what he should say and do. It is natural to suppose that twelve persons, travelling together on foot, would form themselves into two or three little companies, while some of them no doubt would be attending Christ and discoursing with him: but our Lord judged it proper, being now in the house, that all the twelve should hear this admonition, though they might not all have

A. M. 4036. first, *the same* shall be last of all, and
A. D. 32. servant of all.

36 And ^a he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and ^a whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 ¶ ^a And John answered him, saying, Mas-

^a Matthew xviii. 2; Chapter x. 16.—¹ Matthew x. 40; Luke ix. 48.

been engaged in the dispute which occasioned it. *And saith, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be, or let him be, last of all*—Let him abase himself the most: *And servant of all*—Let him serve his brethren in all the offices of humility, condescension, and kindness. In other words, If any man desire to be the greatest person in my kingdom, let him endeavour to obtain that dignity by preferring others in honour, and by doing them all the good in his power. This he said, to signify that in his kingdom, they who are most humble and modest, and zealous in doing good, shall be acknowledged as the greatest persons. *And he took a child*—That happened then to be in the house where they lodged; *and set him in the midst of them*—That they might all fix their eyes upon him, and attend to the instruction which Jesus was about to draw from such an emblem of simplicity, sincerity, humility, teachableness, and innocence. Luke expresses it thus: *And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child.* His perceiving their thought does not seem to relate to the dispute which happened some hours before, and which they had sufficiently declared in their question, but it relates to their present frame of mind. He knew that each of them ardently wished to be the greatest in his kingdom, and he proposed to cure their ambition. See the notes on Matt. xviii. 1-4. *He said, Whosoever shall receive one of such children*—Whosoever shall show kindness, even to the least of my disciples; whosoever shall encourage and assist such a one because he belongs to me; *receiveth me*—Thus, after showing how acceptable a grace humility is, he next declares that kindness shown to such as humble themselves, like little children, is in reality kindness shown to him, especially if it be done out of obedience to his command. *Whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me*—Even my heavenly Father, who is honoured or affronted as I am respected or slighted. And this regard to the meanest of my servants, I must urge upon you as of the utmost importance. *For (Luke) he that is least among you all, that acts as if he were the least, or meanest, or who is most humble and condescending, the same shall be great, in my esteem, and be distinguished by peculiar marks of the divine favour.* See notes on Matt. xviii. 4, 5.

Verses 38-40. *And John answered him*—As if he

ter, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; ^a and we forbade him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: ^a for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For ^y he that is not against us, is on our part.

41 ^a For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong

^a Num. xi. 28; Luke ix. 49.—^x 1 Cor. xii. 3.—^y Matt. xii. 30.
² Matt. x. 42.

had said, *But ought we to receive those who follow not us? Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name*—Probably this was one of John the Baptist's disciples, who believed in Jesus, though he did not yet associate with our Lord's disciples. *And we forbade him, because he followeth not us*—How often is the same temper found in us! How readily do we also *lust to envy!* But how ill does that spirit become a disciple, much more a minister, of the benevolent Jesus! St. Paul had learned a better temper, when he *rejoiced that Christ was preached, even by those who were his personal enemies.* But to confine religion to them that follow us, is a narrowness of spirit which we should avoid and abhor. *Jesus said, &c.*—Christ here gives us a lovely example of candour and moderation. He was willing to put the best construction on doubtful cases, and to treat as friends those who were not avowed enemies. Perhaps in this instance it was a means of conquering the remainder of prejudice, and perfecting what was wanting in the faith and obedience of these persons. *Forbid him not*—Neither directly nor indirectly discourage or hinder any man, who brings sinners from the power of Satan to God, *because he followeth not us, in opinions, modes of worship, or any thing else which does not affect the essence of religion.* *For he that is not against us, is for us*—Our Lord had formerly said, *He that is not with me, is against me:* thereby admonishing his hearers that the war between him and Satan admitted of no neutrality, and that those who were indifferent to him now, would finally be treated as enemies. But here, in another view, he uses a very different proverb; directing his followers to judge of men's characters in the most candid manner; and charitably to hope, that those who did not oppose his cause wished well to it. Upon the whole, we are to be *rigorous in judging ourselves, and candid in judging each other.*

Verses 41, 42. *For whosoever shall give you a cup of water, &c.*—Having answered John, our Lord resumes the discourse, which was broken off at verse 37. And to show the apostles further, that they had been in the wrong to discourage this person, who must have entertained a great veneration for their Master, and was in a fair way to become his follower, he told them, that the lowest degree of respect which any one showed him, though it were but the giving a cup of cold water to one of his thirsty

A. M. 4036. to Christ, verily I say unto you, he
A. D. 32. shall not lose his reward.

42 ^a And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

^a Matthew xviii. 6; Luke xvii. 1.—^b Deut. xiii. 6; Matthew v. 29; xviii. 8.

disciples, would be acceptable to him, and should not lose its reward: whereas, on the other hand, the least discouragement of his servants in their duty, come from what quarter it might, should be severely punished. For he added, *Whosoever shall offend, και ος αν σκανδαλιση, whosoever shall cause to stumble one of these little ones*—The very least Christian. *It is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck*—See note on Matt. xviii. 5, 6.

Verse 43. *And if thy hand offend thee, &c.*—The discourse here passes from the case of offending to that of being offended. If one who is as useful or dear to thee as a hand or eye, prevent thee from walking in the ways of God, or hinder thee therein, renounce all intercourse with him. This primarily relates to persons; secondarily, to things. See the note on Matt. v. 29, 30, where this subject is explained at large. The sum is, It is better to deny one's self the greatest earthly satisfactions, and to part with any and every person and thing, however precious, represented by the figures of a *hand*, a *foot*, and *eye*, than by these things to cause the weakest of Christ's disciples to stumble, or to be made to stumble ourselves. Further, the amputation of our hands and feet, and the digging out of our eyes, when they cause us to stumble, import also, that we should deny ourselves such use of our senses and members as may lead us into sin. Thus the hand and the eye are to be turned away from those alluring objects which raise in us lust and ambition. The foot must be restrained from carrying us into evil company, unlawful diversions, and forbidden pleasures. Nor can we complain of these injunctions as severe, since by causing, or even by tempting others to sin, as well as by sinning ourselves, we are exposed to the eternal punishments of hell. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*—“These expressions seem to be borrowed from Isa. lxvi. 24, in which passage the prophet is describing the miserable end of hardened sinners, by a similitude taken from the behaviour of conquerors, who, after having gained the battle, and beaten the enemy out of the field, go forth to view the slain. Thus, at the last day, the devil, with all his adherents, being finally and completely vanquished, the saints shall go forth to view them, doomed by the just judgment of God to eternal death. And this their punishment is represented by two metaphors, drawn from the different ways of burying the dead in use among the Jews. Bodies of men, interred in the earth, are eaten up of worms, which die when their food faileth; and those that

43 ^b And if thy hand ³ offend thee, cut ^a A. M. 4036.
it off: it is better for thee to enter into life ^a A. D. 32.
maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 ^o Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

³ Or, *cause thee to offend*: and so verses 43, 47.
^c Isa. lxvi. 24.

are burned are consumed in fire, which extinguishes itself when there is no more fuel added to feed it. But it shall not be so with the wicked; their worm shall not die, and their fire is not quenched. These metaphors, therefore, as they are used by our Lord, and by the Prophet Isaiah, paint the eternal punishments of the damned in strong and lively colours.”—Macknight. To this may be added, that by the *worm* here spoken of, *that dieth not*, may be denoted, the continual torture of an accusing conscience, and the misery naturally arising from the evil dispositions of pride, self-will, desire, malice, envy, shame, sorrow, despair; and by *the fire that is not quenched*, the positive punishment inflicted by the fiery wrath of God. Dr. Whitby's note on these verses deserves the reader's particular attention. After observing that these words, *Where their worm dieth not, &c.*, are taken from Isa. lxvi. 24, (where see the notes,) he adds, “It seems reasonable to interpret them according to the received opinion of the Jews, since otherwise our Lord, by using them so frequently in speaking to them, without saying any thing to show them that he did not understand the expression as they did, must have strengthened them in their error. Now, it is certain, 1st, That *gehenna* (hell) was by them still looked on as the place in which the wicked were to be tormented by fire. So the Jerusalem Targum, on Gen. xv. 17, represents it as a *furnace sparkling and flaming with fire, into which the wicked fall*. And the Targum, upon Eccl. ix. 15, speaks of the *fire of hell*; and, chap. x. 11, of the *sparks of the fire of hell*; and, chap. viii. 10, of the *wicked who shall go to be burned in hell*. Accordingly, our Lord speaks here, verse 47, and Matt. v. 22, of the wicked being *cast into hell fire*; and, Matt. xiii. 42, of their being *cast into a furnace of fire*. 2d, The ancient Jews held that the punishments of the wicked in hell will be perpetual, or without end. So Judith says, chap. xvi. 17, *κλαουσονται εν αισθησι εως αιωνος, they shall weep under the sense of their pains for ever*. Josephus informs us that the Pharisees held that the souls of the wicked were to be punished, *αιδω τιμωρια, with perpetual punishment*; and that there was appointed for them, *ειρημος αιδιος, a perpetual prison*. Philo saith, “The punishment of the wicked person is, *ζην αποθανοντα αιει, to live for ever dying*; and *to be for ever in pains, and griefs, and calamities that never cease*: accordingly our Lord says of them, *that they shall go away into eternal punishment*, Matt. xxv. 41; *that God will destroy the soul and body in hell*, Matt. x. 28; and here, *that their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched*.” Whence the doctor concludes, 1st, That though it is not to be

A. M. 4036. 45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it
A. D. 32.

off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having

* Or, cause thee to offend.—^d Lev. ii. 13; Ez. xliii. 24.
• Matt. v. 13; Luke xiv. 34.

doubted that the expression, *the worm dieth not*, is to be understood figuratively of remorse of conscience and keen self-reflection; yet, that the bodies of the wicked shall suffer in fire, properly so called, this he thinks being suitable not only to the tradition of the Jewish and of the Christian Church, but to the constant phraseology of the Scriptures. And, 2dly, That the punishment of the wicked shall be, strictly speaking, *eternal*; this also being the constant opinion of the Christian Church, as he shows in a note on Heb. vi. 2; and this punishment being consistent with divine justice and goodness, as he proves in his Appendix to 2 Thess. i. It is justly added here, by Dr. Macknight, "The most superficial reader must be sensible, that our Lord's repeating so frequently his declaration concerning the duration of future punishments, has in it something very awful, and implies that mankind should attend to it as a matter of infinite importance to them. It likewise affords a lesson to all the ministers of the gospel, directing them to enforce the precepts of religion, which they inculcate, by frequently and earnestly holding forth to the view of their hearers the terrors of a future judgment."

Verses 49, 50. *For every one shall be salted with fire*—These words seem to refer to the preceding, respecting the punishment of those who will not cut off the offending members, which render them obnoxious to future punishment: and so the import of them must be, that all such shall be "seasoned with fire itself, so as to become inconsumable, and shall endure for ever to be tormented, and therefore may be said to be *salted with fire*, in allusion to that property of salt which is to preserve things from corruption."—Whitby. This interpretation supposes the word *πας*, *every one*, to signify the same as if the expression had been *πας γαρ αυτων*, *for every one of them*, namely, whose fire is not quenched; shall be salted with, or in the fire; that is, preserved from corruption, in and by it. So chap. xii. 44, *παντες γαρ*, *for all*, that is, *all they*, as our translators render it, all those rich men, there spoken of. So Luke xvi. 16, *The kingdom of God is preached, και πας, and every one*, (namely, who believes,) *presseth into it*. And Luke xxi. 32, *This generation shall not pass away, εως αν παντα γενηται*, *till all things be done*, that is, *παντα ταυτα*, *all these things*, there mentioned. The reader may see many other instances in *Evagrius*. The sense, therefore, of the clause is, *Every one*, who does not comply with the preceding ad-

two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire: A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32.

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire,
^d and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50 *Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewithal will ye season it? † Have salt in yourselves, and ‡ have peace one with another.

† Eph. iv. 29; Col. iv. 6.—‡ Rom. xii. 18; xiv. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Heb. xiii. 14.

vice, and consequently is cast into hell, shall be, as it were, *salted with fire*, preserved, not consumed, thereby. *And every sacrifice*—That is, every person who offers himself unto God in repentance, faith, and new obedience, as a *living sacrifice*; shall be *salted with salt*—Even with the salt of divine grace, which purifies the soul, (though frequently with pain,) and preserves it from corruption. It is evident that there is an allusion here to that part of the law of Moses which required every meat-offering, or sacrifice, to be seasoned with salt. See Lev. ii. 13. *Salt is good*—Highly beneficial to the world in many respects: *But if the salt*—Which should season other things; *have lost its own saltness*; *Αναλον γενηται*, *become insipid*; *wherewith will ye season it?*—By what means will ye restore its saltness, or seasoning quality, to it? Thus, if you, whom I have termed *the salt of the earth*, (Matt. v. 13; where see the note,) and have appointed to be the chief instruments in seasoning the rest of mankind with truth and grace, with wisdom and piety, should lose your own grace, and your faith in, and relish for, the truths of my gospel, or should cease to be properly influenced thereby, wherewith can you be seasoned? Beware, therefore, of apostatizing from the truth, and of falling from grace: see that you retain your savour, and the seasoning virtue wherewith I have endued you, and, as a proof of it, *have peace one with another*.

More largely this obscure text might be paraphrased thus: As every burnt-offering was salted with salt, in order to its being cast into the fire of the altar, so every one who will not part with his hand or eye, shall fall a sacrifice to divine justice, and be cast into hell-fire, which will not consume, but preserve him from a cessation of being. And on the other hand, every one who, denying himself, and taking up his cross, offers up himself as a living sacrifice to God, shall be seasoned with grace, which, like salt, will make him savoury, and preserve him from destruction for ever. *As salt is good* for preserving meats, and making them savoury, so it is good that ye be seasoned with grace, for the purifying your hearts and lives, and for spreading the savour of my knowledge, both in your own souls, and wherever ye go. But as salt, if it loses its saltness, is fit for nothing, so ye, if ye lose your faith and love, are fit for nothing but to be utterly destroyed. See therefore that grace abide in you, and that ye no more contend, *Who shall be greatest?*

CHAPTER X.

Here, (1,) Christ disputes with the Pharisees concerning divorce, 1-12. (2,) He kindly receives the little children that were brought to him to be blessed, 13-16. (3,) He tries the rich man that inquires what he must do to inherit eternal life, 17-22. (4,) He discourses with his disciples, on that occasion, concerning the peril of riches, and the advantage of forsaking all for his sake, 23-31. (5,) He again gives his disciples notice of his sufferings and death approaching, 32-34. (6,) He counsels James and John to think of suffering rather than of reigning with him, 35-45. (7,) He cures Bartimeus, a poor blind man, 46-52. The substance of all these passages we had before, Matt. xix., xx.

A. M. 4037. **AND** ^a he arose from thence, and ^b cometh into the coasts of Judea, by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 ¶ ^b And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, ^c Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart, he wrote you this precept:

6 But from the beginning of the creation, ^d God made them male and female.

^a Matt. xix. 1; John x. 40; xi. 7.—^b Matt. xix. 3.—^c Deut. xxiv. 1; Matt. v. 31; xix. 7.—^d Gen. i. 27; v. 2.—^e Gen. ii.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verses 1-12. *He cometh into the coasts of Judea, &c.*—This paragraph is explained at large in the notes on Matt. xix. 1-11. *From the beginning of the creation*—Therefore Moses, in the first chapter of Genesis, gives us an account of things from the beginning of the creation of this lower world. Does it not clearly follow from hence, that there was no creation here below, previous to that which Moses describes? *Whosoever shall put away his wife, &c.*—Though this discourse of Christ be originally about divorce, yet all polygamy is also condemned by it, as the reader may see in the note on Matt. xix. 4-6. *And if a woman shall put away her husband, &c.*—“This practice of divorcing the husband, unwarranted by the law, had been (as Josephus informs us) introduced by Salome, sister of Herod the Great, who sent a bill of divorce to her husband Costobarus; which bad example was afterward followed by Herodias and others. By law, it was the husband’s prerogative to dissolve the marriage. The wife could do nothing by herself. When he thought fit to dissolve it, her consent was not necessary. The bill of divorce which she received was to serve as evidence for her, that she had not deserted her husband, but was dismissed by him, and consequently free.”—Campbell.

Verses 13-16. *They brought little children to him*—See the note on Matt. xix. 13-15. *Jesus was much displeased*—At their blaming those who were not blameworthy, and endeavouring to hinder the chil-

7 ¶ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

11 And he saith unto them, ^f Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

13 ¶ ^g And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his dis-

24; 1 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. v. 31.—^f Mat. v. 32; xix. 9; Luke xvi. 18; Rom. vii. 3; 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.—^g Mat. xix. 13; Luke xviii. 15.

dren from receiving a blessing. *And said, Suffer little children to come unto me*—Now, and at other convenient times, for I am pleased, rather than offended, to see them brought to me: *for of such is the kingdom of God*—The members of the kingdom which I am come to set up in the world are such as these, as well as grown persons of a child-like temper. *Verily, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child*—Divesting himself of those prejudices and those secular views which men contract in their riper years, that he may come, as it were, to the humility and meekness, the simplicity and teachableness, of a little child, (see Psa. cxxxi. 2.) *He shall not enter therein*—He shall not be a member of my kingdom, be his genius ever so sublime, or his circumstances in life ever so considerable. *And he took them up in his arms, &c.*—He tenderly embraced them with complacency and love, and as a further token of the overflowing kindness of his heart toward them; *he put his hands upon them, and blessed them*—Recommending them in a solemn manner to the blessing and favour of his heavenly Father; which no doubt descended upon them, and attended them in their future life. “Let ministers view this compassionate Shepherd of Israel, thus gathering the lambs in his arms with all the tokens of tender affection; and let the sight teach them a becoming regard for the lambs of their flock, who should early be taken notice of and instructed; and for and with whom they should frequently pray, remembering how often divine grace takes possession

A. M. 4037. ciples rebuked those that brought
A. D. 33. *them.*

14 But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for ^b of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, ¹ Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 ¶ ^k And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God.*

19 Thou knowest the commandments, ¹ Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him,

^b 1 Cor. xiv. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 2.—^c Matt. xviii. 3.—^k Mark xix. 16; Luke xviii. 18.—^l Ex. xx.; Rom. xiii. 9.—^m Matt. vi. 19,

of the heart in the years of infancy, and sanctifies the children of God almost from the womb. Let every first impression, made upon their tender minds, be cherished; and let not those whom Christ himself is ready to receive, be disregarded by his servants, who upon all occasions should be gentle unto all, and apt to teach. Let parents view this sight with pleasure and thankfulness; let it encourage them to bring their children to Christ by faith, and to commit them to him in baptism and by prayer. And if he who *has the keys of death and the unseen world*, see fit to remove these dear creatures from us in their early days, let the remembrance of this story comfort us; and teach us to hope, that he who so graciously received these children, has not forgotten ours; but that they are sweetly fallen asleep in him, and will be the everlasting objects of his care and love; *for of such is the kingdom of God.* And let us all commit ourselves to him; and let us be disposed to become as little children, if we desire to enter into his kingdom. Let us not govern ourselves by the vain maxims of a corrupt and degenerate age. Let not pride, ambition, lust, or avarice possess, torment, and enslave our minds; but, with the amiable simplicity of children, let us put ourselves into the wise and kind hands of Jesus, as our guardian, and refer ourselves to his pastoral and parental care; to be clothed and fed, to be guided and disposed of, as he shall see fit. For this purpose, O God, may we be *born again* by thy Spirit, and *formed anew* by thy grace! Since by this method alone we can

Master, all these have I observed A. M. 4037.
from my youth. A. D. 33.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have ^m treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 ¶ ⁿ And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them ^o that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

20; xix. 21; Luke xii. 33; xvi. 9.—^p Matt. xix. 23; Luke xviii. 24.—^q Job xxxi. 24; Psa. lii. 7; lxii. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 17.

be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and be so the children of God as to be at length the children of the resurrection."—Doddridge.

Verses 17–22. *There came one running, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xix. 16–22. *And he answered, Master, &c.*—He stands reproved now, and drops the epithet, *Good*. *Jesus, beholding him*—And looking into his heart; *loved him*—Doubtless for the dawns of good which he saw in him; *and said to him*—Out of tender love, *One thing thou lackest*—The love of God, without which all religion is a dead carcass. In order to this, throw away what is the grand hinderance of it. Give up thy great idol, riches! *Go, sell whatsoever thou hast.*

Verses 23–27. *Jesus looked round about*—On all that were about him; *and saith to his disciples, How hardly, Πως δυσκολως, with how great difficulty, shall they that have riches*—Not only that love them, but that possess them; *enter into the kingdom of God*—Respecting this difficulty, see note on Matt. xix. 23, 24. *And the disciples were astonished at his words*—For they were ready to imagine that ere long all the rich and great people of the country would appear for their Master, and fix him on the throne of Israel. *But Jesus answereth again*—To that surprise which he saw in their countenances; *Children, &c.*—See how he softens the harsh truth, by the manner of delivering it! And yet without retracting or abating one tittle: *How hard is it for them that trust in riches*—Either for defence, or

A. M. 4037. A. D. 33. 27 And Jesus looking upon them, saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

28 ¶ Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life.

¶ Jer. xxxii. 17; Matt. xix. 27; Luke i. 37.—⁹ Matt. xix. 27; Luke xviii. 28.—² Chron. xxv. 9; Luke xviii. 30.

happiness, or deliverance from the thousand dangers that life is continually exposed to. That these cannot enter into God's glorious kingdom, is clear and undeniable; but it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a man to have riches, and not trust in them. Therefore, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And they were astonished out of measure—Περὶ πολλῶν ἐξεπλάσσοοντο, they were more abundantly struck with astonishment, more even than before; having now heard Christ's repetition and illustration of what he had said before; saying, Who then can be saved?—Who that are rich can ever get to heaven? and what a discouragement will it be to others, to see the rich and the great neglecting salvation, and turning the means of their happiness and usefulness into the instruments of their destruction? And Jesus looking upon them, &c.—See on Matt. xix. 25, 26.

Verses 28-31. Peter began to say, Lo, we have left all—Though the young man would not. Jesus said, There is no man that hath left house, &c.—This is explained Matt. xix. 27-29. "Our Lord is not here speaking of such as have actually separated themselves from the persons, and parted with the possessions, here mentioned; for if that had been his meaning, he would not have said that wives and children were to be forsaken, having himself, on a former occasion, expressly prohibited divorce, on any account, except fornication. But he is speaking of those who, for his sake and the gospel's, have renounced the pleasures and satisfactions which relations and possessions usually afford." But he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, &c.—Not in the same kind; for it will generally be with persecutions: but in value: a hundred-fold more happiness than any or all of these did or could afford. But let it be observed, None is entitled to this happiness, but he that will accept of it with persecutions. "They who have forsaken all for

31 But many that are first shall be last; and the last first. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

32 ¶ And they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33 Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles;

34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

¶ Matt. xix. 30; xx. 16; Luke xiii. 30.—¹ Matt. xx. 17; Luke xviii. 31.—² Chap. viii. 31; ix. 31; Luke ix. 22; xviii. 31.

my sake, shall be no losers in the issue; because God, who designs to admit them into heaven, will give them the comforts necessary to support them in their journey thither, and will raise them up friends, who shall be as serviceable to them as their nearest kindred, whom they have forsaken. By the special benignity of his Providence, they shall have every thing valuable that relations or possessions could administer to them. And, besides, shall have persecutions, whose heat will nourish virtues in them of such excellent efficacy, as to yield them, even in this present world, joys a hundred times better than all earthly pleasures; so that they shall be fed by the bread of sorrows. But, above all, in the world to come they shall have everlasting life. Their afflictions contributing to the growth of their graces, which are the wings of the soul, they shall in due time be raised on them even up to heaven, leaving all sorrows behind them, and shall fly swiftly into the bosom of God, the fountain of life and joy, where they shall have full amends made them for all the evils they had undergone on account of Christ and his gospel."—Macknight. But many that are first, &c. See on Matt. xix. 30.

Verses 32-34. They were in the way to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed—At his courage and intrepidity, considering the treatment which he had himself told them he should meet with there: and as they followed, they were afraid—Both for him and themselves: nevertheless, he judged it best to prepare them, by telling them more particularly what was to ensue. The rulers at Jerusalem had issued out a proclamation against our Lord, immediately after the resurrection of Lazarus, and probably promised a reward to any that would apprehend him, John xi. 57. This might be the reason why the disciples were astonished at the alacrity which their Master showed in this journey to the capital city, and afraid while they followed him. In such circumstances

A. M. 4037. 35 ¶^{*} And James and John, the
A. D. 33. sons of Zebedee, come unto him,
saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest
do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye
that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that
we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the
other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not
what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I
drink of? and be baptized with the baptism
that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And
Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of
the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism
that I am baptized withal shall ye be bap-
tized:

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my
left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be
given to them for whom it is prepared.*

^{*} Matt. xx. 20.—[†] Matt. xx. 24.—[‡] Luke xxii. 25.—[§] Or,
think good.—^{||} Matt. xx. 26, 28; Chap. ix. 35; Luke ix. 48.

our Lord knew that a repetition of the prophecy concerning his own sufferings was proper; because it showed the disciples they were entirely voluntary. And as he told them expressly that they had been predicted by the prophets, and consequently decreed of old by God, the opposition that he was to meet with, though it would end in death, instead of weakening their faith, ought to have increased it; especially as he informed them at the same time that he would rise again the third day. *Behold we go up to Jerusalem, &c.*—See on Matt. xx. 18, 19.

Verses 35–40. *And James and John come to him, saying*—By their mother, (see Matt. xx. 20,) for it was she, not they, that uttered the words: *Master, we would that thou shouldst do, &c.*—Here, again, the disciples show their utter ignorance of the prophecies, and of their Master's kingdom, by an action which likewise discovered, in the clearest manner, the temper of mind they were in, and the motives from which they followed Christ. They seem to have fancied that by his resurrection, after his sufferings, was meant, his taking possession of the great empire which they believed he was come to erect; and therefore they no sooner heard him mention his rising from the dead, than they came and begged the favour of him, that he would confer on them the chief posts in his kingdom. This they expressed by asking to be seated, the one on his right hand, the other on his left, in allusion to his late promise of placing the twelve apostles on twelve thrones, to judge the tribes. *But Jesus said, Ye know not what ye ask*—Ye know not that ye are asking for sufferings, which must needs pave the way to glory. *Can ye drink of the cup*—Can ye bear the inward suffer-

41 ¶ And when the ten heard *it*, A. M. 4037.
they began to be much displeased A. D. 33.
with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, ^{*}Ye know that they which ¹are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 ^{*}But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even ^bthe Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and ^cto give his life a ransom for many.

46 ¶ ^dAnd they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of

^b John xiii. 14; Phil. ii. 7.—^c Matt. xx. 28; 1 Tim. ii. 6, Tit. ii. 14.—^d Matt. xx. 29; Luke xviii. 35.

ings which I must undergo? *and be baptized with the baptism*—Can ye endure the outward sufferings which await me? Our Lord was filled with sufferings within, and covered with them without. *They said, We can*—Being greatly moved with the prospect of the dignities which they were aspiring after, they replied without hesitation, that they were able to drink of his cup, that is, to undergo any hardship with their Master, which he might suffer in the way to his kingdom. *Jesus said, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup, &c.*—Ye shall certainly share with me in my lot, which they accordingly did. See on Matt. xx. 20–23. *But to sit on my right hand, &c., is not mine to give, but to them for whom it is prepared*—Them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality. For these only eternal life is prepared. To these only he will give it in that day; and to every man his own reward, according to his own labour.

Verses 41–45. *When the ten heard it*—See on Matthew xx. 24–28. *A ransom for many*—Even for as many souls as needed such a ransom, 2 Corinthians v. 15.

Verses 46–52. *And as he went out of Jericho, blind Bartimeus sat by the way-side*—Matthew (chap. xx. 29) says, there were two blind men. It seems this Bartimeus was the more eminent of the two, and spoke for them both. See on Matt. xx. 29–34. *When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth*—Of some of whose miracles he had doubtless received information; he began to cry out, *Jesus, thou son of David, &c.*—Our Lord's name was no sooner mentioned than this blind man, who was well acquainted with his fame, conceived hopes of ob-

A. M. 4037. Nazareth, he began to cry out, and
A. D. 33. say, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called: and they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

• Matt. ix. 22; Chap. v. 34.

taining a cure; and being deeply impressed with a sense of his own affliction, he cried out so vehemently that the people rebuked him, as they will not fail to rebuke all who, from a sense of their guilt, depravity, and misery, cry after the Saviour of sinners. *But he cried the more a great deal*—An example worthy to be imitated by those who are concerned to obtain the cure of their spiritual diseases. *And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called*—He would not perform the miracle till the blind man came to him, that, by the manner of his walking, the spectators might be sensible he was truly blind. *And they call the blind man*—Some of the people, having their expectations raised of seeing Christ work a miracle, ran immediately to call the man and his companion; *saying, Be of good comfort*—Take courage; *rise, he calleth thee*—And therefore he doubtless intends to grant thy request. *And he, casting away his garment*—Through joy and eagerness; *rose, and came to Jesus*—The other blind man also following as fast as he could. *And Jesus said,*

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

* Or, saved thee.

What wilt thou that I should do unto thee—What is the mercy which thou so earnestly entrest? *The blind man said, Lord, that I might receive my sight*—The other also, doubtless, made the same request: and Jesus, who had compassion on them, touched their eyes, and said to each, *Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole*—The strong persuasion which thou hast entertained of my power and goodness, and thy confidence therein, makes thee fit to receive this cure which I now bestow on thee. *And immediately he received his sight*—As did his companion likewise; *and they followed Jesus in the way*—Travelled with him, probably all the way to Jerusalem, being deeply affected with a sense of his power and goodness, and earnestly desirous to show their gratitude, by declaring openly, unto all the persons they met, what a great miracle Jesus had performed for them. “Thus Jesus, by his touch,” says Erasmus, “cures the mind that is blinded with worldly lusts, and gives light for this end, that we may follow his footsteps.”

CHAPTER XI.

We are now come to the passion-week, the week in which Christ died; and the great occurrences thereof; and have in this chapter, (1.) His riding in triumph into Jerusalem, 1–11. (2.) His cursing the barren fig-tree, 12–14. (3.) His driving those out of the temple that made it a place of traffic, 15–19. (4.) His discourse with his disciples concerning the power of faith, and the efficacy of prayer, on the occasion of the withering of the fig-tree which he had cursed, 20–26. (5.) His reply to those who questioned his authority, 27–33. This chapter coincides with Matt. xxi.

A. M. 4037. AND * when they came nigh to
A. D. 33. Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,
2 And saith unto them, Go your way into

• Matt. xxi. 1; Luke

the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do

xix. 29; John xii. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verses 1–3. *And when they came nigh to Jerusalem*—See on Matt. xxi. 1–3; *unto Bethphage and Bethany*—The limits of Bethany reached to the mount of Olives, and joined to those of Bethphage,

which was part of the suburbs of Jerusalem, and reached from the mount of Olives to the walls of the city. Our Lord was now come to the place where the boundaries of Bethphage and Bethany met. *Ye shall find a colt tied*—In Matthew we read,

A. M. 4037. ye this? say ye that the Lord hath
A. D. 33. need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

8 ^b And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, ^c Hosanna: Blessed

is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

10 Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: ^d Hosanna in the highest.

11 ^e And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the even-tide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

12 ¶ ^f And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry.

13 ^g And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves: for the time of figs was not yet.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No

^b Matt. xxi. 8.—^c Psa. cxviii. 26.—^d Psa. cxlviii. 1.

^e Matt. xxi. 12.—^f Matt. xxi. 18.—^g Matt. xxi. 19.

an ass tied, and a colt with her, but Mark and Luke only mention the colt, because, it seems, our Lord rode on him only.

Verses 4-10. *And they went their way, and found the colt, &c.*—Found all the particulars contained in Christ's prediction exactly true. See on Matt. xxi. 6-11. *Blessed be the kingdom of our father David*—May the kingdom of the Messiah, promised to our father David, be speedily established, and may it long flourish; *that cometh*—Which is now to be erected; *in the name of the Lord*—And therefore will be fitly termed *the kingdom of God*, and *the kingdom of heaven*. *Hosanna in the highest*—Repeat again and again your songs and congratulations. Thus they expressed their joyful and rapturous expectations of his assuming the royal dignity, and vindicating Israel from the Roman yoke; and, imboldened by the display of his power in the resurrection of Lazarus, which he had lately effected, they feared not the resentment of their present masters, for declaring themselves thus openly in his favour.

Verse 11. *And Jesus went into the temple*—Having entered the city by the eastern gate, he alighted from the colt, and went directly to the temple, but did not drive the buyers and sellers out this first day; for Mark here tells us expressly, that by the time he got thither, and had *looked round about on all things, even-tide was come*; from which we may infer, that the market in the temple was over. It seems he stayed in the temple but a little while. Having made his public appearance in the metropolis, and received the title of Messiah openly from the multitude, and surveyed the temple, he left the city without doing any thing, to the great discouragement of the throng that had come in with him, expecting that he was immediately to have laid hold on the reins of government.

Verses 12-14. *On the morrow, when he was come from Bethany*—Where he had lodged, and was returning into the city; *he was hungry, &c.*—See note on Matt. xxi. 18-22. *And seeing a fig-tree, having leaves*—The fig-tree, it must be observed, puts forth its fruit first, and its leaves afterward, so that it was natural to suppose, as it had leaves, it would also have fruit upon it. *And when he came, he found nothing but leaves*—There was not so much as any fruit in the bud: which unfruitfulness at this season showed it to be absolutely barren. *For the time of figs*, that is, the season of gathering figs, *was not yet*. Thus, in Matt. xxi. 34, *καιρος των καρπων*, signifies *the season of gathering the fruits*. In construing this passage, the latter clause must be joined with the words, *He came, if haply, &c.*, the middle clause being a parenthesis; thus, *He came, if haply he might find any thing thereon, for the season of gathering figs was not yet*. That this is the true construction of the passage is plain, because the evangelist is not giving the reason why there were no figs on the tree, but the reason why Jesus expected to find some on it. He tells us the season of gathering figs was not come, to show that none had been taken off the tree; and consequently, that, having its whole produce upon it, there was nothing improper in Christ's expecting fruit on it then. Whereas, if we should think the reason why he did not find any figs was, that the time of them was not come, we must acknowledge the tree was cursed very improperly for having none. It is true, this interpretation makes a trajection necessary; yet it is not more extraordinary than that which is found in Mark xvi. 3, 4; where the clause, *for it was very great*, namely, the stone at the door of the sepulchre, does not relate to what immediately precedes it, namely, *and when they looked they saw the stone rolled away*, but to the remote member, *they*

A. M. 4037. man eat fruit of thee hereafter for
A. D. 33. ever. And his disciples heard it.

15 ¶^b And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.

^b Matt. xxi. 12; Luke xix. 45; John ii. 14.—¹ Isa. lvi. 7.

¹ Or, a house of prayer for all nations?

said, *Who shall roll us away the stone?*—This interpretation is approved by Dr. Campbell, who renders the original expression, *the fig-harvest*, justly asking, “What can the time of any fruit be, but the time of its full maturity? And what is the season of gathering, but the time of maturity? But figs may be eaten for allaying hunger before they be fully ripe: and the declaration that the season of figs was not yet come, cannot be the reason why there was nothing but leaves on the tree; for the fig is of that tribe of vegetables wherein the fruit appears before the leaf. The leaves therefore showed that the figs should not only be formed, but well advanced; and, the season of reaping being not yet come, removed all suspicion that they had been gathered. When both circumstances are considered, nothing could account for its want of fruit but the barrenness of the tree.” *Jesus said, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever*—This, like some other of our Lord’s actions, was emblematical and prophetic. “This fig-tree,” says Origen, “was, δένδρον τῆ λαοῦ, a tree representing the people, ἐμψυχὸς σκκη, a living fig-tree, on which was pronounced a curse suitable to its condition; for, δια τούτο ἀκαρπὸς ἐστὶν ἡ Ἰουδαίων συναγωγή, καὶ τούτο γίνεται αὐτῇ ἕως τῆς συντελείας τῆ αἰῶνος, therefore the synagogue of the Jews is unfruitful, and will continue so till the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in. And the disciples heard it—And took notice of the words.

Verses 15–17. *And they come to Jerusalem*—Jesus, having doomed the fig-tree to destruction, continued his journey to the city, where, when he arrived, he went straightway to the temple, and drove the buyers and sellers out of it, &c., and would not suffer any vessel to be carried through the sacred edifice. See the note on Matt. xxi. 12–14. Such strong notions had our Lord of even relative holiness, and of the regard due to those places, as well as times, that are peculiarly dedicated to God. The Jews, it must be observed, reckoning the lower and outward court of the temple a place of little or no sanctity, because it was designed for accommodating the Gentile proselytes in their worship, not only kept a daily market there of such things as were necessary in offering sacrifices, but suffered the common porters, in going from one part of the city to another with their burdens, to pass through it, for the sake of shortening their way. But as these abuses occa-

17 And he taught, saying unto A. M. 4037. them, Is it not written, ¹ My house shall be called ¹ of all nations the house of prayer? but ² ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 And ¹ the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because ² all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

¹ Jer. vii. 11.—¹ Matt. xxi. 45, 46; Luke xix. 47.—² Matthew vii. 28; Chap. i. 22; Luke iv. 32.

sioned great disturbance to the proselytes, Jesus reformed them again as he had done three years before, (see John ii. 14,) telling the people around him, that the Gentiles worshipped there by divine appointment, as well as the Jews, the temple being ordained of God to be the *house of prayer for all nations*; and to prove this, he cited Isa. lvi. 7, from which the inference was plain, that they were guilty of a gross profanation of the temple who carried on any traffic, even in the court of the Gentiles, much more they who, to make gain, committed frauds and extortions in the prosecution of their traffic, because thus they turned God’s *house of prayer* into a *den of thieves*. The offenders, it appears, did not make the least resistance. Probably they were struck with a panic by the secret energy of Christ’s omnipotence, as was the case formerly, when he made the like reformation at the first passover after his ministry commenced. To this purpose, Jerome, on the place, says, “*igneum enim quiddam, atque sidereum, radiebat ex oculis ejus, et divinitatis majestas lucebat in facie.*” *For, a certain fiery and sparkling radiance issued from his eyes, and a divine majesty shone in his face.*

Dr. Campbell justly notices here an inaccuracy in our translation of the original clause, which is rendered, *shall be called of all nations the house of prayer*, as if the last words had been, *ὑπο πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν, of all nations*, whereas they are, *πᾶσι τοῖς ἐθνεσιν, for all nations*. “The court of the Gentiles was particularly destined for the devout of all nations, who acknowledged the true God, though they had not subjected themselves to the Mosaic law, and were accounted aliens. The proselytes, who had received circumcision, and were, by consequence, subject to the law, were on the same footing with native Jews, and had access to the court of the people. Justly, therefore, was the temple styled, *A house of prayer for all nations*. The error in the common version is here the more extraordinary, as, in their translation of Isaiah, they render the passage quoted, *for all people.*”

Verses 18, 19. *The scribes, &c., sought how they might destroy him*—They had heard the rebuke which he had given them for allowing the temple to be profaned, and they had heard likewise the application which he had made of a passage in the eighth Psalm to the case of the children in the temple,

A. M. 4037. 20 ¶^a And in the morning, as they
A. D. 33. passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried
up from the roots.

21 And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith
unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which
thou cursedst is withered away.

^a Matt. xxi. 19.—² Or, *Have the faith of God.*

wishing him all manner of prosperity; and these things, with the authority which he assumed, galled and exasperated them greatly. They were, however, afraid to take him by violence, or to attempt any thing openly against him, lest it should raise a tumult: they only consulted among themselves how they might destroy him with as little noise as possible; *because all the people were astonished at his doctrine*—Both at the excellence of it, and at the majesty and authority with which he taught.

Verses 20, 21. *And in the morning, they passed by, &c.*—Next morning, as they were returning to Jerusalem, it astonished the disciples not a little when they looked on the fig-tree that had been pronounced barren the night before, and found it *dried up from the roots*, that is, quite withered down to the ground and shrunk: a miracle the more extraordinary, because the fig-tree is remarkable for its abundant sap and moisture. Peter, in particular, expressed great surprise at it, *saying, Master, Behold the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.* "We have seen already that Jesus only said to the fig-tree, *No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever*; this Peter, according to the Jewish manner of speaking concerning things that are barren, (Heb. vi. 8,) called a *curse of the fig-tree*. And some ill-disposed readers, not apprehending the proper force of the words, are apt to form a very unbecoming notion of Jesus from this action. But they do so without the least cause. Every thing he said on the occasion was decent. Moreover, the transaction was intended to prefigure the speedy ruin of the Jewish nation, on account of its unfruitfulness under greater advantages than any other people enjoyed at that day, and, like all the rest of his miracles, was done with a gracious intention, namely, to alarm his countrymen, and to induce them to repent."—Macknight. Thus Bishop Hall viewed this miracle, as appears by his excellent paraphrase on the passage: "When he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came purposely to seek that fruit which he knew he should not find ripe, that he might hence take occasion to work that exemplary miracle upon it which ensued: for when he found only store of leaves upon it and no fruit, that he might in this tree show how much he hates a formal profession (such as the Jews made) of religion, without an answerable fruitfulness, he cursed the fig-tree, and said, Let that which is thy fault be thy punishment; since thou bearest no fruit at all, never mayest thou bear any. And presently the fig-tree, as blasted by that word of judgment, withered away." It is observable that the destruction of the swine, and this blasting of the fig-tree, were the only instances of punitive miracles in the

22 And Jesus answering, saith unto them, ² Have faith in God.

23 For ° verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe

° Matt. xvii. 20; xxi. 21; Luke xvii. 6.

whole course of our Saviour's ministry, notwithstanding they do not appear to have been injurious. The case of the swine we have already considered; (see note on Matt. viii. 30–32;) and, with respect to the fig-tree, Matthew informs us that it was *in the way*, that is, in the common road, and therefore probably no particular person's property; but if it was, being barren, the timber might be as serviceable to the owner as before. So that here was no real injury; but Jesus was pleased to make use of this innocent miracle for the valuable purposes above suggested, as well as to teach his disciples the efficacy of faith, spoken of in the next words.

Verses 22–24. *Jesus answering, saith, Have faith in God*—The original expression, *εχετε πισιν θεου*, is literally, *Have a faith of God*; that is, say some, *Have a strong faith*. And it is a known Hebraism, to subjoin the words, *of God*, to a substantive, to denote *great, mighty, excellent*; and to an adjective, as the sign of the superlative. In support of this interpretation, Bishop Pearce has produced a number of passages, universally explained in this manner. "I cannot help, however, upon the whole," says Dr. Campbell, "preferring the common version. My reasons are, 1st, I find that the substantives construed with *θεου*, (God,) when it signifies great or mighty, are names either of real substances, or of outward and visible effects. Of the first kind are *prince, mountain, wind, cedar, city*; of the second are *wrestling, trembling, sleep*; but nowhere, as far as I can discover, do we find any abstract quality, such as faith, hope, love, justice, truth, mercy, used in this manner. When any of these words are thus construed with God, he is confessedly the subject, or the object of the affection mentioned. 2d, The word *πισιν*, both in the Acts and in the epistles, is often construed with the genitive of the object, precisely in the same manner as here. Thus, Acts iii. 16, *πισιν τῷ ὀνοματι αυτου*, is, *faith in his [Christ's] name*; Rom. iii. 22, *πισιν Ἰησου Χριστου*, is, *faith in Jesus Christ*. See to the same purpose, Rom. iii. 26; Gal. ii. 16, 20, and iii. 22; Phil. iii. 9; *ελπις*, hope, is used in the same way, 1 Thess. i. 3." The evident meaning of this precept, as given to the apostles, was, *Have a firm faith or confidence in the power and faithfulness of God, to enable you to effect what you believe will be for his glory, and the furtherance of the work in which you are engaged*. This has been frequently termed the *faith of miracles*, concerning which, see note on Matt. xvii. 20. "It is certain," says Dr. Doddridge, "that the attempt of performing miracles in public, was a remarkable instance of faith in the divine power and fidelity; for they were generally introduced by some solemn declaration

A. M. 4037. that those things which he saith shall
A. D. 33. come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, ^p What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25 And when ye stand praying, ^q forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But ^r if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 ¶ And they come again to Jerusalem: ^s and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

^p Matt. vii. 7; Luke xi. 9; John iv. 13; xv. 7; xvi. 24; James i. 5, 6.—^q Matt. vi. 14; Col. iii. 13.

of what was intended, which was, in effect, a prediction of immediate success: (so Peter says, Acts iii. 6, *In the name of Jesus Christ, Rise up and walk*; ix. 34, *Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole*; and again, verse 40, *Tabitha, arise*.) And, in pronouncing this, the person speaking pawned all his credit as a messenger from God, and consequently all the honour and usefulness of his future life, on the immediate miraculous energy to attend his words, and to be visibly excited on his uttering them. And hence it is that such a firm, courageous faith, is so often urged on those to whom such miraculous powers were given. But what kind of intimation of God's intended miraculous interposition the apostles, in such cases, felt on their minds, it is impossible for any, without having experienced it, to know. It is, therefore, an instance of their wisdom, that they never pretend to describe it, since no words could have conveyed the idea.²⁷

This exhortation, however, is not to be considered as being exclusively given to our Lord's apostles and first disciples: it is also given to us, and to all his true followers, to the end of the world. We are all here exhorted to have a steadfast faith in the power, love, and faithfulness of God; and to be fully persuaded that he will make good all his declarations, and fulfil all his promises, in their proper meaning, to all true believers in due season; and this notwithstanding any difficulties or apparent improbabilities which may be in the way. And it is on this foundation that we must approach God in prayer, fully expecting, if we ask such things as we are authorized by his word to ask, and are earnest, importunate, and persevering in asking them, that we shall certainly receive what we ask, as our Lord declares in the next words; even if the granting of our petitions imply God's doing what is really extraordinary, he having, in all ages, on certain occasions, done what was truly miraculous, in answer to

28 And say unto him, By what ^{A. M. 4037.} authority doest thou these things? ^{A. D. 33.}

and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one ³ question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for ^t all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus,

^r Matt. xviii. 35.—^s Matt. xxi. 23; Luke xx. 1.—³ Or, *thing*.
^t Matt. iii. 5; xiv. 5; Chap. vi. 20.

the prayers of his faithful people; innumerable instances of which, especially with respect to recovery from sickness, may easily be produced. For instances, see the Arminian Magazines, vol. v., pages 251, 312; vol. viii., page 200; vol. ix., pages 35, 36; vol. xiv., pages 468, 532; vol. xvi., page 146; vol. xix., page 409.

Verses 25, 26. *When ye stand praying*—Standing was their usual posture when they prayed. *Forgive, if ye have aught against any*—If you expect your prayers should prevail with God, you must take care to offer them in love as well as in faith; and, as you have offended the Majesty of heaven by many provocations, if you expect forgiveness from him, you must forgive your fellow-creatures if you have any matter of complaint against any of them. See notes on Matt. vi. 14, 15; xviii. 23–35.

Verses 27–29. *There come to him the chief priests, &c.*—It seems that Christ's sermons made a great impression on those who heard him, for the number of his followers and admirers increased so as to alarm the rulers, who feared that the people, on his account, would endeavour to shake off the Roman yoke. They consulted, therefore, among themselves, how they might destroy him, and resolved to do it under pretext of law; the attachment which the multitude had to him hindering them from laying violent hands on him. In consequence of this resolution, the chief priests, scribes, and elders, that is, some of the first men of the nation, came, probably by appointment of the senate, to Jesus one day when he was in the temple, and before all the people, put two questions to him. The first was, concerning the nature of the authority by which he acted, whether it was as a prophet, a priest, or a king; no other person having a right to make any reformation in church or state. The second question was, that if he claimed the authority of any, or all of these characters, they desired to know from

A. M. 4037. We cannot tell. And Jesus answered, saying saith unto them, Neither do

I tell you by what authority I do these things. A. M. 4037
A. D. 33.

whom he derived it. The things done by him, to which they referred, were his entering the city with such a numerous train of attendants; his taking upon him to reform the economy of the temple;

and his receiving the acclamations of the people, who gave him the title of Messiah. *Jesus answered, I will also ask of you one question.*—See note on Matt. xxi. 23–27.

CHAPTER XII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) *The parable of the vineyard let out to ungrateful husbandmen, representing the sin and ruin of the Jewish Church, 1–12.* (2.) *Christ's silencing the Pharisees and Herodians, who thought to ensnare him with a question about paying tribute to Cesar, 13–17.* (3.) *His silencing the Sadducees, who attempted to perplex the doctrine of the resurrection, 18–27.* (4.) *His conference with a scribe, about the first and great command of the law, 28–34.* (5.) *His puzzling the scribes with a question about Christ's being the son of David, 35–37.* (6.) *His caution to the people to beware of the scribes, 38–40.* (7.) *His commendation of the poor widow that cast her two mites into the treasury, 41–44.* This chapter coincides with Matt. xxi. 33—xxiii. 6.

A. M. 4037. **AND** he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man

planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a place for the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant: and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.

5 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-be-

loved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

12 And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had

* Matt. xxvii. 33; Luke xxii. 9.—† Psa. cxviii. 22.

° Matt. xxi. 45, 46; Chap. xi. 18; John vii. 25, 30, 44.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verses 1–11. *He began to speak unto them by parables*—“Christ having showed the rulers, chief priests, and scribes, the heinousness of their sin, in rejecting John the Baptist, (Matt. xxi. 28–32,) judged it proper, likewise, publicly to represent the crime of the nation, in rejecting all the messengers of God from first to last, and among the rest his only-begotten Son; and in misimproving the Mosaic dispensation, under which they lived. At the same time, he warned them plainly of their danger, by reason of the punishment which they had incurred, on account of such a continued course of disobedience and rebellion. The outward economy of religion, in which

they gloried, was to be taken from them; their relation to God as his people cancelled; and their national constitution destroyed. But because these were topics extremely disagreeable, he couched them under the veil of a parable, which he formed upon one made use of long before, by the Prophet Isaiah, chapter v. 1.”—Macknight. *A certain man planted a vineyard, &c.*—See this parable explained at large in the notes on Matt. xxi. 33–46.

Verse 12. *They sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people*—Greek, *του οχλου*, the multitude. How wonderful is the providence of God, using all things for the good of his children! Generally the multitude is restrained from tearing them in pieces,

A. M. 4037. spoken the parable against them :
A. D. 33. and they left him, and went their way.

13 ¶ ^d And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.

14 And when they were come they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cesar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a ¹ penny, that I may see it.

16 And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cesar's.

17 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Render to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 ¶ ^e Then come unto him the Sadducees, ^f which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, ^g Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the

^d Matt. xxii. 15; Luke xx. 20.—¹ Valuing of our money sevenpence halfpenny, as Matt. xviii. 28.—^e Matt. xxii. 23; Luke xx. 27.

only by the fear of their rulers. And here, the rulers themselves are restrained, through fear of the multitude!

Verses 13-17. *They send unto him certain of the Pharisees, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xxii. 15-22. *They marvelled at him*—At the wisdom of his answer.

Verses 18-26. These verses are explained in the notes on Matt. xxii. 23-33. *He is not the God of the dead, but of the living*—That is, (if the argument be proposed at length,) since the character of his being the God of any persons, plainly intimates a relation to them, not as dead, but as living; and since he cannot be said to be at present their God at all, if they are utterly dead; nor to be the God of human persons, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, consisting of souls and bodies, if their bodies were to abide in everlasting death; there must needs be a future state of blessedness, and a resurrection of the body, to share with the soul in it.

Verses 28, 29. *One of the scribes came*—So Luke

first took a wife, and dying left no seed. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but ^h are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, *I am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

28 ¶ ⁱ And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, ^j Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

^f Acts xxiii. 8.—^g Deut. xxv. 5.—^h 1 Cor. xv. 42, 49, 52.—ⁱ Ex. iii. 6.—^j Matt. xxii. 35.—^k Deut. vi. 4; Luke x. 27.

also, xx. 19; but Matt., *εις ες αυτων νομικος, one of them being a lawyer*. In this diversity of words, however, there is no difference in sense. For the scribes not only transcribed the Scriptures, but were generally, also, teachers of the law, from which they had the name of *lawyers*: *Having heard them reasoning together*—Having attended to the discourse between Jesus and the Sadducees; *and perceiving that he had answered them well*—Had confuted their degrading doctrine of materialism, and proved, even from the books of Moses, the divine authority of which the Sadducees themselves could not but acknowledge, the certainty of a future state; asked him another question, with a view to make a further trial of his skill in the sacred volume. *Which is the first commandment of all*—The principal, and most necessary to be observed? See the note on Matt. xxii. 34-36. *Jesus answered, The first of all the commandments*—And the foundation of all the rest, is, *The Lord our God is one Lord*—One Jehovah, one self-existent, independent, infinite, eternal Being:

A. M. 4037. 30 And thou shalt love the Lord
A. D. 33. thy God with all thy heart, and with
all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with
all thy strength : this is the first commandment.

Lev. xix. 18 ; Matt. xxiii. 39 ;

one in essence; inclusive, however, of three, *υποστασεις*, *subsistences*, generally termed *persons*. See on Matt. xxviii. 19, and note on Exod. iii. 14. Dr. Campbell translates this clause, *The Lord is our God: the Lord is one*; in Deut., *Jehovah is our God: Jehovah is one*; and not as one sentence, *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah*. Among other reasons for rendering the words thus, he gives the following: 1st, That "it appears to have been the purpose of their great legislator, to establish among them these two important articles, as the foundation of that religious constitution he was authorized to give them. The first was, that the God whom they were to adore, was not any of the acknowledged objects of worship in the nations around them, and was therefore to be distinguished among them, the better to secure them against seduction, by the peculiar name *Jehovah*, by which alone he chose to be invoked by them. The second was, the unity of the divine nature, and consequently, that no pretended divinity (for all other gods were merely pretended) ought to be associated with the only true God, or share with him in their adoration. 2d, That in the reply of the scribe, verse 32, which was approved by our Lord, and in which he, as it were, echoes every part of the answer that had been given to his question, there are two distinct affirmations with which he begins; these are, *There is one God*, and *there is only one*, corresponding to *The Lord is our God*, and *the Lord is one*. The first clause, in both declarations, points to the object of worship; the second, to the necessity of excluding all others. Accordingly, the radical precept relating to this subject, quoted by our Lord, Matt. iv. 10, from the LXX., is exactly suited to both parts of this declaration. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God*. This may be called the positive part of the statute, and corresponds to the article, *The Lord is our God*. *Thou shalt serve him only*. This is the negative part, and corresponds to the article, *The Lord is one*."

Verse 30. *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*—The summary of piety contained in these words, (see notes on Deut. vi. 5 ; Matt. xxiii. 37,) is introduced by the preceding emphatical and strong assertion of the unity of God; because, "it is necessary that men should be deeply impressed with just notions of the object of their worship, particularly that he is the only true God, the maker of all things, and the possessor of all perfection, to whom there is not any being equal, or like, or second: in order that they may apply themselves, with the utmost diligence, to obey his precepts, the first and chief of which is, that they give him their hearts. God is so transcendently amiable in himself, and, by the benefits he hath conferred on us, hath such a title to our utmost affection, that there is no obliga-

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31 And the second is like, namely, A. M. 4037.
this, Thou shalt love thy neigh- A. D. 33.
bour as thyself: there is none other command-
ment greater than these.

Rom. xiii. 9 ; Gal. v. 14 ; James ii. 8.

tion that bears any proportion to that of loving him. The honour assigned to this precept proves, that piety is the noblest act of the human mind, and that the chief ingredient in piety is love, founded on a clear, extensive view of the divine perfections, a permanent sense of his benefits, and a deep conviction of his being the sovereign good, our portion, our happiness. But it is essential to love, that there be a delight in contemplating the beauty of the object beloved; that we frequently, and with pleasure, reflect on the benefits which the object of our affection has conferred on us; that we have a strong desire of pleasing him, great fear of doing any thing to offend him, and a sensible joy in the thought of being beloved in return. Hence the duties of devotion, prayer, and praise, are the most natural and genuine exercises of the love of God. Moreover, this virtue is not so much any single affection, as the continual bent of all the affections and powers of the soul. In which light, to love God is, as much as possible, to direct the whole soul toward God, and to exercise all its faculties on him as its chief object. But the beauty and excellence of this state of the mind is best seen in its effects; for the worship and obedience flowing from such a universal bent of the soul toward God, is as much superior to the worship and obedience arising from partial considerations, as the light of the sun is to any picture of it that can be drawn. For example, if we look on God only as a stern lawgiver, who can and will punish our rebellion, it may indeed force an awe and dread of him, and as much obedience to his laws as we think will satisfy him, but can never produce that constancy in our duty, that delight in it, and that earnestness to do it in its utmost extent, which are produced and maintained in the mind by the sacred fire of divine love, or by the bent of the whole soul, turned toward God; a frame the most excellent that can be conceived, and the most to be desired, because it constitutes the highest perfection and happiness of the creature." *This is the first (Matthew, and great) commandment*—As this is the first in order, so it is the greatest commandment in the law.

Verse 31. *And the second is like*—Of a like comprehensive nature; comprising the whole of our duty to man. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour*—"The precept enjoining love to our neighbour is like to the great commandment which enjoins the love of God, because charity is the sister of piety, clearly proving its relation by the similarity of its features, complexion, and temper. As piety is the offspring of God, so is its sister, charity, being enjoined by the same authority, and produced by the influence of the same Spirit. Piety and charity consist of the like motions and dispositions of soul, and are kept alive by the same kind of nourishment; the beauties of moral

(20*)

A. M. 4037. 32 And the scribe said unto him,
A. D. 33.

Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; ^a and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, ^o is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. ^p And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

35 ¶ ^q And Jesus answered and said, while

^a Deut. iv. 39; Isa. xlv. 6, 14; xlv. 9.—^o 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6-8.—^p Matt. xxii. 46.—^q Matt. xxii. 41;

excellence appearing, whether in the great Father, or in his children, who bear his image. They have the same happy tendency to make those in whom they reside, like God, who is God by being good and doing good; like him, also, in his felicity, which arises, not only from the possession, but from the communication of his goodness. They are like to each other in their sublime and important nature, and of like use in the conduct of life; the one being the principle from which the whole duty we owe to God must spring; the other that from which the whole duty we owe to man must flow. To conclude, they have a like power on the minds of the beholders, raising both esteem and love wherever they appear in their genuine beauty. These are the features by which piety and charity are strongly marked, by which their affinity to each other is clearly proved, and by which they are rendered sister graces, and inseparable companions."—Mac-knight. *There is no other moral, much less ceremonial, commandment, greater than these.*

Verses 32-34. *The scribe*—Who had proposed the question to try him, being struck with the solidity and spirit of his answer, said, *Well, Master*—In the original it is, *καλως*, *excellently*, *finely*, or *beautifully*; a phrase which expresses his high satisfaction in the reply much more strongly than the word *well*. *Thou hast said the truth*—Thy declaration is perfectly correct, and unspeakably important; *for there is one God, &c.*, and *to love him with all the heart*—To love and serve him with all the united powers of the soul, in their utmost vigour; and without a rival; *and to love his neighbour as himself*—To maintain the same equitable and charitable temper and behaviour toward all men, as we, in like circumstances, would wish from them toward ourselves, is a more necessary and important duty, and a more acceptable service, than the offering the most noble and costly sacrifices; nor could the most exact and pompous ritual observances be acceptable without such graces and virtues as these. *When Jesus saw that he answered discreetly*—And thereby showed that he had just views of true religion; *he said, Thou*

he taught in the temple, How say ^{A. M. 4037.} the scribes that Christ is the son of ^{A. D. 33.} David?

36 For David himself said ^r by the Holy Ghost, ^s The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord, and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 ¶ And ^t he said unto them in his doctrine, ^u Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and ^x love salutations in the market-places,

Luke xx. 41.—^r 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.—^s Psa. cx. 1.—^t Ch. iv. 2.
^u Matt. xxiii. 1, &c.; Luke xx. 46.—^x Luke xi. 43.

art not far from the kingdom of God—He applauded the piety and wisdom of the scribe's reflection, by declaring, that he was not far from embracing the gospel, and becoming a true member of Christ's Church, possessed of all the blessings belonging to his disciples. Reader, art thou not far from the kingdom of God? Then go on: be a real Christian; else it had been better for thee to have been afar off.

Verses 35-37. See the note on Matt. xxii. 41-46, where this paragraph is explained. *And the common people heard him gladly*—They heard him with great attention and pleasure; for the clear and solid answers which he returned to the insnaring questions of his foes, gave them a high opinion of his wisdom, and showed them how far he was superior to their most renowned rabbis; whose arguments to prove their opinions, and answers to the objections that were raised against them, were, generally speaking, but mean and trifling in comparison of his. Besides, the common people were neither so much prejudiced in behalf of the commonly received opinions, nor so much interested, as the scribes or other teachers.

Verses 38-40. *Beware of the scribes*—See that ye do not imitate their hypocrisy, or imbibe their principles, and be on your guard against their insidious counsels and designs. There was an absolute necessity for these repeated cautions of our Lord. For, considering the inveterate prejudices of these scribes against him and his doctrine, it could never be supposed that the common people would receive the gospel till these incorrigible blasphemers of it were brought to just disgrace. Yet he delayed speaking in this manner till a little before his passion, as knowing what effect it would quickly produce. *Which love to go in long clothing, &c.*—Here our Lord assigns the reason why he bid his disciples *beware* of imitating them. They were excessively proud and arrogant, as was plain from their affected gravity of dress, from the anxiety which they discovered to get the principal seats at feasts, and all public meetings, as things belonging to them, on account of their superior worth, and from their courting to be saluted

A. M. 4037. 39 And the chief seats in the syna-
A. D. 33. gogues, and the uppermost rooms at
feasts :

40 ¶ Which devour widows' houses, and for a
pretence make long prayers: these shall re-
ceive greater damnation.

41 ¶ ^a And Jesus sat over against the trea-
sury, and beheld how the people cast ² money
^a into the treasury: and many that were rich
cast in much.

¶ Matt. xxiii. 14.—^a Luke xxi. 1.—^a A piece of brass money;
Matt. x. 9.—^a 2 Kings xii. 9.

in the streets with particular marks of respect, and to be addressed with the sounding titles of *rabbi*, *father*, and *master*; thinking such public acknowledgments of their merits due from all who met them. To this their excessive pride the Jewish teachers added an unbounded covetousness and sensuality, which did not suffer the substance even of widows to escape them. For the evangelist informs us, that they *devoured widows' houses*, possessing themselves of their property by various acts of deception, and lived luxuriously thereon. *And for a pretence*—To cover their crying immoralities; *made long prayers*—With a great show of piety, hoping thereby to engage the esteem and confidence of others, that they might have the greater opportunity to injure and defraud them. *These shall receive the greater damnation*—Their complicated wickedness, particularly making their pretended piety a cloak to their covetousness and luxury, shall cost them dear; and they shall be more dreadfully punished than if they had never prayed at all, nor made any pretences to religion. See notes on Matt. xxiii. 1-14.

Verses 41-44. *Jesus sat over against the treasury*—“Jesus was now in the treasury, or that part of the women's court where the chests were placed for receiving the offerings of those who came to worship. These chests, being thirteen in number, had each of them an inscription, signifying for what use the offerings put into them were destined; and were fixed to the pillars of the portico which surrounded the court. From these voluntary contributions were bought wood for the altar, salt, and other necessaries, not provided for any other way. It was in this court of the women, according to the Talmudists, that the libation of water from Siloam was made annually at the feast of tabernacles, as a solemn public thanksgiving and prayer for the former and latter rain; to which rite, it is generally supposed, our Lord alluded, John vii. 38.”—Macknight. *And beheld how the people cast money into the treasury*—Luke says, *he looked up, and saw the rich men casting in their gifts, &c.*—That is, he noticed it with attentive observation; many of these, as Mark here informs us, *casting in much*, for, it seems, there was still this remainder of national liberality among them, though true religion was sunk to so very low an ebb. *And there came a certain poor widow*—Whose character and circumstances were not unknown to Christ; *and she threw in two mites*—Two

42 And there came a certain poor A. M. 4037
widow, and she threw in two ³mites, A. D. 33.
which make a farthing.

43 And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ^b this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury.

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance: but she of her want did cast in all that she had, ^c even all her living.

^a It is the seventh part of one piece of that brass money.

^b 2 Cor. viii. 12.—^c Deut. xxiv. 6; John iii. 17.

small pieces of brass coin then in use; *which make a farthing*—*Κοδραντες*, a Roman coin, in value no more than three-fourths of our farthing. Wherefore the offering given by this poor widow was very small in itself, though in another respect it was a great gift, being *all that she had, even all her living*. We can hardly suppose, that at each of the chests there were officers placed to receive and count the money which the people offered, and to name the sum aloud before they put it in. It is more reasonable to fancy that each person put his offering privately into the chest, by a slit in its top. Wherefore, by mentioning the particular sum which this poor widow put in, as well as by declaring that it was *all her living*, our Lord showed that nothing was hid from his knowledge. *And he called unto him his disciples*—That he might inform them of this woman's generous action, and that they might hear his remarks upon it: *and saith, Verily, this poor widow hath cast more in than all they, &c.*—Thus he spoke to show, that it is the disposition of the mind, in deeds of charity, and in oblations made to the worship of God, which God regards, and not the magnificence of the gift. *For all they did cast in of their abundance*—Their offerings, though great in respect of hers, bore but a small proportion to their estates. *But she of her want did cast in all that she had*—Her offering was the whole of her income for that day, or, perhaps, the whole of the money in her possession at that time. Here then we see what judgment is passed on the most specious outward actions by the Judge of all! And how acceptable to him is the smallest, which springs from self-denying love! Both the poor and the rich may learn an important lesson from this passage of the gospel. The poor, who seem to have the means of doing charitable offices denied them in a great measure, are encouraged by it to do what they can; because, although it may be little, God, who looks into the heart, values it not according to what it is in itself, but according to the disposition with which it is given. On the other hand, it shows the rich, that it is not enough that they exceed the poor in the quantity of their charity. A little given where a little is left behind, often appears in the eye of God a much nobler offering, and discovers a far greater strength of good dispositions, than sums vastly larger bestowed out of a plentiful abundance. See Macknight.

CHAPTER XIII.

In this chapter, which coincides with Matt. xxiv. and Luke xxi., we have the substance of the prophetic discourse which our Lord delivered, on quitting the temple for the last time, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the unparalleled calamities to be brought on the Jews for crucifying their Messiah, and rejecting his gospel. Here is, (1.) The occasion of his predictions, viz., his disciples admiring the buildings of the temple, and their inquiry concerning the time of the desolation of them, 1-4. (2.) The predictions themselves: 1. Of the rise of deceivers, 5, 6, 21-23: 2. Of the wars of the nations, 7, 8: 3. Of the persecution of Christ's followers, 9-13: 4. Of the destruction of Jerusalem, 14-20: 5. Of the dissolution of the Jewish state, civil and ecclesiastical, emblematical of the end of the world, 24-27. (3.) Some general intimations concerning the time of these calamities, 28-32. (4.) Some practical inferences from the whole, 33-37.

A. M. 4037. **AND** * as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!

2 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? ^b there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter, and James, and

John, and Andrew, asked him privately, A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

4 ° Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus answering them, began to say, ^d Take heed lest any man deceive you:

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars, and ru-

* Matt. xxiv. 1; Luke xxi. 5.—^b Luke xix. 44.—^c Matt. xxiv.

3; Luke xxi. 7.—^d Jer. xxix. 8; Eph. v. 6; 1 Thess. ii. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verses 1, 2. See what manner of stones, &c.—Our Lord, in the conclusion of his lamentation over Jerusalem, (Matt. xxiii. 38, 39,) had declared that the temple should never be favoured with his presence any more; a declaration which, doubtless, appeared very strange to the disciples, and affected them much. For which reason they stopped him as he was going away, and desired him to see what a fine, sumptuous building the temple was: insinuating, probably, that they were surprised to hear him talk of leaving it desolate, for that so rich and glorious a fabric ought not to be deserted rashly. *Jesus said, There shall not be left one stone upon another*—This superb building, which you behold, adorned with huge stones of great beauty, shall be razed to the very foundation. It seemed exceedingly improbable that any thing like this should happen in that age, considering the peace of the Jews with the Romans, and the strength of their citadel, which forced Titus himself to acknowledge that it was the singular hand of God which compelled them to relinquish fortifications which no human power could have conquered. Bishop Chandler justly observes, "That no impostor would have foretold an event so unlikely and so disagreeable."—*Defence of Christianity*, pp. 472, 473. Add to this, that it was not usual with the Romans to destroy either the cities or the temples of the countries they conquered. And with regard to this temple, Josephus tells us, (*Bell.*, vii. 9,) that Titus having held a council of his generals, who were for burning the temple, declared that he would by all means save that edifice as an ornament to the empire. But God had determined and declared that it should be destroyed. Accordingly, the soldiers burned it without paying any regard to Titus's orders. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 42.

Verses 3-8. *As he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple*—As this mountain stood eastward from the city, it must have been the eastern wall of the temple, fronting that mountain, which the disciples desired their Master to look at, and which, being built from the bottom of the valley to a prodigious height with stones of incredible bulk, firmly compacted together, made a very grand appearance at a distance. (*Josephus Antiq.*, xv. 14; *Bell.*, vi. 6.) And in Mr. Mede's opinion, this eastern wall was the only part of Solomon's structure that remained after the Chaldeans burned the temple. Hence the portico, built on the top of it, obtained the name of *Solomon's porch*, or portico, John x. 23. *Peter, James, &c., asked him privately*—When Jesus was come to the mount of Olives, and had taken a seat on some eminence, from whence the temple and a part of the city could be seen, these disciples, while the rest were at a distance on the road, or absent on some occasion or other, drew near to him and inquired privately, *when these things should be, and what should be the sign when they should be fulfilled?* See notes on Matt. xxiv. 3-8. *Many shall come in my name, &c.*—Christian writers have always, with great reason, represented Josephus's History of the Jewish War as the best commentary on this chapter; and many have justly remarked it, as a wonderful instance of the care of Providence for the Christian Church, that he, an eye-witness, and in these things of so great credit, should (especially in such an extraordinary manner) be preserved, to transmit to us a collection of important facts, which so exactly illustrate this noble prophecy in almost every circumstance. Compare *Bell.*, iii. 8, al. 14. *There shall be famines and troubles*—Matthew says, *famines and pestilences*. Concerning these Josephus writes thus: (*Bell.*, vii. 17:) "Being assembled together from all parts to

A. M. 4037. mours of wars, be ye not troubled: A. D. 33. for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall not be yet*.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: ° these *are* the beginnings of ¹ sorrows.

9 But ^f take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the

• Matt. xxiv. 8.—¹ The word in the original importeth the pains of a woman in travail.

the feast of unleavened bread, presently and on a sudden they were environed with war. And first of all a plague fell among them, by reason of the straitness of the place, and immediately after a famine worse than it." Besides, in the progress of the siege, the number of the dead, and the stench arising from their unburied carcasses, must have infected the air, and occasioned pestilence. For Josephus tells us, (*Bell.*, vi. *fine*.) that there were no fewer than six hundred thousand dead bodies carried out of the city, and suffered to lie unburied. *All these are the beginning of sorrows*—Greek, *ωδινον*. The expression properly signifies the pains of child-bearing, which at the beginning are but light in comparison of what they become afterward. Therefore our Lord's meaning was, that the evils which he mentioned were but small in comparison of those which were yet to fall upon the nation.

Verse 9. *Take heed to yourselves*—Walk circumspectly, and arm yourselves both with patience and fortitude, that you may be able to perform your duty amid all the opposition and persecution which you shall meet with. *For they shall deliver you up to councils, &c.*—See note on Matt. x. 17; xxiv. 9. *And in the synagogues ye shall be beaten*—"It is certain," says Whitby, "both from Scripture and the Jewish writers, that whipping and beating were punishments used in the synagogues of the Jews. Thus Paul says, he *punished* the Christians oft in every synagogue, Acts xxvi. 11; and that he *did beat* in the synagogue those that believed, Acts xxii. 19: and that it was usual to whip both their wise men and their disciples, when they had acted perversely, in their synagogues, is fully proved by Campegius Vitringa de Synag. Vet." *And ye shall be brought before rulers and kings*—Thus Peter and John were called before the sanhedrim; James and Peter before Herod; and Paul before Nero the emperor, as well as before the Roman governors, Gallio, Felix, and Festus; and some were beaten, as Peter and John, (Acts v. 40,) Paul and Silas. *For a testimony against them*—The persecutions which you shall suffer shall become a glorious proof, both of your innocence, and of their guilt in rejecting the gospel. See note on Matt. x. 18.

Verse 10. *The gospel must first be published among all nations*—"The fulfilment of this part of the prophecy we learn chiefly from the writings of

synagogues ye shall be beaten: and A. M. 4037. ye shall be brought before rulers and A. D. 33. kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

10 And ^s the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 ^h But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour,

^f Matt. x. 17, 18; xxiv. 9; Rev. ii. 10.—^s Matt. xxiv. 14. ^h Matt. x. 19; Luke xii. 11; xxi. 14.

the New Testament, which inform us that the gospel was preached by Paul in Arabia, and through the vast tract from Jerusalem to Iconium in Lycaonia, and in Galatia, and through all Asia Minor, and in Greece, and round about to Illyricum, and in Crete and Italy, probably also in Spain and Gaul. Besides, the gospel reached much farther than this apostle carried it; for we find him writing to Christians who had never seen his face. Also, we have still remaining Peter's epistles to the converted Jews in Pontus, Asia, Cappadocia, and Bythynia. Probably the gospel was preached in these and many other countries by the Jews who sojourned there, and who, having come to Jerusalem to the passover, were converted on the day of pentecost. The Ethiopian eunuch, converted by Philip, would carry it likewise into his country. But whatever way it happened, the fact is certain, that in most of these countries churches were planted within thirty years after Christ's death, or about ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Hence we find the apostle telling the Romans, (x. 18,) that the sound of the gospel had *gone forth into all the world*, and that the faith of the Christians at Rome *was spoken of throughout the world*, chapter i. 8. And hence, too, he tells the Colossians, chap. i. 23, that the truth of the gospel was *come to all the world*, and was *preached to every creature*. And when Mark wrote his gospel the apostles had gone forth, and *preached everywhere*, xvi. 20. The preaching of the gospel, through the whole world, by twelve illiterate fishermen, and the destruction of Jerusalem, were events extremely improbable, and therefore the prediction and accomplishment of them deserve to be particularly taken notice of; and the rather, because they were both absolutely necessary for bringing about the conversion of the world to Christianity, and are mentioned in this prophecy as such."—Macknight.

Verse 11. *Take no thought what ye shall speak*—Be not solicitous beforehand what ye shall say in your defence, to vindicate yourselves and your religion from the unrighteous charges and aspersions of your enemies. *But whatsoever shall be given you*—And strongly suggested to your minds; *in that hour, that speak ye*—Boldly and resolutely; *for it is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost*—Who shall assuredly direct, and even dictate to you what you

A. M. 4037. that speak ye: for it is not ye that
A. D. 33. speak, ⁱ but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now ^k the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son: and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 ^l And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but ^m he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 ⁿ But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, ^o spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that

readeth understand,) then ^p let them
A. M. 4037. that be in Judea flee to the moun-
A. D. 33. tains:

15 And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house:

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17 ^q But wo to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

ⁱ Acts ii. 4; iv. 8, 31.—^k Mic. vii. 6; Matt. x. 21; xxiv. 10; Luke xxi. 16.—^l Matt. xxiv. 9; Luke xxi. 17.—^m Dan. xii.

12; Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13; Rev. ii. 10.—ⁿ Matt. xxiv. 15. ^o Dan. ix. 27.—^p Luke xxi. 21.—^q Luke xxi. 23; xxiii. 29.

shall say at such times. For, as it is really my cause in which you are engaged, therefore, though you are ignorant and unlearned men, and so may be apprehensive you shall be confounded in the presence of persons who are, in rank and education, so much your superiors; yet depend upon it, I will give you such wisdom and eloquence, that your persecutors shall be even astonished at the freedom and propriety with which you shall express yourselves, according to the various occasions which arise. See notes on Matt. x. 19; Luke xxi. 14–18.

Verses 12, 13. *The brother shall betray the brother to death*—The unbelieving Jews and heathen shall discover, betray, and deliver to be imprisoned, tortured, and put to death, their believing relatives, even their brethren, fathers, or children. With respect to the Jews in particular, their known zeal and cruelty render it abundantly credible that, in the persecution of the Christians, the bigots to the law of Moses, overlooking the ties of nature, would be instrumental in putting their own relations to death, who followed the standard of Christ. *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake*—That the disciples of Christ were hated of all men in the first ages of Christianity, is well known. Their opposition to idolatry was the cause of the ill-will which the heathen bore toward them; their preaching that the law of Moses was abrogated, enraged the Jews: and in this temper both Jews and heathen continued during the first three centuries, till Constantine, declaring himself a Christian, put an end to the cruelties that had been so long exercised upon the disciples of Christ. "That not only the apostles," says Dr. Doddridge, "but all the primitive Christians, were in general more hated and persecuted than any other religious sect of men, is most notorious to all who are at all acquainted with ecclesiastical history: a fact which might seem unaccountable, when we consider how inoffensive and benevolent their temper and conduct was, and how friendly an aspect their tenets had on the security of any government under which they lived. The true reason of this opposition was, that while the different pagan religions, like the confederated demons honoured by them, sociably agreed with each

other, the gospel taught Christians, not only, like Jews, to bear their testimony to the falsehood of them all; but also with the most fervent zeal to urge the renunciation of them, as a point of absolute necessity, requiring all men, on the most tremendous penalties, to believe on Christ, and in all things to submit themselves to his authority: a demand which bore so hard, especially on the pride and licentiousness of their princes, and the secular interests of their priests, that it is no wonder they raised so violent a storm against it; which, considering the character and prejudices of the populace, it must be very easy to do." *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved*—He who is neither made to apostatize by the persecutions I have described, nor led astray by the seduction of unbelieving Jews or false Christians, shall escape out of the destruction that is about to fall on this land; and, persevering in faith and piety to the end of his life, shall be saved eternally.

Verses 14–20. *When ye shall see the abomination, &c.*—Our Lord, having foretold both the more remote and more immediate signs of the end of the Jewish economy, proceeds to describe the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. *The abomination* which caused *the desolation*, whereof Daniel prophesied, (chapter ix. 27,) signifies the Roman armies, with their standards, whereon the images of their idols were painted; which armies were an abomination to the Jews, on account of their idolatry, and caused desolation wherever they came. *Standing where it ought not*—That is, in the territory of Jerusalem, generally termed holy ground. *Let him that readeth understand*—Let him who readeth Daniel's prophecy (for these seem to be the words of our Lord, and not of the evangelist) understand, that the end of the city and sanctuary, with the ceasing of the sacrifice and oblation there predicted, is come. *Then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains*—By *Judea*, here, we are to understand all the southern parts of Palestine, both the plain and the hill-countries, which, at this time, went by the name of Judea. By *the mountains*, we are to understand the countries on the east side of Jordan, especially those which, in the time of the war, were under the

A. M. 4037. 19 ^{A. D. 33.} For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

¹ Dan ix. 26; xii. 1; Joel ii. 2; Matt. xxiv. 21.—² Matt.

government of the younger Agrippa, to whom Claudius gave Batanea and Trachonitis, the tetrarchy of Philip, and Abilene, the tetrarchy of Lysanias. All these countries remaining in their obedience to the Romans, the people who fled into them were safe. Besides, being mountainous countries, they seem to have been the very place of refuge pointed out to the Christians of those times by their Master. But see this whole paragraph explained at large in the notes on Matt. xxiv. 15-22. *Except the Lord had shortened those days*—The destruction of the nation shall go on so fast in those days of vengeance, that, unless God had made them fewer in number than the sins of the nation deserved, not one Jew should remain alive. The truth is, so fierce and so obstinate were the quarrels which, during the siege, raged among the Jews, both within the walls of Jerusalem and abroad in the country, that the whole land became a scene of desolation and bloodshed; and had the siege continued much longer, the whole nation had been destroyed, according to what our Lord here declares. *But for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen*—That is, hath taken out of, or separated from, the world, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; he hath shortened the days—The elect, here, are such of the Jews as were already converted, or should be converted, to the faith of Christ; and particularly the Jews that should be brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles, as the apostle speaks. The elect are those Gentiles also who should be convinced and converted, as by all the other proofs of Christianity, so more especially by the argument arising from the preservation of the Jews. The meaning, therefore, is, that for the sake of those who should be converted to Christianity, and made true disciples of Christ in that and after ages, God had determined that the days of vengeance should be fewer in number than the iniquity of the nation deserved.

Verses 21-23. *If any shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ*—See on Matt. xxiv. 23-28. *For there shall arise false Christs*—Grotius, and some others, think our Lord had Barchochebas in view here, because he expressly called himself Messiah, and pretended to work great miracles. But as the passage describes what was to happen about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, it cannot be applied to Barchochebas, who arose in the reign of Adrian, about sixty years after. Josephus (*Antiq.*, xx. 6) tells us, that under the government of Felix, "the whole country was full of magicians who deceived

A. M. 4037. 21 ^{A. D. 33.} And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or lo, he is there; believe him not.

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

xxiv. 23; Luke xvii. 23; xxi. 8.—² 2 Pet. iii. 17.

the people." In the same chapter, he says, "The magicians and deceivers persuaded the common people to follow them into the wilderness, promising to show them evident signs and miracles." It seems these impostors pretended that the miracles they were going to perform, were those which God had predicted the Messiah would perform; perhaps they assumed the title directly, though Josephus, after the destruction of his nation, was ashamed to make any mention of the Messiah at all, or of the prophecies relating to him. After the example of Moses, these false Christs appealed to the miracles which they promised to perform, in proof of their being sent to deliver the nation from slavery. This appears evidently from a passage of his *Jewish War*, (ii. 12,) where, speaking of the affairs under Felix, he says, "Impostors and deceivers, under pretence of inspiration, attempting innovations and changes, made the common people mad, and led them into the wilderness, promising that God would there show them, σημεια ελευθεριας, signs of liberty;" that is, miracles in proof that they should be delivered from the Roman yoke, and obtain their liberty. This was the benefit the nation expected from the Messiah; and those deceivers who promised it to them were readily believed: for the common people daily expected that the Messiah would put them in possession of universal empire. Every impostor, therefore, who assumed that character, and promised them deliverance, was quickly followed and obeyed. Hence the propriety of Josephus's observation. The same historian, *Antiq.*, xx. 6, mentions an Egyptian Jew, calling himself a prophet, who persuaded the people to go with him to the mount of Olives, promising to show them from that place the walls of Jerusalem falling down, and giving them an entrance into the city. He speaks of this deceiver likewise, *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 12, as "gathering together thirty thousand men on the mount of Olives, proposing to go thence and take Jerusalem by force, to drive out the Roman garrison, and rule over the people." Here this impostor plainly acted the Messiah. But Felix, getting notice of his designs, came out and routed him. *And shall show signs and wonders to seduce, if possible, even the elect*—This relates especially to those impostors who appeared during the time of the siege, of which see Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, vi. 5; and Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 6. As for the objection which is urged from this text against admitting miracles as a proof of doctrines, two things may be here transiently observed:

A. M. 4037. 24 ¶^v But in those days, after that
A. D. 33. tribulation, the sun shall be darkened,
and the moon shall not give her light.

25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 ^x And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

^v Dan. vii. 10; Zeph. i. 15; Matt. xxiv. 29, &c.; Luke xxi. 25.—^x Dan. vii. 13, 14; Matt. xvi. 27; xxiv. 30; Chap. xiv. 62;

"1st, That it cannot certainly be proved that the works here referred to were true miracles: they might be like the *lying powers, signs, and wonders*, mentioned 2 Thess. ii. 9. Or, 2d, That if we should, for argument's sake, grant them to be real miracles, yet they are supposed to be wrought at a time when there were in the Christian Church teachers endued with superior miraculous powers. But it can never be inferred from such a supposition in that case, that God will suffer miracles to be wrought in proof of falsehood, when there are none of his servants to perform greater miracles on the side of truth. And when such superior miracles on the side of truth do exist, the opposite miracles, at most, can only prove that some invisible beings of great power, who are the abettors of falsehood, are strongly engaged to support the contrary doctrine; the consideration of which must excite all wise and good men to receive a truth so opposed with greater readiness, and to endeavour to promote it with greater zeal; as they may be sure the excellence and importance of it is proportionable to the solicitude of these malignant spirits to prevent its progress."—Doddridge. *But take ye heed*—Be cautiously upon your guard against so dangerous an imposition: *Behold, I have foretold you all these things*—That, comparing the event with the prediction, your faith may be established by those very circumstances which, in another view, might have a tendency to shake it.

Verses 24–31. *But in those days*—Of vengeance; *after that tribulation*—Attending the siege and taking of Jerusalem; *the sun shall be darkened, &c.*—Our Lord having, in the preceding part of his discourse, given his disciples a particular account of the various circumstances which should precede and accompany the destruction of Jerusalem, proceeds now to describe the dissolution of the Jewish polity, and the abolition of the Mosaic economy, in all the pomp of language and imagery made use of by the ancient prophets, when they foretold the overthrow of cities and states. The expressions are highly figurative, and signify the passing away of all the glory, excellence, and prosperity of the nation: and the introduction of universal sadness, misery,

28 ^v Now learn a parable of the A. M. 4037.
fig-tree: When her branch is yet ten- A. D. 33.
der, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but ^x my words shall not pass away.

32 ¶ But of that day and *that hour* knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in

Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 7, 10; Rev. i. 7.—^v Matt xxiv. 32; Luke xxi. 29, &c.—^x Isa. xl. 3.

and confusion; that the Jewish polity, both civil and religious, should be destroyed; that the Jews should be no more a people, united under a form of government administered by themselves, and possessing their own country. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 29–35.

Verse 32. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man*—See note on Matt. xxiv. 36. *Neither the Son, but the Father*—It must be observed here, that "the words *οὐδεὶς υἱός, neither the Son*, have been omitted in some copies of Mark, as they are inserted in some copies of Matthew: but there is no sufficient authority for the omission in Mark, any more than for the insertion in Matthew. Erasmus, and some of the moderns, are of opinion, that the words were omitted in the text of Matthew, lest they should afford a handle to the Arians, for proving the Son to be inferior to the Father: but it was to little purpose to erase them out of Matthew, and to leave them standing in Mark. On the contrary, St. Ambrose, and some of the ancients, assert that they were inserted in the text of Mark by the Arians: but there is as little foundation or pretence for this assertion, as there is for the other. It is much more probable that they were omitted in some copies of Mark by some indiscreet orthodox, who thought them to bear too hard upon our Saviour's dignity: for all the most ancient copies and translations extant retain them: the most ancient fathers quote them, and comment upon them. Admit the words, therefore, as the genuine words of Mark, we must, and we may, without any prejudice to our Saviour's divinity. For Christ may be considered in two respects, in his human and divine nature; and what is said with regard only to the former, doth not at all affect the latter. As he was the great teacher and revealer of his Father's will, he might know more than the angels, and yet he might not know all things. It is said in Luke ii. 52, that *Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*. He increased in wisdom, and consequently in his human nature he was not omniscient. In his human nature, he was the *son of David*; in his divine nature, he was the *Lord of*

A. M. 4037. heaven, neither the Son, but the
A. D. 33. Father.

33 ^a Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 ^b For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work; and commanded the porter to watch.

^a Matt. xxiv. 42; xxv. 13; Luke xii. 40; xxi. 34; Rom. xiii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 6.

David. In his human nature, he was upon earth; in his divine nature, he was in heaven, John iii. 13, even while upon earth. In like manner it may be said, that though as God he might know all things, yet he might be ignorant of some things as man. And of this particular the Messiah might be ignorant, because it was no part of his office or commission to reveal it. *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power*, as our Saviour said, Acts i. 7, when a like question was proposed to him. It might be proper for the disciples, and for the Jews too, by their means, to know the signs and circumstances of our Saviour's coming, and the destruction of Jerusalem; but upon many accounts it might be unfit for them both to know the precise time."—Bishop Newton. But Dr. Macknight thinks the proper translation of the passage affords a better solution of the difficulty. "The word *οιδεν* here," says he, "seems to have the force of the Hebrew conjugation *hiphil*, which, in verbs denoting action, makes that action, whatever it is, pass to another. Wherefore, *οιδεν*, which properly signifies, *I know*, used in the sense of the conjugation *hiphil*, signifies, *I make another to know, I declare*. The word has this meaning without dispute, 1 Cor. ii. 2, *I determined (οιδεναι) to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified*; that is, *I determined to make known, to preach nothing among you, but Jesus Christ*. So likewise in the text, *But of that day and that hour none maketh you to know, none hath power to make you know it*; (just as the phrase, Matt. xx. 23, *is not mine to give*, signifies, *is not in my power to give*;)—no, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father.—Neither man nor angel, nor even the Son himself, can reveal the day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem to you; because the Father hath determined that it should not be revealed. The divine wisdom saw fit to conceal from the apostles, and the other disciples of Jesus, the precise period of the destruction of Jerusalem, in order that they might be laid under a necessity of watching continually. And this vigilance was especially proper at that time, because the success of the gospel depended, in a great measure, upon the activity and exemplary lives of those who first professed and published it." Most commentators, however, prefer the former interpretation. As God, who by his Son revealed to the apostles and first disciples of Jesus the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish state, and marked a

35 ^c Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

^b Matthew xxiv. 45; xxv. 14.—^c Matthew xxiv. 42, 44.

variety of particulars which were to precede or accompany it, yet did not acquaint them with the day and hour when it should actually take place; so while he has warned us of the certainty of death and a future judgment, and discovered to us many circumstances which will attend, precede, or follow these solemn, and, to us, infinitely interesting events, he has seen fit to conceal from us the exact time when they shall happen, that we may be always expecting and preparing for them. And therefore the subsequent exhortation as much concerns every one of us, as it could possibly concern those to whom it was first given.

Verses 33–37. *Take ye heed*—Of every thing that would unfit you for your Master's coming, that might lull you into a fatal security, and render you negligent and slothful: *watch and pray*—Let your minds be always awake to a sense of your danger, and be on your guard against it: *watch for the coming of your Lord, that it may not surprise you, and pray for that grace which is necessary to qualify you for it, by enabling you to fulfil his will in all things*. *For ye know not when the time is*—And ought to be ready every day for that which may come any day. This he illustrates in the close by a parable. *The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, &c.*—Being about to leave this world and go to the Father; *who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, &c.*—Gave authority to some that were to be overseers, and work to others that were to be labourers; *and commanded the porter to watch*—To be ready to open to him at his return; and in the mean time to take care to whom he should open his gates, not to idle vagrants, thieves, and robbers, but only to his master's friends and servants. Thus our Lord Jesus, when he ascended on high, left something to all his servants to do, expecting they should all serve his cause in his absence, and be ready to receive him at his return. All are appointed to work, and some are authorized to rule. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 42–51. *Watch ye therefore*—The advice is repeated and pressed upon them, because of its unspeakable importance, as it is also upon us. *For ye know not when the master of the house cometh*—The builder, head, and ruler of his house, the church; *the Son, presiding over his own house, or family*, Heb. iii. 6: *Ye know not when he will come to take account of his servants, and of their work, and of the improvement they have made; at even or at midnight, &c.*—*Ὠψε, evening*, answers to the first watch of the night,

which began at sun-setting and ended at nine: *μεσονυκτιον*, or *midnight*, answers to the second watch, which ended at twelve: *αλεκτοροφωνια*, or the *cock-crowing*, answers to the third watch, which ended at three in the morning: *πρωι*, or the *morning*, answers to the fourth watch, which ended at six. As if he had said, Early and late, hold yourselves in a prepared state; *lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping*—In a state of lukewarmness and sloth. Observe, reader! 1st, This is applicable to his coming to each of us in particular at death, as well as to his coming to us all in general at the final judgment. Our present life is a night, a dark night, compared with the other life; we know not in which watch of the night our Master will come; whether in the days of youth, or middle age, or old age; but as soon as we are born, we begin to die; and therefore, as soon as we are capable of expecting

any thing, we must expect death. 2d, Our great care must be that, whenever our Lord comes, he do not find us sleeping secure in ourselves, off our guard, indulging ourselves in ease and sloth, mindless of our work and duty, and thoughtless of our Lord's coming; ready to say, He will not come, and so being unprepared to meet him. 3d, His coming will indeed be a sudden coming; it will be a great surprise and terror to those that are careless and asleep: it will come upon them *as a thief in the night*. It is therefore, 4th, the indispensable duty of all Christ's disciples to watch, to be awake, and keep awake. *What I say unto you twelve, I say unto all*—My disciples and followers; what I say to you of this generation, I say to all that shall believe in me through your word: *Watch*—Expect my second coming, and prepare for it, that you *may, be found in peace, without spot and blameless*.

CHAPTER XIV.

This chapter coincides with Matt. xxvi., and contains, (1.) The plot of the chief priests and scribes against Christ, 1, 2. (2.) The anointing of his head at a supper in Bethany, two days before his death, 3-9. (3.) The contract which Judas made with the chief priests to betray him, 10, 11. (4.) Christ's eating the passover with his disciples, 12-21. (5.) His instituting the Lord's Supper, and his discourse with his disciples at supper, 22-25. (6.) His warning them of their approaching danger and fall, 26-31. (7.) His agony and prayer in the garden, while his disciples slept, 32-42. (8.) Judas betraying him, and the apprehending of him by the chief priests and their agents, 43-52. (9.) His arraignment before the high-priests, at whose bar he is condemned and insolently abused, 53-65. (10.) Peter's denying of him thrice, and bitterly repenting, 66-72.

A. M. 4037. A. D. 33. **A**FTER* two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

2 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 ¶^b And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came

a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of ¹ spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred ² pence, and have been given to

* Monday before Easter, gospel, verse 1 to the end.—Matt. xxvi. 2; Luke xxii. 1; John xi. 55; xiii. 1.—^b Matt. xxvi. 6;

John xii. 1, 3; Luke vii. 37.—¹ Or, pure nard, or, liquid nard. ² Matt. xix. 28.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Verses 1-9. After two days was the feast of the passover—For an explanation of these verses, see the notes on Matt. xxvi. 1-13. Of ointment of spikenard, very precious—"Either the word *πισικη*," says Dr. Whitby, "answers to the Syriac, *piethaca*, and then it may be rendered, *nardus spicata*, ointment made of the spikes of nard; or, if it be of a Greek original, I think Theophylact well renders it *πισικη η αβολος και μετα πισως κατασκευασθεισα*, that is, *nard unadulterated and prepared with fidelity*; the great price it bore tempting many to adulterate it, as Dioscorides and Pliny tell us." Nard is a plant which was highly valued by the ancients, both as an article of luxury and medicine. The ointment made

of it was used at baths and feasts as a favourite perfume. From a passage in Horace, it appears that this ointment was so valuable among the Romans, that as much as could be contained in a small box of precious stone was considered as a sort of equivalent for a large vessel of wine, and a proper quota for a guest to contribute at an entertainment, according to the ancient custom. Hor., lib. iv. ode 12. This author mentions the *Assyrian*, and Dioscorides the *Syrian nard*; but, it appears, the best is produced in the East Indies. "The root of this plant is very small and slender. It puts forth a long and small stalk, and has several ears or spikes, even with the ground, which has given it the name of *spikenard*; the taste is bitter, acrid, and aromatic,

A. M. 4037. the poor. And they murmured against
A. D. 33. her.

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 ¶ And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

° Deut. xv. 11.—^d Matt. xxvi. 14; Luke xxii. 3, 4.

and the smell agreeable.”—Calmet. *She brake the box and poured it on his head*—As this spikenard was a liquid, and there appears to be no reason for breaking the box in order to get out the liquor, Knatchbull, Hammond, and some others maintain, that *συντριψασα*, the word here used, ought not to be translated *she brake*, but only that *she shook the box*, namely, so as to break the coagulated parts of the rich balsam, and bring it to such a degree of liquidity, that it might be fit to be poured out; and thus Dr. Waterland translates it. Dr. Doddridge and others, however, think the original word does not so naturally express this, and therefore imagine that the woman broke off the top of the vessel in which the balsam was contained. Dr. Campbell renders it, *She broke open the box*, observing, “I have chosen these words as sufficiently denoting that it required an uncommon effort to bring out the contents, which is all that the word here necessarily implies; and it is a circumstance that ought not to be altogether overlooked, being an additional evidence of the woman’s zeal for doing honour to her Lord. That the term ought not to be rendered *shook*, is to me evident. I know no example of it in this meaning in any author, sacred or profane. Verbs denoting to *shake*, frequently occur in Scripture. But the word is never *συντρίβω*, but *τινασσω*, *σειω*, *σαλευω*.” Mr. Harmer understands it of the breaking the cement with which the vessel was closely stopped, a circumstance which, he thinks, appears natural, and an explanation which is justified by the phraseology of Propertius, a writer of the same age. *There were some that had indignation*—At this which the woman had done, being incited thereto by Judas; and *said*—Probably to the woman, *Why was this waste of the ointment made*—Of this rich and costly balsam? *And they murmured against her*—Spake privately among themselves against the woman, for what she had

11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

12 ¶ And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will show you a large upper room

° Matt. xxvi. 17; Luke xxii. 7.—³ Or, *sacrificed*.

done. *But Jesus*, knowing every thing they spake or thought, *said*, *Why trouble ye her*—Without cause? *She hath wrought a good work on me*—Hath given a great proof of her firm faith, and fervent love to me; and therefore, instead of meriting your censure, deserves your commendation. *She hath done what she could*—To testify her affection for me. *She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying*—Matthew, *προς το ενταφιασαι με, corpus meum ad funus componere*, to prepare my body for its burial. This vindication of the woman suggests the reason why Jesus permitted so expensive a compliment to be paid to him. Being desirous to impress his disciples with the thought of his death, he embraced every opportunity of inculcating it, whether by word or deed.

Verses 10-16. *Judas went unto the chief priests, &c.*—Immediately after this reproof, having anger now added to his covetousness. See these verses explained in the notes on Matt. xxvi. 14-19. *There shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water*—It was highly seasonable for our Lord to give them this additional proof, both of his knowing all things, and of his influence over the minds of men; *follow him*—If our Lord meant that the man would be coming out of the city as the disciples were going in, his order implied, that they were to turn back with him, the house whither he was carrying the water being somewhere in the suburbs; but if he meant that the man would meet them at the crossing of a street, or the turning of a corner, they were to go with him perhaps farther into the city. The expression used by Luke, *συναντησει υμιν*, seems to favour this supposition. *Say ye to the good man of the house*—To the master of the family; *The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, &c.*—Commentators on this passage tell us, from the Talmudists, that in Jerusalem, at the passover, the houses were not to be let, but were of common right for

A. M. 4037. furnished *and* prepared: there make
A. D. 33. ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 ^f And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat, and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is it I?* and another said, *Is it I?*

20 And he answered and said unto them, *It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish.*

21 ^e The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but wo to that man by whom

^f Matt. xxvi. 20, &c.—^e Matt. xxvi. 24; Luke xxii. 22.
^h Matt. xxvi. 26; Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 23.

any one to eat the passover in them. *He will show you a large upper room furnished*—Greek, *εστρωμενον*, *stratum*, *spread*, namely, with a carpet; and *prepared*—Having beds or couches placed to recline on. “The English word,” says Dr. Campbell, “which comes nearest the import of the Greek, is *carpeted*. But when this term is used, as here, of a dining-room, it is not meant only of the floor, but of the couches, on which the guests reclined at meals. On these they were wont, for the sake both of neatness and of conveniency, to spread a coverlet or carpet. As this was commonly the last thing they did in dressing the room, it may not improperly be employed to denote the whole.” *There make ready for us*—There provide the unleavened bread, the lamb, and the bitter herbs, and make all things ready against the time of our coming. Christ does not order one or both of these disciples to return and inform him and the others where they had made this preparation, and to direct them to the house. This was unnecessary; for the same prophetic gift which enabled Jesus to predict these circumstances, would easily guide him to the house; and it is a beautiful modesty in the sacred historian not to notice it. *His disciples went forth*—After our Lord had given these particular instructions, the two disciples whom he sent went out from thence, came into the city, and found all the circumstances as Jesus had predicted. It is justly observed by Mr. Scott here, that “nothing could be less the object of natural sagacity and foresight than the events here mentioned. Had the two disciples come to the place specified rather sooner or later than they did, the man bearing the pitcher of water would either not have arrived, or would have been gone. But our Lord knew that the owner of a certain commodious house in Jerusalem favoured him; he foresaw that at a precise time of the day he would send his

the Son of man is betrayed! good
were it for that man if he had never
been born.

22 ¶ ^h And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 ¶ ⁱ And when they had sung a ‘hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

27 ^k And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is

ⁱ Matt. xxvi. 30.—^g Or, *psalm*.—^k Matt. xxvi. 31.

servant for a pitcher of water; that the disciples would meet him just when they entered the city; that by following him they would find out the person whom he intended; and that by mentioning him as *the master, or the teacher*, the owner of the house would readily consent to accommodate them in an upper chamber. When the disciples found all these circumstances so exactly accord to the prediction, they could not but be deeply impressed with a conviction of their Lord's knowledge of every event, and of his influence over every heart.”

Verses 17–25. *In the evening he cometh with the twelve*—See notes on Matt. xxvi. 20–29. *This is my blood of the new testament—Or, covenant*; that is, this I appoint to be a perpetual sign and memorial of my blood, as shed for establishing the new covenant, that all who shall believe in me, may receive all its gracious promises. *I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, &c.*—That is, I shall drink no more before I die: the next wine I drink will not be earthly, but heavenly.

Verses 26–31. *And they went out into the mount of Olives*—At the conclusion of the supper; Jesus and his disciples sung a proper psalm, or song of praise, together, as was customary at the close of the passover, and then he set out for the mount of Olives, choosing to retire thither, that he might prevent a riot in Jerusalem, and bring no trouble upon the master of the house where he celebrated the passover. *Jesus said, All ye shall be offended this night*—See the notes on Matt. xxvi. 30–35. The Jews, in reckoning their days, began with the evening, according to the Mosaic computation, which denominated *the evening and the morning the first day*, Gen. i. 5. And so, that which after sunset is here called *this night*, is, verse 30, called *this day*, or, *to-day*, as *σημερον* should rather be translated. The expression there is peculiarly significant:

A. M. 4037. written, ¹ I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. A. D. 33.

28 But ^m after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 ^a But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 ¶ ^o And they came to a place which was

¹ Zech. xiii. 7.—^m Chap. xvi. 7.—^a Matt. xxvi. 33, 34; Luke xxii. 33, 34; John xiii. 37, 38.

Verily I say unto thee, that thou—Thyself, confident as thou art; to-day—Even within four and twenty hours; yea, this night—Before the sun be risen; nay, before the cock crow twice—Before three in the morning; wilt deny me thrice. Our Lord, doubtless, spake so determinately as knowing a cock would crow once before the usual time of cock-crowing. By chap. xiii. 35, it appears, that the third watch of the night, ending at three in the morning, was commonly styled *the cock-crowing*. Dr. Owen, in his *Observations on the Four Gospels*, p. 56, observes, that as the Jews, in the enumeration of the times of the night, took notice only of one cock-crowing, which comprehended the third watch, so Matthew, to give them a clear information that Peter would deny his Master before three in the morning, needed only to say, that he would do it *before the cock crew*; but the Romans, (for whom, and the other Gentiles, Mark wrote his gospel,) reckoning by a double crowing of the cock, the first of which was about midnight, and the second at three, stood in need of a more particular designation; and therefore Mark, to denote the same hour to them, was obliged to say, *before the cock crew twice*. Juvenal uses exactly the same phrase to specify the same hour. Sat. i. verse 107.

Verses 32–38. *They came to Gethsemane*—For an explanation of these verses see the notes on Matt. xxvi. 36–39. *And began to be sore amazed*—Greek, *εθαμβεισθαι*, to be in a consternation. The word implies the most shocking mixture of terror and amazement: the next word, *αδμουνειν*, which we render, *to be very heavy*, signifies *to be quite depressed*, and almost overwhelmed with the load: and the word *περιλυπος*, in the next verse, which we translate *exceeding sorrowful*, implies, that he was surrounded with sorrow on every side, breaking in upon him with such violence, that, humanly speaking, there was no way to escape. Dr. Doddridge paraphrases the passage thus: “He began to be in very great amazement and anguish of mind, on account of some painful and dreadful sensations, which were then impressed on his soul by the im-

named Gethsemane: and he saith A. M. 4037 to, his disciples, Sit ye here, while I A. D. 33. shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto them, ^p My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, ^q Abba, Father, ^r all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup

^o Matt. xxvi. 36; Luke xxii. 39; John xviii. 1.—^p John xii. 27. ^q Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6.—^r Heb. v. 7.

mediate hand of God. *Then*, turning to his three disciples, *he says, My soul is surrounded* on all sides with an extremity of anguish and sorrow, which tortures me even almost to death; and I know that the infirmity of human nature must quickly sink under it without some extraordinary relief from God. While, therefore, I apply to him, do *you continue here and watch*.” Dr. Whitby supposes, that these agonies of our Lord did not arise from the immediate hand of God upon him, but from a deep apprehension of the malignity of sin, and the misery brought on the world by it. But, considering how much the mind of Christ was wounded and broken with what he now endured, so as to give some greater external signs of distress than in any other circumstance of his sufferings, there is reason to conclude, there was something extraordinary in the degree of the impression; which in all probability was from the Father's immediate agency, laying on him *the chastisement of our peace*, or *making his soul an offering for our sins*. See Isa. liii. 5, 10. *He went forward a little—Luke says, about a stone's cast, and fell on the ground—Matthew, fell on his face, and prayed that the hour might pass from him—That dreadful season of sorrow, with which he was then almost overwhelmed, and which did pass from him soon after. And he said, Abba, Father—That is, Father, Father: or, perhaps, the word Father is added by Mark, by way of interpreting the Syriac word, Abba. All things are possible unto thee—All things proper to be done. Take away this cup from me—This cup of bitter distress. Nothing is more common than to express a portion of comfort or distress by a cup, alluding to the custom of the father of a family, or master of a feast, sending to his children or guests a cup of such liquor as he designed for them. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt—As if he had said, If thou seest it necessary to continue it, or to add yet more grievous ingredients to it, I am here ready to receive it in submission to thy will; for though nature cannot but shrink back from these sufferings, it is my determinate purpose to bear whatsoever thine*

A. M. 4037. from me : * nevertheless, not what I
A. D. 33. will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

39 And again he went away and prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy;) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the

Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

42 * Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

43 ¶ And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.

* John v. 30; vi. 38.—Rom. vii. 23; Gal. v. 17.—John xiii. 1.

* Matt. xxvi. 46; John xviii. 1, 2.—y Matt. xxvi. 47; Luke xxii. 47; John xviii. 3.

infinite wisdom shall see fit to appoint. *And he cometh, &c.*—Rising up from the ground, on which he had lain prostrate, he returns to the three disciples; *and findeth them sleeping*—Notwithstanding the deep distress he was in, and the solemn injunction he had given them to watch; *and saith unto Peter*—The zealous, the confident Peter! *Simon, sleepest thou?*—Dost thou sleep at such a time as this, and after thou hast just declared thy resolution to die with me? dost thou so soon forget thy promise to stand by me, as not so much as to keep awake and watch one hour? Hast thou strength to die with me, who canst not watch so little a while with me? *Watch ye and pray*—Ye also, who were so ready to join with Peter in the same profession; *lest ye enter into temptation*—Lest ye fall by the grievous trial which is now at hand, and of which I have repeatedly warned you. Observe, reader, *watching and praying* are means absolutely necessary to be used, if we wish to stand in the hour of trial. *The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak*—I know your mind and will are well inclined to obey me, but your experience may convince you, that your nature is very weak, and your resolutions, however sincere and strong, easily borne down and broken. Every one is apt to flatter himself, when he is out of danger, that he can easily withstand temptations; but without prayer and particular watchfulness the passions are wont to prevail over reason, and the flesh to counteract the motions of the Spirit. It is justly observed by Archbishop Tillotson, (*Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 435,) that “so gentle a rebuke, and so kind an apology as we here read, were the more remarkable, as our Lord’s mind was now discomposed with sorrow, so that he must have had the deeper and tenderer sense of the unkindness of his friends. And, alas! how apt are we, in general, to think affliction an excuse for peevishness, and how unlike are we to Christ in that thought, and how unkind to ourselves, as well as our friends,

to whom, in such circumstances, with our best temper, we must be more troublesome than we could wish.”

Verses 39–42. *And he went away and spake the same words*—It is plain, by comparing verses 35, 36, with Matt. xxvi. 42, that the words were not entirely the same; and it is certain that *λογος*, here rendered *word*, often signifies *matter*. So that no more appears to be intended than that he prayed to the same purpose as before. *Sleep on now, &c.*—Dr. Waterland and some others read this interrogatively, *Do ye sleep on still and take your rest?* The passage, however, may be read with propriety agreeably to our own version; (see the note on Matt. xxvi. 42–45;) as much as to say, My previous conflict is now over, and you may sleep on, because I have no further occasion for your watching. *It is enough*, or rather, as Campbell renders *απεχει*, *All is over*, or, *it is done*, the time is expired. The intention of the phrase was manifestly to signify, that the time wherein they might have been of use to him, was now lost; and that he was, in a manner, already in the hands of his enemies. *Rise up, let us go*—See notes on Matt. xxvi. 46–49.

Verses 43–45. *Immediately, while he yet spake*—And gave his disciples the alarm just mentioned; *Judas came, and with him a great multitude*—Persons of different stations and offices in life, sent with authority from the chief priests, with swords and staves—Or clubs, as it seems *εϋλων* ought here to be rendered. “A staff, in Greek, *ραβδος*, is intended principally to assist us in walking; a club, *εϋλον*, is a weapon both offensive and defensive. To show that these words are, in the gospels, never used promiscuously, let it be observed, that, in our Lord’s commands to his apostles, in relation to the discharge of their office, when what concerned their own accommodation in travelling is spoken of, the word *ραβδος* is used by all the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who take particular notice

A. M. 4037. 46 And they laid their hands on
A. D. 33. him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high-priest, and cut off his ear.

48 ^a And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and *with staves* to take me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not: but ^a the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

50 ^b And they all forsook him, and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his naked body*; and the young man laid hold on him:

^a Matthew xxvi. 55; Luke xxii. 52.—^a Psa. xxii. 6; Isa. liii. 7, &c.; Luke xxii. 37; xxiv. 44.

of that transaction. But, in the account given by the same evangelists of the armed multitude sent by the high-priests and elders to apprehend our Lord, they never employ the term *παῖδες*, but always, *ἐυλοῦν*."—Campbell.

Verses 46-49. *They laid their hands on him, and took him*—After they had first gone backward, and fallen to the ground, upon Jesus's saying, *I am he*, as is recorded John xviii. 5, 6. This paragraph is explained in the notes on Matt. xxvi. 51-56.

Verses 51, 52. *There followed him a certain young man*—The ancients, or at least many of them, supposed, that the young man here mentioned by Mark was one of the apostles; though Grotius wonders how they could entertain such an idea, and apprehends it was some youth who lodged in a country-house, near the garden, who ran out in a hurry to see what was the matter, in his night vestment, or in his shirt, as we should express it. Dr. Macknight thinks it might be "the proprietor of the garden, who, being awakened with the noise, came out in the linen cloth in which he had been lying, cast around his naked body, and, having a respect for Jesus, followed him, forgetting the dress he was in." *And the young men*—Οἱ ἀνεπιτοκο, a common denomination for soldiers, among the Greeks. "Though this incident, recorded by Mark, may not appear of great moment, it is, in my opinion," says Dr. Campbell, "one of those circumstances we call picturesque, which, though in a manner unconnected with the story, enlivens the narrative. It must have been late in the night when (as has been very probably conjectured) some young man, whose house lay near the garden, being roused out of sleep by the noise of the soldiers and armed retinue passing by, got up, stimulated by curiosity, wrapped himself (as Casaubon supposes) in the cloth in which he had been sleeping, and ran after them. This is such an incident as is very likely to have happened, but most unlikely to have been invented." *Laid hold on him*—Who was only suspected to be

52 And he left the linen cloth, and
A. M. 4037. fled from them naked. A. D. 33.

53 ^c And they led Jesus away to the high-priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high-priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55 ^d And the chief priests, and all the council, sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none;

56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

^b Psa. lxxxviii. 8; verse 27.—^c Matt. xxvi. 57; Luke xxii. 54; John xviii. 13.—^d Matt. xxvi. 59.

Christ's disciple; but were not permitted to touch them who really were so!

Verses 53, 54. *And they led Jesus away to the high-priest*—To Annas first, who had been high-priest, and afterward to his son-in-law, Caiaphas, who then sustained the office. *And with him were assembled all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes*—Or the chief persons of the sanhedrim, with their proper officers, convened by Caiaphas on this important occasion. *And Peter followed him afar off*—Though he had at first forsaken Christ, and shifted for himself, as the rest of his companions did, yet afterward he and John bethought themselves, and determined to return, that they might see what would become of him: *even unto the palace of the high-priest*—See on Matt. xxvi. 57. It appears, from the circumstance of Peter and John's being ready to go into Caiaphas's house with the band which conducted Jesus, that they had quickly recovered themselves after their flight.

Verses 55-59. *And all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death*—Which they were determined to do. They had seized him as a malefactor; and now they had him, they had no indictment to prefer against him, no crime to lay to his charge: but *they sought for witnesses against him*. They artfully sifted some by sly interrogatories, offered bribes to others to prevail on them to accuse him, and endeavoured by threats to compel others to do it. The chief priests and elders were, by the law, intrusted with the prosecuting and punishing of false witnesses, Deut. xix. 16; yet they were now ringleaders in a crime that tended to the overthrow of all justice. Deplorable is the condition of a country, when those that should be the conservators of peace and equity are the corrupters of both! *And found none*—What an amazing proof of the overruling providence of God, considering both their authority, and the rewards they could offer, that no two consistent witnesses could be procured to charge him with any gross crime!

A. M. 4037. 57 And there arose certain, and
A. D. 33. bare false witness against him,
saying,

58 We heard him say, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 "And the high-priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest

thou nothing? what is it which these
witness against thee? A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

61 But ^s he held his peace, and answered nothing. ^b Again the high-priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: ⁱ and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high-priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

* Chap. xv. 29.—^f Matt. xxvi. 62.—^g Isa. liii. 7.—^h Matt.

xxvi. 63.—ⁱ Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64; Luke xxii. 69.

Their witness, their evidences, agreed not together—So also the Vulgate, *Convenientia testimonia non erant*. But the Greek words, *οαι εκ ηοαυ*, which, literally rendered, are, *were not equal*, are understood by many to signify, Not equal to the charge of a capital crime. So Dr. Hammond; they did not accuse him of that upon which a sentence of death might be founded; no, not by the utmost stretch of their law. Dr. Campbell, who considers the phrase in the same light, renders it, *Their testimonies were insufficient*; observing, "On a doubtful point, where the words appear susceptible of either interpretation, we ought to be determined by the circumstances of the case. Now there is nothing in the whole narrative that insinuates the smallest discrepancy among the witnesses. On the contrary, in the gospels the testimony specified is mentioned as given by all the witnesses. The differences in Matthew and Mark, one saying, *I will rebuild*, another, *I can rebuild*; one adding, *made with hands*, another omitting it; not only are of no moment in themselves, but are manifestly differences in the reports of the evangelists, not in the testimony of the witnesses; nor are they greater than those which occur in most other facts related from memory. What therefore perplexed the pontiffs and the scribes was, that, admitting all that was attested, it did not amount to what could be accounted a capital crime. This made the high-priest think of extorting from our Lord's mouth a confession which might supply the defect of evidence. This expedient succeeded to their wish; Jesus, though not outwitted by their subtlety, was no way disposed to decline suffering, and therefore readily supplied them with the pretext they wanted." The same expression is used in the 59th verse. See the note on Matt. xxvi. 59-61. *There arose certain, and bare false witness*—There is no wickedness so black, no villany so horrid, but there may be found among mankind fit tools to be used in it: so miserably depraved and vitiated is human nature! *Saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple, &c.*—It is observable, that the words which they thus misrepresented were spoken by Christ at least three years before, (John ii. 19.) Their going back so far to find matter for the charge was a glorious, though silent attestation, of the unexceptionable

manner wherein he had behaved, through the whole course of his public ministry.

Verses 60-62. *The high-priest stood up in the midst, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xxvi. 62-64, where this paragraph is largely explained. *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed*—Here one of the peculiar attributes of the Deity is used to express the divine nature. Supreme happiness is properly considered as belonging to God: and as all comfort flows from him, suitable ascriptions of praise and glory are his due. But this form of speech was conformable to the ancient custom of the Jews, who, when the priest in the sanctuary rehearsed the name of God, used to answer, *Blessed be his name for ever*. The title of the *Blessed One*, signified as much as the *Holy One*; and both, or either of them, the God of Israel. Hence such expressions are frequent in the rabbis. See also Rom. i. 25; 2 Cor. xi. 31. "This is a very sublime and emphatical method of expressing the happiness of God. It conveys such an idea of the divine blessedness, that, comparatively speaking, there is none happy but he."—Macknight.

Verses 63-65. *Then the high-priest rent his clothes*—Rending of clothes was an expression sometimes of deep grief, sometimes of holy zeal. The precepts, Lev. x. 8; xxi. 10; forbidding the high-priest to rend his clothes, relate only to the pontifical garments and to private mourning: that is, mourning on account of the calamities befalling himself or friends. Grievings of this kind the chief minister of religion was not to make public by any outward sign whatever. But it was neither unlawful nor unusual for him to rend his ordinary garments on account of public calamities, or instances of gross wickedness, as a testimony of his grief for the one and abhorrence of the other. See 1 Mac. xi. 71. That the high-priest was clothed in his ordinary apparel on this occasion, appears from Exod. xxix. 29, 30, where the pontifical garments are ordered to descend from father to son; and therefore were to be worn only at their consecration, and when they ministered. *And saith, What need we any further witnesses*—Namely, of his being guilty of blasphemy *Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?*—What punishment do you judge him to have deserved? *They all condemned him to be*

A. M. 4037. 64 Ye have heard the blasphemy :
A. D. 33. what think ye ? And they all con-
demned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy : and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 ¶ ^k And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high-priest :

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went

^k Matt. xxvi. 58, 69 ; Luke xxii. 55 ; John xviii. 16.—^l Matt. xxvi. 71 ; Luke xxii. 58 ; John xviii. 25.—^m Matt. xxvi. 73 ;

guilty of death—Namely, all present ; for it is probable Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and some more, who were his disciples, or favourably disposed toward him, were not present : or if they were, they doubtless remonstrated against the iniquity of this sentence. *And some began to spit on him*—See note on Matt. xxvi. 67, 68.

Verses 66–72. *And as Peter was beneath in the palace*—This whole paragraph respecting Peter's three-fold denial of Christ is explained at large in the notes on Matt. xxvi. 69–75. *When he thought thereon he wept*—In the original it is, *και επιβαλων εκλαιε*, which words are interpreted very differently by different commentators. Dr. Whitby thinks our translation of the words may be maintained ; “for though Casaubon,” says he, “gave no instance of this signification of the word, Constantine proves, out of Philoponus, Dionysius, and Basil, that it signifies *κατανοειν*, to consider of, and ponder, or fix the mind upon a thing. So Eustathius ; ‘the word *επιβαλλω*, respects either the action, and then it signifies exactly to take it in hand, or the mind, and then it signifies to consider of it, as we are able ;’ or as Phavorinus interprets it, *επιβαλωσ νοειν*, aptly and wisely to consider of it.” Dr. Campbell, also, after a criti-

cal examination of the text, and of the different interpretations which learned men have given of it, says, “I think, with Wetstein, that the sense exhibited by the English translation is the most probable.” Dr. Macknight, however, gives it as his opinion, that the original expression should be rendered, *and throwing his garment* (that is, the veil which the Jewish men used to wear) *over his head, he wept* ; “For the expression,” says he, “is elliptical, and must be supplied thus, *Επιβαλων ματιον τη κεφαλη αυτε*, as is evident from Lev. xix. 19, LXX. Besides, it was the custom of persons in confusion to cover their heads, Jer. xiv. 3, 4.” Thus also Elsner, Salmasius, Bos, and Waterland understand the words. It may not be improper to mention one more interpretation of the passage, adopted by Raphelius and some other learned critics, which is, *throwing himself out of the company*, namely, in a passionate manner, (which it is very probable he did,) *he wept*. This exposition, it must be acknowledged, makes Mark's words agree in sense with those of the other evangelists, who say, *He went forth and wept* ; and “plain it is,” says Dr. Whitby, “that in the book of Maccabees the word often signifies, *irruens*, or *se projiciens*, rushing, or, casting one's self out.”

69 ¹ And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.

70 And he denied it again. ^m And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them ; ⁿ for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 ^o And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And ^p when he thought thereon, he wept.

Luke xxii. 59 ; John xviii. 26.—^o Acts ii. 7.—^o Matt. xxvi. 75. ^p Or, *he wept abundantly*, or, *he began to weep*.

CHAPTER XV.

This chapter coincides with Matt. xxvii. Here we have Christ, (1.) Arraigned and accused before Pilate the Roman governor, 1–5. (2.) Clamoured against by the common people, at the instigation of the priests, 6–14. (3.) Condemned to be crucified immediately, 15. (4.) Ridiculed and abused as a mock king by the Roman soldiers, 16–19. (5.) Led out to the place of execution, with all possible ignominy and disgrace, 20–24. (6.) Nailed to the cross, between two thieves, 25–28. (7.) Reviled and abused by all that passed by, 29–32. (8.) For a time deserted by his Father, 33–36. (9.) Dying and rending the veil, 37, 38. (10.) Attested by the centurion, and attended by the women, 39–41. (11.) Honourably buried in Joseph of Arimathea's sepulchre, 42–47.

A. M. 4037. **AND*** * straightway in the morning
A. D. 33. the chief priests held a consulta-
tion with the elders and scribes, and the whole
council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away,
and delivered *him* to Pilate.

2 ^b And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King
of the Jews? And he answering, said unto
him, Thou sayest it.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many
things: but he answered nothing.

4 ^c And Pilate asked him again, saying, An-
swerest thou nothing? behold how many things
they witness against thee.

* Tuesday before Easter, gospel, verse 1 to verse 40.—^a Psa. ii. 2; Matt. xxvii. 1; Luke xxii. 66; xxiii. 1; John xviii. 28; Acts iii. 13; iv. 26.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

Verse 1. *And straightway in the morning*—Succeeding the dismal night in which the Jewish rulers had been so busily engaged in the horrid transactions related in the preceding chapter; *the chief priests*—As soon as it was day; *held a consultation with the elders and scribes*—What method they should take to execute the sentence they had passed against Jesus, and how they might contrive to put him to death in the most severe and contemptuous manner. And because the sanhedrim, which, indeed, had the power of trying and condemning men for crimes which the Jewish law had made capital, yet had not the power of putting such sentences in execution without the approbation of the civil magistrate, or Roman governor; therefore they determined to bind Jesus and deliver him to Pilate, which they accordingly did, while it was yet early, John xviii. 28. They had indeed bound him when he was first apprehended, but, perhaps, he had been loosed while under examination, or else they now made his bonds stricter than before; the better, as they might think, to secure him from a rescue as he passed through the public streets in the day-time. See note on Matt. xxvii. 1, 2. The observation of Theophylact here is worthy of notice. "The Jews delivered up our Lord to the Romans, and they, for that sin, were themselves given up into the hands of the Romans!"

Verses 2-5. *Pilate asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews?*—These verses are explained in the notes on Matt. xxvii. 11-14. *But Jesus yet answered nothing*—This is not an accurate translation of the original, (which is, *εκερι σθεν απεκριθη*,) implying, as Dr. Campbell justly observes, "that he had answered nothing to the former question, the reverse of which is the fact, as appears, verse 2. All the Latin translators say rightly, *Nihil amplius respondit, he answered nothing more*, or what is manifestly equivalent. All the foreign translations give the same sense. Yet, to show how difficult it is to preserve a uniform attention, and how liable at times even judicious persons are to run blindfold into the errors

5 ^d But Jesus yet answered nothing; A. M. 4037.
so that Pilate marvelled. A. D. 33.

6 ¶ Now ^e at *that* feast he released unto them
one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.*

8 And the multitude, crying aloud, began to
desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto
them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye
that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

^b Matthew xxvii. 11.—^c Matthew xxvii. 13.—^d Isaiah liii. 7; John xix. 9.—^e Matthew xxvii. 15; Luke xxiii. 17; John xviii. 39.

of their predecessors; it may be observed, that Wesley is the only modern translator who has escaped a blunder not more repugnant to the fact, as recorded in the verses immediately preceding, than contradictory to the import of the Greek expression here used. His version is, *Answered nothing any more*. The rest without exception say, *Still answered nothing*, or words to that purpose. Yet, in the translation commonly used in Queen Elizabeth's reign, the sense was truly exhibited, *Answered no more at all*."

Verses 6-10. *Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner*—The passover being celebrated by the Jews in memory of their deliverance from Egypt, it was agreeable to the nature of the feast to make this release at that time, and therefore customary. See Whitby, and note on Matt. xxvii. 15-18. *There was one named Barabbas, bound with them that had made insurrection*—A crime which the Roman governors, and Pilate in particular, were more especially concerned and careful to punish; *who had committed murder in the insurrection*—He seems to have been the head of the rebels. *The multitude, crying aloud, &c.*—Greek, *αυαθησας ο οχλος ηρξατο αιρεισθαι*, *With great clamour, the multitude demanded of Pilate what he used to grant them*. So Campbell. *But Pilate answered, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?*—If Pilate made this proposal with a view to preserve the life of Jesus, it is hard to say which he discovers most, his want of justice, or of courage, or of common sense. While in a most mean and cowardly manner he sacrifices justice to popular clamour, he enrages those whom he seeks to appease, by unseasonably repeating that title, *The King of the Jews*, which he could not but know was highly offensive to them. *For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him*—To be put to death, not from a regard to justice, but merely for envy at his popularity and goodness; and that these things, and no crime of his, either real or suspected, had made them his enemies. Pilate ought, therefore, certainly rather to have lost his own life than to have delivered

A. M. 4037. 10 (For he knew that the chief
A. D. 33. priests had delivered him for envy.)

11 But ^c the chief priests moved the people that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 ^e And so Pilate, willing to content the

^c Matt. xxvii. 20; Acts iii. 14.—^e Matt.

Jesus to their will. See note on Matthew xxvii. 24, 25,

Verses 11–15. *But the chief priests*—Being very solicitous to carry the plan they had formed for his destruction into execution; *moved the people*—To desire the release of Barabbas, though he was a scandalous and outrageous criminal. *Pilate said again*—Being willing, Luke says, to release Jesus; *What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call King of the Jews*—It seems strange that Pilate should so often repeat this title, *King of the Jews*; but perhaps he might do it partly to ridicule it, and bring contempt on the scheme of a Messiah; and partly to procure from the Jews, in their zeal against Jesus, the strongest and most public professions of their subjection to Cesar. *And they cried out again, Crucify him*—By this cry, they declared the greatest degree of rage that can be imagined; for it was as if they had said, Let him whom you call our king be treated like one of the vilest of your slaves, who has committed the most enormous crime. To have inflicted such a punishment as this on any *free Jew*, would probably have been sufficient to have thrown the whole city and nation into an uproar; but now they were deaf to every thing but the clamour of passion, and in their madness did not consider with how dangerous a precedent they might furnish the Roman governor. And indeed it turned dreadfully on themselves, when such vast numbers of them were crucified for their opposition to the Romans during the time of their last war. See Doddridge, and note on Matt. xxvii. 25. *Pilate said, Why, what evil hath he done?*—What crime do you accuse him of? But instead of showing that he had done any evil, or specifying any one crime of which he had been guilty; *they only cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him*—See note on Matt. xxvii. 23. *Pilate, therefore, willing to content the people*—To whom, as appears from Josephus, he had given much cause of disgust before; being perhaps afraid of an insurrection if he should continue to withstand them, though at the head of an armed force sufficient to have quelled any mob, weakly suffered himself to be borne down by their violence; *and released unto them him that for sedition and murder had been cast into prison, whom they de-*

people, released Barabbas unto them, A. M. 4037. and delivered Jesus, when he had A. D. 33. scourged *him*, to be crucified.

16 ¶ ^b And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band;

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his *head*,

18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they smote him on the head with a

xxvii. 26; John xix. 1, 16.—^b Matt. xxvii. 27.

sired; but delivered Jesus to their will, Luke xxiii. 25, namely, *delivered him to be crucified, when he had scourged him!* “Whipping, or scourging, was a punishment frequently used by the Jews and Romans. The Jews commonly inflicted it by a whip of three cords, and limited the number of stripes to thirty-nine, that they might not exceed the number limited. Deut. xxv. 3. But the usual way of scourging among the Romans was with such rods or wands as the lictors carried in a bundle before the magistrates; and they were exceeding cruel in this kind of punishment, tearing with their scourges even the veins and arteries, and laying the very bowels of the malefactors bare; and as our Saviour was scourged at Pilate's order, it was done most probably by *his officers*, after the Roman manner, and was therefore no less severe than disgraceful.” See Calmet, and note on Matt. xxvii. 26.

Verses 16–19. *And the soldiers led him away*—The soldiers, knowing that it was a Roman custom to scourge prisoners just before they were put to death, interpreted Pilate's order on this head as a declaration that he was immediately to be crucified; therefore they led him to *the hall, called the Pretorium*—As being the place where the pretor, a Roman magistrate, used to keep his court, and give judgment; but in common language, the term was applied to the palace in general. *And they call together the whole band, &c.*—Or cohort, to insult and torment him, not being concerned to keep any measures with a person whom they looked upon as entirely abandoned to their will. *And they clothed him with purple*—As royal robes were usually purple and scarlet, Mark and John term this a *purple robe*, Matthew a scarlet one. The Tyrian purple is said not to have been very different from scarlet. They clothed Jesus in this gaudy dress that he might have something of a mock resemblance to a prince. *And platted a crown of thorns, &c.*—Still further to ridicule his pretensions to royalty, which they considered as an affront to their nation and emperor; *and began to salute him*—In a ludicrous manner, as if he had been a new-created prince, and this his coronation-day. *And they smote him on the head*—And so, as it were, nailed down the thorns on his forehead and temples, occasioning thereby,

A. M. 4037. reed, and did spit upon him, and A. D. 33. bowing *their* knees, worshipped him.

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 ¹ And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 ² And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull.

23 ¹ And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh : but he received *it* not.

24 ¶ And when they had crucified him, ^m they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And ⁿ it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

26 And ^o the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27 And ^p with him they crucify two thieves ;

¹ Matt. xxvii. 32; Luke xxiii. 26.—² Matt. xxvii. 33; Luke xxiii. 33; John xix. 17.—³ Matt. xxvii. 34.—^m Psa. xxii. 18; Luke xxiii. 34; John xix. 23.—ⁿ Matt. xxvii. 45; Luke xxiii. 44; John xix. 14.—^o Matt. xxvii. 37; John xix. 19.

as it may be reasonably supposed, exquisite pain, as well as a great effusion of blood. *And did spit upon him*—Even in his very face; and *bowing their knees, worshipped him*—Did him reverence in a scoffing and insulting manner: all which indignities and cruelties this holy sufferer bore with the utmost meekness and composure, neither reviling nor threatening them; but silently committing himself to the righteous invisible Judge, 1 Peter ii. 23. See note on Matt. xxvii. 27–31, where these particular circumstances of his humiliation are enlarged upon.

Verses 20, 21. *And when they had mocked him, &c.*—These verses are explained in the note on Matt. xxvii. 31, 32.

Verses 22–28. *They bring him unto the place Golgotha*—See these verses elucidated in the notes on Matt. xxvii. 33–44. *When they had crucified him, they parted his garments*—Mark seems to intimate, that they first nailed him to the cross, then parted his garments, and afterward reared up the cross. The English word *to crucify*, denotes properly, to put to death by nailing to the cross; but the Greek word *crucifigo*, here used, means no more than to fasten to the cross with nails. In strict propriety, we should not say, a man cried out after he was crucified, but after he was nailed to the cross. *And it was the third hour*—Or nine o'clock in the morning, when they thus brought him to mount Calvary. John says, *it was about the sixth hour*, even when he was condemned to be crucified. “But then, it must be observed, that the Greek manuscripts produced by Camerarius, Beza, and R. Stephanus, read in

the one on his right hand, and the A. M. 4037. other on his left. A. D. 33.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, ^a And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29 ¶ And ^r they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, ^s thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking, said among themselves, with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And ^t they that were crucified with him, reviled him.

33 ¶ And ^u when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, ^x Eloi, Eloi, lama sabach-

^a Matt. xxvii. 38.—^r Isa. liii. 12; Luke xxii. 37.—^s Psa. xxii. 7.—^t Chap. xiv. 58; John ii. 19.—^u Matt. xxvii. 44; Luke xxiii. 39.—^v Matt. xxvii. 45; Luke xviii. 44.—^x Psa. xxii. 1; Matt. xxvii. 46.

John, *ωστι τριτη*, about the third hour; that Nonnus seems to have read so, his paraphrase running after this manner, *the third hour was not yet past*; that Theophylact contends it ought to be so read, and that because the three other evangelists unanimously say that the darkness began at the sixth hour, which yet began not, till after our Lord had hung upon the cross some considerable time; till after the soldiers had divided his garments, the Jews had mocked him, and bid him come down from the cross, and the discourse had passed between the two thieves among themselves, and between the repenting thief and our Lord. And lastly, the author of the Constantinopolitan Chronicle saith expressly, that the exacter copies, and the manuscript of St. John, kept till his time at Ephesus, read *ωρα ωστι τριτη*, about the third hour. See Jerome on Psa. lxxvii. And the change from γ, the third, to ζ, the sixth, is so easy, that this may very reasonably be owned in the later copies of John's gospel; especially if we consider how punctual Mark is in the enumeration of the hours, saying, *it was the third hour, and they crucified him*, or began to lead him away to be crucified; and, verse 33, *when the sixth hour was come*, from that time *there was darkness over the whole land till the ninth hour*; and, verse 34, at the ninth hour Jesus expired.”—Whitby. *And the scripture was fulfilled*—Namely, Isa. liii. 12, *And he was numbered with the transgressors*—The prophet thus speaking with amazing plainness of the sufferings of the Messiah.

Verses 33–38. *When the sixth hour was come—*

A. M. 4037. thani? which is, being interpreted,
A. D. 33. My God, my God, why hast thou
forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when
they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And ^γ one ran and filled a sponge full of
vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and ^α gave him
to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether
Elias will come to take him down.

37 ^α And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and
gave up the ghost.

38 ¶ And ^β the veil of the temple was rent
in twain, from the top to the bottom.

39 ¶ And ^α when the centurion which stood
over against him, saw that he so cried out,
and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this
man was the Son of God.

40 ^δ There were also women looking on ^α afar
off, among whom was Mary Magdalene, and

^γ Matt. xxvii. 48; John xix. 29.—^α Psa. lxix. 21.—^β Matt.
xxvii. 50; Luke xxiii. 46; John xix. 30.—^δ Matt. xxvii. 51;
Luke xxiii. 45.—^ε Matt. xxvii. 54; Luke xxiii. 47.

For an explanation of this paragraph, see notes
on Matt. xxvii. 45–53. *My God, my God, why hast
thou forsaken me?*—In these words, Jesus claims
God as his God; and yet laments his Father's with-
drawing the tokens of his love, while he bare our
sins.

Verses 39–41. *When the centurion saw that he
so cried out, and gave up the ghost*—Cried out with
such strength of voice, and such firm confidence in
God, even at the moment when he expired, *he said,
Truly this man was the Son of God*—See this
translation defended and explained, in the note on
Matt. xxvii. 54. *Who followed him and ministered
unto him*—Waited upon him, and provided him with
necessaries.

Verses 42–44. *And now, &c.*—*Και ἡδὴ ὀψίας γενομε-
νης, And the evening being now come.* The word
ὀψίας, answering to *evening*, is used with some lati-
tude in Scripture. The Jews spoke of two evenings,
(see notes on Matt. xiv. 15, 23.) It is probably the
former of these that is meant here and Matt. xxvii.
57; for at six the preparation ended, and the sabbath
began, when they were no longer at liberty to be
employed in the manner mentioned in the subse-
quent verses. Therefore, that the bodies might not
be hanging on the sabbath day, (or after six that
evening,) they were in haste to have them taken
down. *Joseph, an honourable counsellor*—A man of
character and reputation, and a member of the
sanhedrim; *who himself waited for the kingdom of
God*—Who expected to see it set up on earth under
the Messiah, and to partake of the blessings of it.
Observe, reader, those who wait for the kingdom of
God, and hope to obtain an interest in the privileges
of it, must show it by their forwardness to own

Mary the mother of James the less; A. M. 4037.
and of Joses, and Salome; A. D. 33.

41 Who also, when he was in Galilee, ^ε fol-
lowed him, and ministered unto him; and
many other women which came up with him
unto Jerusalem.

42 ¶ ^ε And now, when the even was come,
(because it was the preparation, that is, the day
before the sabbath,)

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable coun-
sellor, which also ^β waited for the kingdom of
God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate,
and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already
dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he
asked him whether he had been any while
dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he
gave the body to Joseph.

^δ Matt. xxvii. 55; Luke xxiii. 49.—^ε Psa. xxxviii. 11.
^ε Luke viii. 2, 3.—^ε Matt. xxvii. 57; Luke xxiii. 50; John
xix. 38.—^β Luke ii. 25, 38.

Christ's cause even then, when it seems to be run
down and crushed: *came and went in boldly unto
Pilate*—Though he knew such an action must nec-
essarily draw upon him the enmity and contempt
of his brethren; *and craved the body of Jesus*—That
he might preserve it from further insults, and bestow
on it an honourable interment. Probably, as Dr.
Doddridge observes, the prodigies attending Christ's
death, had been the means of awakening this rich
and noble senator to greater courage than he had
possessed before, and of inducing him thus to stand
forth and publicly own his friendship to Jesus in the
midst of his greatest infamy; which certainly was
a courageous act at such a time, and in such a situa-
tion of affairs. *And Pilate marvelled if he were al-
ready dead*—For though he had given orders to
break the legs of the crucified persons, John xix. 31,
32, he knew that they might live some hours in that
condition: *and calling the centurion, he asked whe-
ther he had been any while dead*—Whether it was
so long since they perceived any sign of life in him,
that they might conclude he was actually dead, past
recall. It was through the special providence of
God, that Pilate was so strict in examining into this
matter, that there might be no pretence for saying
that he was taken down from the cross and placed
in the tomb while he was yet alive; and so for dis-
proving his resurrection. And the reality of his
death was so fully determined, that an objection of
that kind was never started. Thus the truth of
Christ sometimes obtains confirmation even from
its enemies.

Verses 45–47. *And he gave the body to Joseph*—
Pilate gave Joseph leave to take down the body, and
do with it what he pleased, the priests either not

A. M. 4037. 46 ⁱ And he bought fine linen, and
A. D. 33. took him down, and wrapped him
in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre
which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled

a stone unto the door of the se- A. M. 4037.
pulchre. A. D. 33.

47 And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mo-
ther of Joses, beheld where he was laid.

ⁱ Matt. xxvii. 59, 60; Luke

xxiii. 53; John xix. 40.

knowing that he was disposed to make such a grant, or being so influenced that they did not oppose his making it. *And he bought fine linen*—Thus showing in what great estimation he held Jesus; *and took him down*—Mangled and macerated as his body was; *and wrapped it in the linen*—As a treasure of great worth; *and laid it in a sepulchre*—To perform this necessary service God raised up this man at a time when none of Christ's disciples had courage or

ability to undertake such a thing. See note on Matt. xxvii. 60. *And Mary Magdalene, &c.—beheld*—Greek, *εθεωρεν*, *carefully observed where he was laid*, having followed those who took down and carried away the body. They were thus particular in observing where the corpse was placed, because of the design they had formed of coming and embalming the body as soon as the sabbath should be over, there not being time to do it before it commenced.

CHAPTER XVI.

In this chapter, which coincides with Matt. xxviii., we have a short account of the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. (1.) The two Marys and Salome come early in the morning to the sepulchre, bringing sweet spices to embalm the body of Jesus, 1-4. (2.) They see an angel, who assures them of the resurrection of Christ, and sends them to acquaint his disciples with it, 5-8. (3.) He appears to Mary Magdalene, who immediately goes and informs the disciples of it, 9-11. (4.) He appears to the two disciples going to Emmaus, who give an account of it to their brethren, 12, 13. (5.) In the evening of the same day, he appears to the eleven, and, after upbraiding them with their unbelief, commissions them to preach the gospel to all mankind, promising to endue them with power to confirm their doctrine by miracles, 14-18. (6.) He ascends into heaven; and the apostles go forth and engage in their work, in which God owns them, and renders it successful, 19, 20.

A. M. 4037. **AND** ^a when the sabbath was past,
A. D. 33. Mary Magdalene, and Mary the
mother of James, and Salome, ^b had bought
sweet spices, that they might come and anoint
him.

shall roll us away the stone from A. M. 4037.
the door of the sepulchre? A. D. 33.

2 ^c And very early in the morning, the first
day of the week, they came unto the sepul-
chre at the rising of the sun:

4 (And when they looked, they saw that the
stone was rolled away,) for it was very great.

5 ^d And entering into the sepulchre, they
saw a young man sitting on the right side,
clothed in a long white garment; and they
were affrighted.

3 And they said among themselves, Who

6 ^e And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted:

^a Matthew xxviii. 1; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1.
^b Luke xxiii. 56.

^c Luke xxxiv. 1; John xx. 1.—^d Luke xxiv. 3; John xx. 11, 12.
^e Matt. xxviii. 5-7.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

Verse 1. *Mary Magdalene, &c., had bought sweet spices*—These Galilean women, who had waited on Jesus in his last moments, and attended his body to the sepulchre, observing that his funeral rites were performed in haste, (the body being rolled in nothing but a mixture of myrrh and aloes, brought by Nicodemus, John xix. 39,) agreed among themselves to come, when the sabbath was passed, and embalm their dead Lord, by anointing and swathing him in a proper manner. Accordingly, as soon as they had seen him laid in the sepulchre, and the entrance into it blocked up by a great stone, they returned to the

city, and bought what other spices were necessary for that purpose. *And very early in the morning they came unto the sepulchre*—See note on Matt. xxviii. 1. *At the rising of the sun*—It appears, upon comparing the accounts given by the other evangelists, that they set out while it was yet dark, and came within sight of the sepulchre, for the first time, just as it grew light enough to discern that the stone was rolled away. But by the time Mary had called Peter and John, and they had viewed the sepulchre, the sun was rising.

Verses 3-6. *And they said, Who shall roll us away the stone*—This seems to have been the only diffi-

A. M. 4037. Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which
A. D. 33. was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, ^f as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled, and were amazed: ^g neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

9 ¶ Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, ^h he appeared first to

Mary Magdalene, ⁱ out of whom he A. M. 4037.
had cast seven devils. A. D. 33.

10 ^k And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 ^l And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 ¶ After that, he appeared in another form ^m unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told ⁿ it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

^f Matt. xxvi. 32; Chap. xiv. 28.—^g Matt. xxviii. 8; Luke xxiv. 9.—^h John xx. 14.

ⁱ Luke viii. 2.—^k Luke xxiv. 10; John xx. 18.—^l Luke xxiv. 11.—^m Luke xxiv. 13.

culty they apprehended. So they knew nothing of Pilate's having sealed the stone, and placed a guard of soldiers there. *And when they looked—* *Ἀναβλεψασαί, and having lifted up their eyes; they saw—* Namely, before they arrived quite at the sepulchre; that the stone was rolled away—An angel having descended and done this, as is recorded Matt. xxviii. 2; where see the note. *For it was very great—* These words, the reader will observe, should be read after the third verse, with which they are connected: an instance of a similar transposition was noted on chap. xi. 13. *And entering into the sepulchre they saw a young man, &c.—* Matthew says, this was the angel, who had rolled away the stone, and frightened the guards from the sepulchre. It seems he had now laid aside the terrors in which he was arrayed, and assumed the form and dress of a human being, in order that when the women saw him, they might be as little terrified as possible. See note on Matt. xxviii. 5, 6. This is the appearance of the one angel which Matthew and Mark have described. The women, much encouraged by the agreeable news, as well as by the sweet accent with which the heavenly being spake, it seems, went down into the sepulchre, and lo, another angel appeared; this is the vision of the two angels, which Luke, chap. xxiv. 3, 4, has described as the principal vision. Probably the one sat at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. In which situation they showed themselves by-and-by to Mary Magdalene, John xx. 12.

Verse 7. *Go your way, tell his disciples, &c.—* The kindness of this message will appear above all praise, if we call to mind the late behaviour of the persons to whom it was sent. They had every one of them forsaken Jesus in his greatest extremity; but he graciously forgave them, and, to assure them of their pardon, called them by the endearing name of his brethren, John xx. 17. *And Peter—* Though he so oft denied his Lord. What amazing goodness was this! "Peter is here named, not as prince of the apostles, as the Papists think him, but, as the fathers say, for his consolation, to take off the scruple which might lie upon his spirit, whether, after his

three-fold denial of his Master, he had not forfeited his right to be one of his disciples."—Whitby. See notes on Matt. xxviii. 7-10.

Verses 9-11. *When Jesus was risen early, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene—* "There is something very remarkable in this passage of the history. None of the apostles, or male disciples, were honoured with the first visions of the angels, or with the immediate news of Christ's resurrection, far less with the first appearances of Jesus himself. The angels in the sepulchre kept themselves invisible all the time Peter and John were there. Perhaps the male disciples in general had this mark of disrespect put on them, both because they had with inexcusable and shameful cowardice forsaken their Master when he fell into the hands of his enemies, and because their faith was so weak, that they had absolutely despaired of his being the Messiah when they saw him expire on the cross, Luke xxiv. 21. How different was the conduct of the women! Laying aside the weakness and timidity natural to their sex, they showed an uncommon magnanimity in the whole of this melancholy transaction. Hence, in preference to the male disciples, they were honoured with the news of Christ's resurrection, and had their eyes gladdened with the first sight of their beloved Lord after he arose, so that they preached the joyful tidings of his resurrection to the apostles themselves." *And she went—* With the other women; and told them that had been with him—That is, the disciples that had constantly attended him; as they mourned and wept—For the loss of their dear Master. *And they believed not—* Such were the prevailing prejudices that had taken possession of their minds, and so entirely were their spirits dejected and their hopes blasted by his death, that, though they could not think this was related with a design to impose upon them, yet they were ready to impute it to the power of imagination, and supposed that the women who gave them the information were deceived.

Verses 12, 13. *He appeared in another form unto two of them, &c.—* Of which, see notes on Luke xxiv. 13-33. *And they went and told it unto the residue—* Namely, the same evening. *Neither believed*

A. M. 4037. 14 ¶^a * Afterward he appeared unto
A. D. 33. the eleven, as they sat ¹at meat, and
upbraided them with their unbelief and hard-
ness of heart, because they believed not them
which had seen him after he was risen.

15 ° And he said unto them, Go ye into all
the world, ²and preach the gospel to every
creature.

16 ° He that believeth and is baptized, shall
be saved; ³but he that believeth not, shall be
damned.

^aLuke xxiv. 36; John xx. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 5.—* Ascension
Day, gospel, verse 14 to the end.—¹Or, together.—^oMatt.
xxviii. 19; John xv. 16.—^oCol. i. 23.—^oJohn iii. 18, 36;
Acts ii. 38; xvi. 30-32; Rom. x. 9; 1 Pet. iii. 21.—^oJohn
xii. 48.

they them—That is, some of them did not believe,
though others of them did, who, though they had
given little credit to the reports of the women, sup-
posing they were occasioned more by imagination
than reality; yet, as appears from Luke xxiv. 34,
when Simon declared that he had seen the Lord,
they began to think that he was *risen indeed*. Their
belief, therefore, was not a little confirmed by the
arrival of the two disciples, who declared that the
Lord had appeared to them also.

Verse 14. *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven
as they sat at meat*—Namely, on the evening of the
day on which he rose. Concerning this appearance
of Christ, see notes on Luke xxiv. 36-43, where it
is related at large. *And upbraided them with their
unbelief, &c.*—“That after so many assurances from
his own mouth that he would rise again the third
day; and after the testimony of so many eye-
witnesses, that he had performed his promise, they be-
lieved not. And if this be attributed to them as
culpable unbelief, and hardness of heart, surely those
persons must much more be guilty of these sins, who,
after the testimony of these apostles, and five hun-
dred more eye-witnesses of his resurrection; after
the ocular testimony of a multitude of Christians in
different parts of the world, touching the mighty
miracles performed in his name by the apostles, the
chosen witnesses of his resurrection, and by many
others, who believed it and were baptized into this
faith, for a whole age together, do yet continue to
disbelieve that resurrection, and the faith confirmed
by it.”—Whitby.

Verses 15, 16. *Go ye into all the world*—To all
countries under heaven; *and preach the gospel to
every creature*—That is, to all mankind, to every
human being, whether Jew or Gentile, for our Lord
speaks without any limitation or restriction whatever.
On this Bengelius remarks, “If all men, of all places
and ages, have not heard the gospel, the successors
of the first preachers, or those whose duty it was to
hear it, have not answered God’s design herein, but
have made void his counsel.” *He that believeth*—
The gospel which you preach, *with his heart unto
righteousness*; he that receives your testimony with

17 And these signs shall follow them A. M. 4037.
that believe: ° In my name shall A. D. 33.
they cast out devils; ⁴they shall speak with
new tongues;

18 ° They shall take up serpents; and if
they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt
them; ⁵they shall lay hands on the sick, and
they shall recover.

19 ¶ So then, ⁶after the Lord had spoken
unto them, he was ⁷received up into heaven,
and ⁸sat on the right hand of God.

^aLuke x. 17; Acts v. 16; viii. 7; xvi. 16; xix. 12.—^oActs
ii. 4; x. 46; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28.—^oLuke x. 19; Acts
xxviii. 5.—^oActs v. 15, 16; ix. 17; xxviii. 8; James v. 14,
15.—^oActs i. 2, 3.—^oLuke xxiv. 51.—^oPsalms cx. 1;
Acts vii. 56.

a faith productive of love to God and man, and of
obedience to the divine will; and who, in token of
that faith, *is baptized*, and continues till death to
maintain a temper and conduct suitable to that en-
gagement, *shall be saved*—That is, he shall, by vir-
tue of that faith and baptism, be put into a state of
salvation: he shall be saved from the guilt and power
of his sins into the favour and image of God; his
person shall be justified, and his nature sanctified;
and he shall be entitled to, and made meet for, eter-
nal salvation; of which also he shall be made a
partaker, if he continue in the faith he has received,
and do not wilfully recede from his baptismal cove-
nant. *He that believeth not*—With such a faith as
is above described, whether baptized or unbaptized;
shall be damned—*Κατακριθησεται, shall be condemned*,
namely, at the day of final judgment, and in conse-
quence thereof shall perish eternally.

Verses 17-20. *And these signs shall follow them
that believe*—Bengelius subjoins, “That believe with
that very faith mentioned in the preceding verse.”
(Though it is certain a man may work miracles and
not have saving faith, Matt. vii. 22, 23.) “It was
not one faith by which Paul was saved; another, by
which he wrought miracles. Even at this day, in
every believer, faith has a latent miraculous power:
(every effect of prayer being really miraculous:)
although in many, because of their littleness of faith,
and because the world is unworthy, that power is
not exerted. Miracles in the beginning were helps
to faith; now also they are the objects of it. At
Leonberg, a town in Wirtemberg, in the memory of
our fathers, a cripple, that could hardly move with
crutches, while the dean was preaching on this very
text, was in a moment made whole.” See note on
chap. xi. 22; where many similar instances are re-
ferred to; the number of which might easily be in-
creased on the most certain evidence. *Shall follow
them that believe*—The gospel word, and faith
therein, must precede, and then the signs shall fol-
low. *In my name they shall cast out devils, &c.*—
That is, by my authority committed to them, and by
my power attending them. Raising the dead is not
mentioned here; so our Lord performed even more

A. M. 4037. 20 And they went forth, and preach-
A. D. 33. ed everywhere, the Lord working with

them,^b and confirming the word with A. M. 4037-
signs following. Amen. A. D. 33.

^b Acts v. 12; xiv. 3; 1 Cor.

ii. 4, 5; Heb. ii. 4.

than he promised. *If they drink any deadly thing*—But not by their own choice: God never calls us to try any such experiment; *it shall not hurt them. They shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover*—Immediately, without the use of any further means. Such was the purport of our Lord's discourses with his disciples till his ascension, as is more largely related by Luke and John. *And after he had spoken unto them*—In this and a similar manner, time after time, for forty days; *he was received up into heaven*—While they were steadfastly beholding him; *and sat on the right hand of God*—That is, was invested with the highest dignity and

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authority, there to reign in all the glory of his mediatorial kingdom: *And they went forth and preached everywhere*—Through all parts of the Roman empire, and even to divers barbarous nations, and that with amazing success; *the Lord working with them, according to his promise, and confirming the word with signs following*—Which were at once the most solid, as well as the most obvious and popular demonstration of those divine truths which they delivered. *Amen*—So may the presence of the Lord be always with his faithful ministers! and may his gospel be attended everywhere with success, as well as with convincing evidences of its divine authority!

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF SAINT LUKE.

ACCORDING to Eusebius and Jerome, this evangelist was a native of Antioch, in Syria; but of this there appears to be no certainty, nor whether he was by birth a Gentile or a Jew. From the circumstance, however, of his being Paul's fellow-labourer in Judea, we may infer, that if he was originally a Gentile, he embraced the Jewish religion early in life; for, considering that apostle's prudence, we may be sure he would have allowed no person to assist him in preaching the gospel in Judea who was not circumcised, (see Acts xvi. 3,) a ceremony which he forbade to the Gentile converts. It is true, in his epistle to the Colossians, (chap. iv. 10-14,) he appears to distinguish Luke from his fellow-labourers of the circumcision; but from this we can only infer, that Luke was not a Jew by birth; or rather, as Dr. Campbell observes, "He might have added the clause, *who are of the circumcision*, not to distinguish these persons from those after mentioned as *not of the circumcision*, but to give the Colossians particular information concerning those with whom, perhaps, they had not previously been acquainted. If they knew what Luke, Epaphras, and Demas, whether Jews or Gentiles, originally were, the information was quite unnecessary with regard to them." That our evangelist was, with all the other writers of the New Testament, a convert to Christianity from Judaism, not from Gentilism, is, upon the whole, sufficiently evident from his style; in which, notwithstanding its greater copiousness and variety, there are as many Hebraisms as are found in the other evangelists, and such as could not be exemplified in any writer originally Gentile, unless his conversion to Judaism had taken place when he was young. Dr. Lardner thinks it also likely, that he is the Lucius mentioned Rom. xvi. 21; and, if so, related to the Apostle Paul, and Lucius of Cyrene, mentioned Acts xiii. 1.

Cave and Mill, with others, think it probable that Luke was converted to Christianity by Paul. But there are no hints of this either in the Acts or Epistles; neither are there any expressions used by Paul in speaking of him or to him, which denote peculiar affection, nor any particular demonstrations of gratitude from Luke toward Paul as a spiritual father; circumstances which render it highly probable that Luke was a Christian long before his acquaintance with Paul. Indeed Epiphanius, and after him many of the ancients, have supposed that both Mark and Luke were of the number of the seventy disciples; and many moderns have gone into the same opinion, particularly Whitby and Heuman: but others think that the preface to Luke's gospel is inconsistent with this supposition. For he speaks of himself as writing according to the information of the eye-witnesses, which it is thought implies, that he was not one of the number himself. But, to remove this objection, Heuman observes, that Luke's words imply no more than he was not one of the eye-witnesses "from the beginning;" that he may have been, nevertheless, a follower of Christ in the latter part of his ministry; and that, though he was an eye-witness of many things which he relates, he very properly places the authority of his history on the testimony of the apostles. It must be acknowledged, however, that the most ancient authors do not mention him as being of the seventy; nor is it likely that

PREFACE TO THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.

he should be of the number, unless he was both a Jew by birth, and had his residence in Galilee, from which country our Lord appears to have chosen not only his apostles, but the seventy also. It is remarkable, that he is the only evangelist who mentions the commission given by Christ to the seventy, chap. x. 1-20. It has been generally supposed, that this evangelist was a physician, and is the person intended Col. iv. 14, where the apostle says, "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you." In this opinion, Eusebius, Gregory Nyssen, Jerome, Paulinus, Euthalius, Euthymius, and others, agree; and it is certainly strengthened by his being joined with Demas, because, in the other passages, where, according to the opinion of all, he is spoken of, he is mentioned in conjunction with the same Demas; and both are called Paul's fellow-labourers, Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 10, 11. This argument is the more to be regarded, in that the epistle to the Colossians, in which Luke is styled the physician, was sent at the same time with that to Philemon, who was an inhabitant of Colosse.

What is certain concerning this evangelist, from his own history of the Acts, is, that he often attended Paul in his travels, and was his fellow-labourer in the gospel. The first time he speaks of himself as Paul's companion, is Acts xvi. 10; where, using in his narration the first person plural, he intimates he was one of Paul's company at Troas, before he took ship to go into Macedonia. He went with him, therefore, from Troas to Samothrace, then to Neapolis, and after that to Philippi. But it is observable, that, having finished his account of the transactions at Philippi, he changes his style from the first to the third person plural, chap. xvii. 1; nor does he any more speak of himself till Paul was departing from Greece with the collection for the saints in Judea, Acts xx. 6. Here, therefore, he joined him again, accompanying him from Macedonia to Troas, and from thence to Jerusalem, where he abode with him. After this, Paul being sent prisoner from Cesarea to Rome, Luke was in the ship with him during the whole of the voyage, came with him to Rome, and there abode, ministering to him, as is plain from the salutations in the epistles which Paul wrote from that city. In all probability, therefore, Luke attended the apostle during the whole of his imprisonment; and as he published his history of the Acts before Paul's release, it can hardly be doubted that he composed it in Rome under the apostle's eye, while he waited on him. It is not certain, indeed, where he penned his gospel. Cave supposes he did it at Rome likewise. But Jerome seems to contradict this; for he tells us, that Luke, the third evangelist, published his gospel in the countries of Achaia and Bœotia. Grotius imagines, that when Paul was released, Luke went into Greece, and there wrote his gospel. Nevertheless, as this work came abroad before the Acts, it is more natural to suppose that Luke employed himself in collecting and digesting the materials of his gospel while he travelled with Paul in Greece and Judea, before the latter was seized upon by the Jews in the temple; that he finished it while Paul was imprisoned in Cæsarea, and then undertook his history of *the Acts of the Apostles*. Both these treatises Luke inscribed to one Theophilus, an intimate friend of his own, who from his name is supposed to have been a Greek. The epithet (*κραιστε*) most excellent, wherewith he addressed him, shows him to be a person of distinction; for it was usually given to men in the highest stations, such as prefects and governors of provinces. Accordingly we find it thus applied by Lysias in his letter to Felix, by Tertullus in his speech to Felix, and by Paul in his speech to Festus.

But though no certainty can be had about the precise time and place of the publication of this gospel, we have, in regard to the author, the same plea of the uniform testimony of Christian antiquity, which was pleaded in favour of the preceding evangelists, Matthew and Mark. Some indeed have thought that, as an evangelist, Luke has the testimony of Paul himself, being, as they supposed, "the brother whose praise is in the gospel," mentioned in one of his epistles, 2 Cor. viii. 18. But admitting that Luke is the person there intended, another meaning may with greater plausibility be

PREFACE TO THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.

put on the expression, "in the gospel;" which rather denotes, in preaching the gospel, than in writing the history of its author. Lardner has taken notice of allusions to some passages in this gospel to be found in some of the apostolic fathers; and there are evident quotations from it, though without naming the author, in Justin Martyr, and the epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons. Of Tatian's Harmony of the Gospels, composed a little after the middle of the second century, see the introduction to the gospels, p. 3. Irenæus, not long after, mentions all the evangelists by name, arranging them according to the order wherein they wrote, which is the same with that universally given them throughout the Christian world to this day; and, when speaking of Luke, he recites many particulars which are peculiar to that gospel. From that time downward the four evangelists are often mentioned; and whatever spurious narratives have from time to time appeared, they have not been able to bear a comparison with those, in respect either of antiquity, or of intrinsic excellence. Early in the third century, Ammonius also wrote a Harmony of the four Gospels. As these were at that time, and had been from their first publication, so they continue to this day, to be regarded as the great foundations of the Christian faith.

The gospel by Luke has supplied us with many interesting particulars, which had been omitted by both his predecessors, Matthew and Mark. From him we learn whatever relates to the birth of John the Baptist; the annunciation; and other important circumstances concerning the nativity of the Messiah; the occasion of Joseph's being then in Bethlehem; the vision granted to the shepherds; the early testimony of Simeon and Anna; the wonderful manifestation of our Lord's proficiency in knowledge when only twelve years old; his age at the commencement of his ministry, connected with the year of the reigning emperor. He has given us, also, an account of several memorable incidents and cures which had been overlooked by the rest; the conversion of Zaccheus the publican; the cure of the woman who had been bowed down for eighteen years, and of the dropsical man; the cleansing of the ten lepers; the repulse he met with when about to enter a Samaritan city; and the instructive rebuke he gave on that occasion to two of his disciples, for their intemperate zeal; also, the affecting interview he had, after his resurrection, with two of his disciples, in the way to Emmaus, and at that village. Luke has likewise added many edifying parables to those which had been recorded by the other evangelists. Of this number are the parable of the creditor who had two debtors; of the rich fool who hoarded up his increase, and, when he had not one day to live, vainly exulted in the prospect of many happy years; of the rich man and Lazarus; of the reclaimed profligate; of the Pharisee and the publican praying in the temple; of the judge who was prevailed on by a widow's importunity, though he feared not God, nor regarded man; of the barren fig-tree; of the compassionate Samaritan; and several others; most of which so early a writer as Irenæus has specified as peculiarly belonging to this gospel; and has thereby shown to all ages, without intending it, that it is, in every thing material, the same book which had ever been distinguished by the name of the evangelist till his day, and remains so distinguished to ours.

In regard to Luke's character as a writer it is evident, that, though the same general quality of style, an unaffected simplicity, predominates in all the evangelists, they are nevertheless distinguished from one another. Luke abounds in Hebraisms as much as any of them; yet it must be acknowledged, that there are also more Grecisms in his language than in that of any of the rest. The truth is, there is greater variety in his style, which is probably to be ascribed to this circumstance,—his having been more, and for a longer time, conversant among the Gentiles than any other evangelist. His ordinary place of abode, if not the place of his birth, appears to have been Antioch, the capital of Syria, the seat of government, where people of the first distinction of the province had their residence, and to which there was a great resort of strangers. Here the Greek language had long prevailed. Besides, Luke's occupation, as a physician, may very probably have occasioned his

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greater intercourse with those of higher rank. Not that the profession itself was then in great esteem in that country; for it has been justly observed, that in Rome, as well as in Syria, slaves who gave early signs of quickness of parts and manual dexterity, were often instructed in physic, who, if they proved successful, were commonly rewarded with their freedom. That Luke himself, whatever may have been his early condition in life, was, when a Christian minister, a freeman and master of his time, is evident from his attendance on the Apostle Paul, in his peregrinations for the advancement of the gospel. But the profession of medicine and surgery (for these two were then commonly united) not only proved the occasion of a more general intercourse with society, but served as a strong inducement to employ some time in reading. This may sufficiently account for any superiority this evangelist may be thought to possess above the rest in point of language.

To conclude: though we have no reason to consider Luke as, upon the whole, more observant of the order of time than the other evangelists, he has been at more pains than any of them to ascertain the dates of some of the most memorable events, on which, in a great measure, depend the dates of all the rest. In some places, however, without regard to order, he gives a number of detached precepts and instructive lessons, one after another, which probably have not been spoken on the same occasion, but are introduced as they occurred to the writer's memory, that nothing of moment might be forgotten. In regard to the latter part of the life, and to the death of this evangelist, antiquity has not furnished us with any accounts which can be relied on. See Macknight and Campbell.

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

S A I N T L U K E .

CHAPTER I.

In this chapter we have, (1,) Luke's preface to his gospel, which he dedicates to his friend Theophilus, 1-4. (2,) A short account of Zacharias and Elisabeth, the parents of John the Baptist, 5-7. (3,) The appearance of the Angel Gabriel to Zacharias, giving him notice of the birth of a son, and predicting the important office he should sustain, 8-17. (4,) The chastisement inflicted on Zacharias for his unbelief, 18-23. (5,) Elisabeth's conception, and acknowledgments of the Lord's goodness to her, 24, 25. (6,) Gabriel's annunciation of the birth of Christ to the Virgin Mary, and her ready belief thereof, 26-38. (7,) The joyful meeting of Elisabeth and Mary, and their praises and prophecies, 39-56. (8,) The birth, circumcision, and naming of John the Baptist, 57-66. (9,) Zacharias's song of praise and predictions on that occasion, 67-79. (10,) A short account of John the Baptist's private life, 80.

A. M. 4051.
A. D. 47.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in

order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, A. M. 4051.
A. D. 47.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1, 2. *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand*—Who they were to whom the apostle here alludes, who had, from vague reports, (for so his words seem to imply,) rashly published narratives not entirely to be depended on, it is impossible for us now to discover. It is true, the word *επεχειρησαν*, *have undertaken*, used here by Luke, does not necessarily imply any censure on the writers of such accounts, but the scope of the place seems to imply it, if not on all, at least on some of them: for if all, or even most of them, had furnished true narratives, the number was an argument rather against a new attempt than for it. Grotius justly observes, that the spurious gospels, mentioned by ancient writers, are forgeries manifestly of a later date than the time of Luke. That there were, however, some such performances at the time when Luke began to write. the words of this evangelist are a sufficient evidence: for, to consider this book merely on the footing of a human composition, what writer of common sense would introduce himself to the public by observing the numerous attempts that had been made by former writers, some of whom at least had not been at due pains to be properly informed, if he himself were actually the first, or even the second, or the third, who had written on the subject; and if one of the two who preceded him had better opportunities of knowing than he, and the other fully as good? But the total disappearance of those spurious writings, probably no better than hasty collections of flying rumours, containing a mixture of truth and

falsehood, may, after the genuine gospels were generally known and read, be easily accounted for. At midnight, the glimmering of the taper is not without its use, but it can make no conceivable addition to the light of the meridian sun. It deserves, however, to be remarked by the way, that whatever may be thought to be insinuated here by the evangelist, concerning the imperfect information of former historians, there is no hint given of their bad designs. It is justly observed here by Dr. Campbell, that the very circumstance of the number of such narratives, at so early a period, is itself an evidence that there was something in the first publication of the Christian doctrine, which, notwithstanding the many unfavourable circumstances where-with it was attended, excited the curiosity and awakened the attention of persons of all ranks and denominations; insomuch that every narrative, which pretended to furnish men with any additional information concerning so extraordinary a personage as Jesus, seems to have been read with avidity. *To set forth in order a declaration*—Greek, *αναταξασθα διηγησθαι*, to compose a narrative; of those things which are most surely believed among us—As the great foundation of our common faith. The expression, *πραγματων*, refers not only to the things believed, but also to the things performed by Christ and his apostles; this first history of Luke being designed to record what Jesus himself said or did, Acts i. 1; and his second, to relate the acts of the apostles: and the participle, *πεπληροφορημενων*, translated, *most surely believed*, is rather to be understood

A. M. 4051. 2 ^a Even as they delivered them
 A. D. 47. unto us, which ^b from the beginning
 were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word ;
 3 ^c It seemed good to me also, having had

^a Hebrews ii. 3 ; 1 Peter v. 1 ; 2 Peter i. 16 ; 1 John i. 1.
^b Mark i. 1 ; John xv. 27.

as referring to the fulness of that evidence with which the things were attended, than to the confidence with which they were credited. It not only signifies that the doctrines were taught and the things done, but that they were taught and done with such circumstances, as laid a foundation for *πληροφορία της πιστεως*, a full assurance of faith, as to the truth of the doctrines, and the reality of the facts. *Even as they delivered them, which from the beginning—Of Christ's ministry ; were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word—*Because the persons, according to whose information the writers referred to by Luke composed their histories, are said to have been *eye-witnesses* as well as *ministers of the word*, (*τε λογος*,) several writers have supposed that, by the word, Luke meant Christ himself, one of whose titles is, *the Word*, John i. 1, and, *the Word of God*, Rev. xix. 13. Others, however, by the word, understand the transactions of our Lord's public life ; his sermons, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension, because these things were the great subjects of the preaching of the apostles, who were eye and ear witnesses of them. And to Christians these were matters of such moment, that the knowledge, consideration, and remembrance of them, were the great business and comfort of their lives. It is no wonder, therefore, that those who were able should set down in writing such particulars of them as they had learned, whether from the conversations or sermons of the apostles and eye-witnesses. But histories thus drawn up, though they might contain many things highly worthy of the notice of Christians, must needs have been defective both in their matter and manner. Wherefore, Luke, having attained a thorough knowledge of our Lord's history from the very beginning, thought fit to give a more full, regular, and connected account of it than had hitherto appeared, as he signifies in the next verse.

Verses 3, 4. *It seemed good to me also—*That is, I have judged it to be my duty ; Luke, doubtless, was moved by the Holy Ghost to write his history, as he was also to write in the manner he has done ; but in both he was moved as a reasonable creature, and not as a machine : *having had perfect understanding of all things—*Greek, *παρηκολυθηκοτι ανωθεν πασιν ακριβως*, *having accurately traced all things from their first rise* : "Luke might have this thorough knowledge by intimate conversation with the apostles, and particularly with Paul, whose companion he was for a long time ; or perhaps he was present himself at a number of transactions which he has recorded. The assurance with which he speaks of his own knowledge of these things, leads us to think that he was an eye-witness of some of them. On this supposition, his reasoning in this preface will be more conclusive than on any other, and will

perfect understanding of all things A. M. 4051.
 from the very first, to write unto thee A. D. 47.
^d in order, ^e most excellent Theophilus,
 4 ^f That thou mightest know the certainty

^c Acts xv. 19, 25, 28 ; 1 Cor. vii. 40.—^d Acts xi. 4.—^e Acts i. 1.
^f John xx. 31.

stand thus : Seeing many have written from the information of the eye-witnesses and ministers, I, who from the very first have had perfect knowledge of all things, both by conversing with the eye-witnesses, and by being present myself at many of the transactions of Jesus, have thought it incumbent on me to write his history, for the more certain information of mankind." *To write unto thee in order—*Greek, *καθεξης σοι γραφαι*, *to write an orderly account to thee*. So Dr. Doddridge ; who observes, "It is chiefly on the authority of this clause that **Le Clerc**, and many other modern harmonizers (of the gospels) have thought, as **Beza** also did, that all the other gospels are to be reduced to the order of Luke wherever they differ from it : a conclusion which I apprehend to be an occasion of many errors, and particularly injurious to the character of **Matthew**. The foundation of it is very precarious ; since it is evident this evangelist might, with great propriety, be said to have given an *orderly account* of the history of Christ, as the leading facts [such as his conception, birth, childhood, baptism, preaching, miracles, passion, resurrection, ascension] are placed in their due series, though some particulars are transposed." *Most excellent Theophilus—*As the word *Theophilus* signifies *lover of God*, some have thought it is not a proper name here, but a general title, applicable to every true Christian. But, as **Dr. Campbell** justly observes, if the evangelist meant to address his discourse to all pious Christians, and had no one individually in view, he would certainly have put his intention beyond all doubt, by using the plural number, and saying, *κρατιστοι θεοφιλοι*, *most excellent lovers of God*. Besides, to have addressed all true Christians under the appearance of bespeaking the attention of an individual, does not seem agreeable to the simplicity of style used in the gospel ; and must have appeared to the writer himself as what could not fail to be misunderstood by most readers, proper names of such a form as *Theophilus*, and even this very name, being common in Greek and Latin authors. The word is, therefore, undoubtedly the proper name of a person : and the title, *κρατιστε*, *most excellent*, is given him, not to describe his character, although doubtless he was a truly pious and excellent Christian, but on account of his office or rank in civil society, the same title being commonly given to persons in high stations of life ; and particularly to the Roman governors. Accordingly **Paul** uses it in addressing **Felix** and **Festus**. This *Theophilus*, as the ancients inform us, was a person of eminent quality at Alexandria. In Acts i. 1, Luke does not give him this title. He was then probably a private man. The evangelist, by inscribing his two books to him, bestowed on him a fame which will last while Christianity subsists.

of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

A. M. 3998. B. C. 6. 5 ¶ **T**HERE was ^e in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, ^h of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

^f Matthew ii. 1.—^g 1 Chronicles xxiv. 10, 19; Nehemiah xii. 4, 17.

That thou mightest know—More fully and circumstantially; *the certainty*—The exact and certain truth; *of those things in which thou hast been instructed*—Namely, formerly, by those who had been made the instruments of initiating him into the Christian faith. The word *κατηχηθης*, here used, doth with great accuracy express the instructions given to those who were training up for admission to the Christian Church, whose name of *catechumens* was, as it is well known, derived from hence, and applied without any particular regard to the age of the persons concerned. Compare Acts xviii. 25. We are not to suppose that Luke had the edification of Theophilus merely in view, in writing his history; he also doubtless meant it for the instruction of persons of all nations and ages into whose hands it should fall.

Verse 5. *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea*—This is he who is commonly known by the name of *Herod the Great*, a cruel, ambitious man, who, without any title, obtained the crown of Judea from the Roman senate, to whom he was recommended by Mark Antony. Under his government the Jews were very uneasy, because he was a foreigner. Nevertheless, the Roman generals in those parts having given him possession of the throne, by his own prudence and address he maintained himself in it for the space of forty years. His reign, though celebrated on many accounts, was remarkable for nothing so much as that, toward the conclusion of it, the Messiah and his forerunner were born. Besides Herod the king, there are two others of this name mentioned in Scripture, namely, *Herod* surnamed *Antipas*, his son, who was inferior to his father both in dignity and dominion, being only a *tetrarch*, and having no dominions but Galilee and Perea: it was this Herod that beheaded the Baptist, and with his men of war mocked our Lord. The other was Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the king by Aristobulus, and brother to Herodias, Philip's wife. He killed James the apostle with the sword, and imprisoned Peter to please the Jews; and was himself eaten up of worms for his affecting divine honours. Agrippa, before whom Paul pleaded his cause, was the son of this Herod, for which reason he is commonly called *Agrippa*. *Of the course of Abia*—The priests were become so numerous in David's time, that they could not all minister at the tabernacle at once. He therefore divided them into twenty-four courses, or companies, who were to serve in rotation, each company by itself for a week. The time of their ministration, as well as

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6 And they were both ⁱ righteous A. M. 3998. before God, walking in all the com- B. C. 6. mandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

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

^j Gen. vii. 1; xvii. 1; 1 Kings ix. 4; 2 Kings xx. 3; Job l. 1; Acts xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16; Phil. iii. 6.

the course itself, was called *εφημερια*, a name which originally belonged to the Athenian magistrates, who being fifty men chosen by lot out of each tribe, and each man governing the city a single day, the days which any tribe governed, as well as its fifty governors succeeding one another, were called *εφημεριαι*. Now there being a considerable resemblance between this division and succession of the Athenian magistrates, and that of the Jewish priests, the Greek interpreters of the Old Testament applied the same name to the courses of the priests, though somewhat improperly, as their ministry lasted not for a day but a week. The course of Abia, (that is, that of which Abia, or Abijah, was the head in David's time,) was the eighth. See the notes on 1 Chron. xxiv. 3-10.

Verse 6. *They were righteous before God*—They were sincerely and really righteous; they were so in God's sight, whose judgment, we are sure, is according to truth; they approved themselves to him who searcheth the heart; and he was graciously pleased to accept them. It is a happy thing when those that are joined to each other in marriage are both joined to the Lord! And it is especially requisite that the priests, the Lord's ministers, should, with their yoke-fellows, be *righteous before God*, that they may be examples to the flock, and give them cause of joy. *Walking in all the moral commandments and ceremonial ordinances of the Lord blameless*—Thus they manifested their righteousness: it shone forth in the whole course of their conversation; in every branch of piety and virtue. How admirable is the character given of this pious pair! May our behaviour be thus unblameable, and our obedience thus sincere and universal! The two words, *εντολαις και δικαιωμασι*, here used, are generally interpreted, the former of the *moral*, the latter of the *ceremonial* precepts of the divine law. It is certain, however, that they are often taken in a much more extensive sense; and that undoubted examples may be produced, to prove that both terms are used promiscuously in both senses.

Verse 7. *And they had no child*—The providence of God so ordering it, that the birth of John the Baptist might be the more remarkable, and might excite the greater attention; *because that Elisabeth was barren*—Even when in the flower of her age. *And they both were now well stricken in years*—Here, then, was a double obstacle in the way of their having children, both the natural barrenness of Elisabeth, and the old age of them both; and, consequently, a double proof of the supernatural agency of God in the birth of John, evidently showing him

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A. M. 3398. 8 And it came to pass, that, while
B. C. 6. he executed the priest's office before
God ^k in the order of his course,

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

^k 1 Chronicles xxiv. 19; 1 Chronicles viii. 14; xxxi. 2.
^l Exodus xxx. 7, 8; 1 Samuel ii. 28; 1 Chronicles xxiii. 13;

to be a person miraculously sent by God. It is worthy of observation here, that many eminent persons under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, were born of mothers that had been long barren, as Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Samson, Samuel, and here John the Baptist, to render their birth the more extraordinary, and the blessing of it the more valuable in the eyes of their parents; and to show, that when God keeps his people waiting long for a particular mercy, he is sometimes pleased to recompense them for their patience, by doubling the worth of it when it is given.

Verse 9. *His lot was to burn incense*—"Because some parts of the sacred service were more honourable than others, both the priests and Levites divided the whole among them by lot. The Jews tell us, that there were three priests employed about the service of the incense; one who carried away the ashes left on the altar at the preceding service; another who brought a pan of burning coals from the altar of sacrifice, and, having placed it on the golden altar, departed; a third, who went in with the incense, sprinkled it on the burning coals, and, while the smoke ascended, made intercession for the people. This was the part that fell to Zacharias, and the most honourable in the whole service."—Macknight. *When he went into the temple of the Lord*—As the original word here is not *το ιερου*, but *του ναου*, it ought to have been rendered, *the house*, or *sanctuary*. The former word, properly signifying *the temple*, comprehended the whole edifice, with all its enclosures, piazzas, and other buildings; the latter included only what is termed, by way of eminence, *the house*, consisting of the vestibule, the holy place or sanctuary, and the most holy. The altar of incense, on which the perfumes were burned, was in the sanctuary; the people who were praying without, were in the temple, *εν το ιερω*, in the court of Israel, though not in what was strictly called *the house of God*. See note on Matt. xxi. 12.

Verse 10. *The whole multitude of the people, &c.*—The manner in which the evangelist expresses himself here, shows that a more than ordinary concourse of the people was in the temple on this occasion, from which we may infer that it was a sabbath, or some high festival time; for often on ordinary week-days, few of the people were present at the morning and evening sacrifices, and therefore "four and twenty men were employed to attend this service, as representatives of the people of Israel, to lay their hands on the head of the sacrifice, to pray, and to receive the blessing. These were called, from their office, *stationary men*."—Macknight. This circumstance of there being a multitude present,

10 ^m And the whole multitude of A. M. 3398.
the people were praying without at B. C. 6.
the time of incense.

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

^m 2 Chronicles xxix. 11.—ⁿ Leviticus xvi. 17; Revelation viii. 3, 4.—^o Ex. xxx. 1.

would give great publicity to the facts here recorded, and cause them to become the subject of much inquiry and conversation, both in Jerusalem and throughout all the country. In consequence of which, doubtless, an expectation would be excited in the minds of many, that God was about to visit his people in some extraordinary way; which would tend greatly to prepare them for the reception of the gospel, when it should be offered to them. *The people were praying without at the time of incense*—This the pious Jews constantly did, and that not only in the temple, but everywhere else; choosing to present their supplications to God at the hours of sacrifice and incense, while the ministers of religion interceded for the nation. Hence these hours were called the hours of prayer, Acts iii. 1. And this was the foundation of that elegant figure, by which prayer is, in Scripture, so often compared to incense. And perhaps one reason of ordaining incense might be, to intimate the acceptableness of those pious prayers which accompanied it, as well as to remind the worshippers of that sacrifice of a *sweet-smelling savour*, which was in due time to be offered to God for them, and of that incense which was and is continually offered with the prayers of the saints, upon the golden altar that is before the throne, Rev. viii. 3, 4. Observe, reader, 1st, All the prayers which we offer to God here, in his courts, are acceptable and successful only by virtue of Christ's intercession in the temple of God above. 2d, We cannot expect to have an interest in his intercession, if we do not unite our own supplications to his, and sincerely and fervently pray for ourselves. Nor, 3d, is it sufficient for us to be present where God is worshipped, if our hearts do not join in the worship, and go along with the minister in all the parts of it. If he burn the incense ever so well; if he pray in ever so pertinent, judicious, and lively a manner, if we be not at the same time engaged in prayer in concurrence with him, what will it avail us?

Verses 11, 12. *There appeared unto him an angel*—About four hundred years had passed since God had vouchsafed to his ancient people any supernatural communication, either by prophecy, the ministry of angels, or in any other extraordinary way. But as he was now about to send them the Messiah, and establish through him a new dispensation, by which a new and more spiritual way of intercourse with himself should be opened and settled, he sends an angelic messenger to announce his intentions, and prepare their minds for the reception of so great a blessing. For as the law, an inferior economy, was given at first, in a great measure, by the ministry of angels, it was proper that the gospel, a more ex-

A. M. 3398. 12 And when Zacharias saw him,
B. C. 6. ° he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

° Judges vi. 22; xiii. 22; Dan. x. 8; Verse 29; Chap. ii. 9; Acts x. 4; Rev. i. 17.

cellent institution, should not want at least an equally extraordinary and honourable introduction. *When Zacharias saw him, he was troubled*—Although he was accustomed to converse with God, yet we see he was thrown into a great consternation at the appearance of his angelic messenger, nature not being able to sustain the sight. Is it not then an instance of the goodness, as well as the wisdom of God, that the services which these heavenly spirits render us are generally invisible?

Verse 13. *But the angel said, Fear not, &c.*—Thus encouraging him with great gentleness of aspect and voice. *For thy prayer is heard*—I do not come unto thee with a message of terror, but am sent to assure thee, *thy prayer is heard, and thy wife shall bear thee a son*—“No doubt this good man had often prayed for children; but as he seemed now to have given up all expectations of that kind, it is reasonable to conclude, that these words chiefly relate to his prayers for the deliverance of Israel by the Messiah, whose appearance was then expected by pious persons conversant in the sacred writings, (Luke ii. 25, 38; xix. 11; xxiii. 51;) and the more earnestly desired just at this time, as they suffered so many grievous things by the oppression of the Romans and the tyranny of Herod, which toward the close of his reign grew more and more insupportable.”—Doddridge. The priests, it must be observed, in this office, considered themselves as the mouth of the people, and made the welfare of the nation the subject of their prayers. Therefore, since it is reasonable to suppose that Zacharias now interceded for the coming of the Messiah, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, we may consider the angel’s words as having a reference to such a prayer, thus: “The Messiah, for whose coming thou prayest, is about to be born, for thy wife shall bring forth his forerunner.” We may observe here with pleasure, that the prayers of pious worshippers come up with acceptance before God; to whom no costly perfume is so sweet as the fragrance of an upright heart. An answer of peace was here returned, when the case seemed to be most helpless. Let us wait patiently for the Lord, and leave to his own wisdom the time and manner wherein he will appear for us. *Thou shalt call his name John*—John signifies, *the grace or favour of Jehovah*. A name well suiting the person who was afterward so highly in favour with God, and endued with abundance of grace; and who opened a way to the most glorious dispensation of grace in the Messiah’s kingdom.

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

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

¶ Verses 60, 63.—¶ Verse 58.—¶ Num. vi. 3; Judg. xiii. 4; Chap. vii. 33.—¶ Jer. i. 5; Gal. i. 15.

Verses 14–16. *Thou shalt have joy and gladness*—He shall be such a son as thou shalt have reason to rejoice in. As if he had said, Many parents, if they could foresee what their children will prove, instead of rejoicing at their birth, would wish they had never been. But I will tell thee what thy son will be; and then thou wilt not need to rejoice with trembling, as the best must do at the birth of their children, but thou mayest rejoice with triumph. *And many shall rejoice with thee*—All the relations of the family will rejoice on the occasion, and all its well-wishers; yea, and all good people, that are made acquainted with the circumstances of the case, and with the character and office the child shall bear. The word *γαλλιασις*, rendered *gladness*, properly answers to the word *exultation*, or *leaping for joy*—See 1 Pet. i. 8; iv. 13; Matt. v. 12. *For he shall be great*—A person of extraordinary eminence and usefulness, and that not only in the opinion of men, but *in the sight of the Lord*—The sovereign and infallible Judge. Those are great indeed, that are so in God’s sight, not those that are so in the eye of a vain and carnal world. John was to be *great* in respect of his character, his office, his inspiration, and the success of his ministry, as the angel here explains the expression. *And shall drink neither wine nor strong drink*—As he is to preach repentance, and the crucifixion of all sinful lusts, affections, and dispositions, in order to the remission of sins, he shall show mankind a pattern of that self-denial which he enjoins; wholly avoiding a delicate and self-indulging way of living, and being remarkable for his continued abstinence and mortification. By the word *σικερα*, here rendered *strong drink*, *fermented liquor* of every kind seems to be intended. Some would confine the term to a liquor made of dates, the fruit of the palm-tree, a drink much used in the East: but there does not appear to be any sufficient reason for such a limitation of its meaning. The word is originally Hebrew, שכר, *shecher*, and is rendered by Buxtorf, *inebrians potus*, *inebriating drink*. All fermented liquors, therefore, as being capable of producing this effect, must be understood as implied in it. It is distinguished from wine, Lev. x. 9; Num. vi. 3; and elsewhere. *He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb*—Shall be influenced by the Spirit of God, even from the instant of his birth, sanctifying his nature, and communicating into him wisdom and piety in an extraordinary measure, to qualify him for the high and important office to which he is designated. “In Scripture, to be filled

A. M. 3398. 16 ' And many of the children of
B. C. 6. Israel shall he turn to the Lord their
God.

17 " And he shall go before him in the spirit
and power of Elias, * to turn the hearts of the
fathers to the children, and the disobedient ¹ to
the wisdom of the just; to make ready a peo-
ple prepared for the Lord.

¹ Mal. iv. 5, 6.—* Mal. iv. 5; Matt. xi. 14; Mark ix. 12.
* Eccclus. xlviii. 10.

with the Holy Ghost, commonly signifies, that de-
gree of inspiration by which the prophets anciently
spake. Accordingly in this chapter it is applied to
Elisabeth, to Mary, and to Zacharias, in cases where
they all spake by a particular affluatus. When the
angel, therefore, told Zacharias that his son should
be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's
womb, his meaning (at least in part) was, that he
should be very early inspired to teach the doctrines
and precepts of true religion. Nor will this seem
strange, when it is remembered, that at the age of
twelve years our Lord exercised his prophetic
gifts among the doctors in the temple."—Macknight.
Many of the children of Israel shall he turn—By
true repentance and unfeigned faith, productive of
new obedience; *to the Lord their God*—Whose
ways they have so generally forsaken, even while
they are professing themselves to be his peculiar
people, and boasting in such an extraordinary rela-
tion to him. In this way John was to prove his
divine mission.

Verse 17. *He shall go before him*—Namely, before
Christ; *in the spirit and power of Elias*—With the
same integrity, courage, austerity, and fervour, and
the same power of God attending his word. The
son of Zacharias equalled, if not exceeded, Elijah
in zeal for God, in severity of manners, in fortitude,
and in sustaining persecutions. "For he was clad
in a garment of camel's hair, fed on locusts and wild
honey, rebuked sinners of the highest distinction
with great boldness, and was put to death on that
account. He had the power also of Elijah; for
though he did no miracle, he was honoured with the
like success in restoring the lost spirit of true reli-
gion among his countrymen. Nay, he even excelled
Elijah in that which is properly the power of a pro-
phet, and to which all other gifts are subservient,
the power of converting men; being in this more suc-
cessful without miracles than Elijah had been with
them." *To turn the hearts of the fathers to the chil-
dren*—To reconcile those that are at variance, to put
an end to the most bitter quarrels, such as are very
frequently those between the nearest relations; *and
the disobedient to the wisdom of the just*—Or, the
righteous. And the most obstinate sinners to true
wisdom, which is only found among them that are
righteous before God. Dr. Waterland reads, *To
turn the hearts of the fathers with the children,*
(thus also Dr. Hammond,) *and the disobedient to a
sense of righteousness*; Greek, και απειθεις εν φρονησει

18 ¶ And Zacharias said unto the A. M. 3398.
angel, ' Whereby shall I know this? B. C. 6.
for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken
in years.

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

¹ Or, by.—' Gen. xvii. 17.—* Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21-23;
Matt. xviii. 10; Heb. i. 14.

δικαιων. Nearly to the same purpose is Dr. Dod-
dridge's paraphrase. "According to that prediction
of Malachi with which the sacred canon concludes,
he shall meet with such glorious success in his min-
istry, as to *convert the hearts of the fathers with
those of the children*; that is, he shall bring many,
both of the rising and the declining age, to that real
piety toward God, which will be the surest band of
their mutual duty toward each other: and many of
*those who have hitherto been disobedient to the wis-
dom of the just*, that is, insensible of the obligations
to real religion, which is the greatest wisdom, *shall
he make ready, as a people prepared for the Lord*,
raising in their minds an expectation of the Messiah,
and a disposition to welcome him when he shall ap-
pear." See the former clause more fully explained
in the note on Mal. iv. 6.

Verses 18-20. *Zacharias said, Whereby shall I
know this?*—In how different a spirit did the blessed
Virgin say, *How shall this be?* Zacharias disbe-
lieved the prediction, as appears from verse 20, and
therefore was justly punished: Mary had no doubt
of the fulfilment of what was foretold, but only in-
quired concerning the manner of it. *And the angel
said, I am Gabriel*—"I am the same servant of God
(so the name Gabriel signifies, being, by interpreta-
tion, *vir Dei*, a man or servant of God) who, as the
Scripture informs thee, appeared anciently to the
Prophet Daniel with a message concerning the Mes-
siah. And now I am not come of myself, but I am
sent of God to communicate to thee the glad tidings
of the near accomplishment of the things which I
long ago showed to Daniel at a great distance.
Thou, therefore, whose advanced age ought to have
been venerable by an advanced knowledge of divine
things, as well as by a strong faith in the power of
God, art deserving of much blame, for calling in
question the truth of my message, especially as by
the prophecies of Daniel thou mightest have under-
stood that this is the period determined for the com-
ing of the Messiah and his forerunner." There
seems to be a remarkable gradation in the angel's
words here, enhancing the guilt of Zacharias's un-
belief. As if he had said, I am Gabriel, a holy angel
of God, yea, one of the highest order, even of those
who stand in the presence of God. Not only so,
but I am now peculiarly sent from God, and that
with a message to thee in particular: nay, and to
show thee glad tidings, such as ought to be received
with the greatest joy and readiness. *And behold*

A. M. 3398. 20 And, behold, ^a thou shalt be
B. C. 6. dumb, and not able to speak, until
the day that these things shall be performed,
because thou believest not my words, which
shall be fulfilled in their season.

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

22 And when he came out, he could not
 speak unto them: and they perceived that he
 had seen a vision in the temple; for he beck-

^a Ex. iii. 26; xxiv. 27.—^b 2 Kings xi. 5; 1 Chron. ix. 25.

thou shalt be dumb—The original word, κωφος, signifies deaf as well as dumb: and it seems plain that he was as unable to hear as he was to speak; for his friends were obliged to make signs to him, that he might understand them, verse 62. Thus the angel gave him a sign, which was also a chastisement of his offence. Because he had sinned with his lips, the angel struck him dumb, declaring that he should continue so till the message, the truth of which he doubted, was verified by the accomplishment.

Verses 21, 22. *And the people*—Who had been praying in the court of the temple, while the incense was burning; *waited for Zacharias*—To come out and bless them; for so the priests used to do after burning the incense; *and marvelled that he tarried so long*, εν τω χρονιζειν αυτον, at his delaying, or, spending time in the temple; εν τω ναω, in the house, or sanctuary. See note on verse 9. All that is here said to have taken place between the angel and Zacharias, might have passed in a few minutes; since, therefore, the people took notice of his continuing so much longer than was usual in the holy place, it is probable, that after the angel had left him, he employed some time in secret devotion, to which the mixture of holy affections that would naturally arise in his mind on so great and extraordinary an occasion would powerfully incline him; and while thus occupied, he might easily forget how fast the moments passed away. *When he came out, he could not speak unto them*—A circumstance which must have greatly astonished them; *and they perceived that he had seen a vision*—That is, a divine vision; *in the temple*—Or holy place. As the signs which he made, left them no room to doubt that some extraordinary and supernatural revelation had been made to him by God. *For he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless*—He continued deaf and dumb during the remainder of his stay at Jerusalem; a circumstance wisely ordered by Providence to awaken a greater and more general expectation, as to the event of so strange an occurrence; which, as a great multitude were now present in the court of the temple, (see verse 10,) would of course be widely spread, not only through Jerusalem but all Judea.

Verses 23–25. *As soon as the days of his ministra-*

oned unto them, and remained speech- A. M. 3398.
less. B. C. 6.

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

24 ¶ And after those days his wife Elisa-
 beth conceived, and hid herself five months,
 saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the
 days wherein he looked on me, to ^c take away
 my reproach among men.

^c Gen. xxx. 23; Isa. iv. 1; liv. 1, 4.

tion were accomplished—Though he was both deaf and dumb, he was still able to burn incense, and perform the other duties of his office. He therefore continued at the temple till the time of his ministration was ended; when he returned to his house; which is generally supposed to have been at Hebron, a city of the priests, about twenty miles from Jerusalem. See on verse 39. *And after these days*—Probably very soon after; *his wife Elisabeth conceived*—According to the prediction of the angel; *and hid herself five months*—Retired from company, that she might have the more leisure to meditate on the wonderful goodness of God toward her and her husband, and might praise him for it, and rejoice therein. Or, as some think, she kept herself retired, and avoided seeing company, that she might conceal her pregnancy for a while, lest she should expose herself to ridicule by speaking of it before she knew certainly that it was a reality. *Saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me*—Hath miraculously interposed, and done this great work for me; *in the days wherein he looked upon me*—In his own good time, in which he hath had respect to me; *to take away my reproach*—Namely, barrenness, which was a great reproach among the Jews. To which may be added, “that a branch of the family of Aaron should fail, would be looked upon as a particular calamity, and might be interpreted as a judgment; and so much the rather, considering the many promises God had made to increase the families of his obedient people.” Thus Dr. Doddridge, who takes occasion here to observe further, “that, considering how the whole Jewish polity was interwoven with those acts of religion which were to be performed by the priests alone, it might seem wonderful that no provision at all should be made for entailing the priesthood on any other family, if that of Aaron should happen to be extinct. Leaving this contingency unprovided for, was, in effect, putting the whole credit of the Jewish religion upon the perpetual continuance of the male branches of that family; an issue on which no man of Moses’s prudence, nor indeed of common sense, would have rested his legislation, if he had not been truly conscious of its divine origin, especially after two of Aaron’s four sons had been cut off in one day, for a rash act in the execution of their office, as soon as

A. M. 3398. 26 ¶ * And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

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

* Annunciation of the B. V. Mary, gospel, verse 26 to verse 39. B. C. 5.—^d Matt. i. 18; Chap. ii. 4, 5.—^e Dan. iv. 23; x. 19.

they were initiated into it, and died without any children, Num. iii. 4.

Verses 26, 27. *In the sixth month*—Namely, after Elisabeth had conceived; *the angel Gabriel*—The same angel who had been the messenger of such good news to Zacharias; *was sent from God unto a city of Galilee*—A country which lay “in the most northern part of Palestine, and was bounded on the north by Lebanon and Syria, on the west by Phœnicia, on the south by Samaria, and on the east by Jordan and the sea of Tiberias. Yet, from the gospels it appears, that a part of the country north of the sea and eastward of Jordan was reckoned Galilee: which, therefore, comprehended the possessions of the tribes of Issachar, Zebulon, Naphtali, and Asher. It was divided into Upper and Lower Galilee, whereof the former was called *Galilee of the Gentiles*, Matt. iv. 15, because it bordered upon the Gentile nations, and was partly inhabited by them. Of the populousness and fertility of this country see notes on Matt. xv. 16. *Named Nazareth*—A small city in the tribe of Zebulon, now reduced to a very low and contemptible condition, Matt. ii. 23. *To a virgin espoused*—It was customary among the Jews, for persons that married to contract before witnesses some time before. And as Christ was to be born of a pure virgin, so the wisdom of God ordered it to be of one *espoused*, that to prevent reproach he might have a *reputed* father, according to the flesh. *To Joseph, of the house of David*—Joseph was a descendant of King David, though now in low circumstances. It is of the greatest importance to prove that Christ was lineally descended from David, this being one of the characteristics of the Messiah; but certainly this cannot be inferred from the genealogy of Joseph, because he was only the reputed father of Christ: nor is it necessary to understand the evangelist here as speaking of Joseph's being of the house of David. His words may be understood differently, as indeed they are read by Dr. Whitby and many others, thus: *to a virgin of the house of David, (espoused to a man whose name was Joseph,) and the virgin's name was Mary*. What strengthens this interpretation is, that this and the preceding verse refer wholly to the virgin, who is described by the place of her residence, Nazareth; by her relation to Joseph, being espoused to him; by her lineage and descent, of the house of David; and by her name, Mary.

Verse 28. *The angel said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured*—Greek, *Κεχαριτωμενη*, who hast found mercy, or favour, with God, as it is explained, ver. 30.

28 And the angel came in unto her, A. M. 3398. and said, * Hail, *thou that art* ² highly favoured, ¹ the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

29 And when she saw *him*, ^e she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what

² Or, *graciously accepted*, or, *much graced*: verse 30.—¹ Judg. vi. 12.—^e Verse 12.

The Lord is with thee—Or, *The Lord be with thee*, as Dr. Campbell renders *Κυριος μετὰ σε*: *Blessed art thou among women*—That is, according to the Hebrew idiom, thou art the happiest of all the women that ever lived. It must be observed, that this salutation gives no room for any pretence of paying adoration to the virgin; as having no appearance of a prayer, or of worship offered to her. Besides, similar expressions are applied to others. *Hail*, is the salutation used by our Lord to the women after his resurrection: *thou art highly favoured*, or, *hast found favour with God*, is no more than was said of Noah, Moses, and David. *The Lord is with thee*, was said to Gideon, Judges vi. 12; and, *Blessed shall she be above women*, of Jael, Judges v. 24. “The Church of Rome,” observes a pious writer, “saying ten Ave Marias for one Pater Noster, idolatrously uses these words as a prayer to the holy virgin, whereas they are only a salutation; declaring that she above all women had the honour freely conferred by God upon her, to be the mother of the Messiah. The original word, *κεχαριτωμενη*, signifies, not *full of grace*, but *freely beloved*. Compare Mary with other renowned women, and what had she, besides this favour, more than they? Had she the spirit of prophecy? so had they. Had she the spirit of sanctification? so had they: and she had no more immunity and freedom from sin and death than they. Accordingly the angel says, *Blessed art thou among women*, not, *Blessed art thou above women*. How senseless are they, 1st, In turning a salutation into a prayer! 2d, In making use of these words upon every occasion, which were spoken by an angel upon a special occasion! 3d, In applying these words to her now in heaven, which suited with her only when she was here on earth, saying, *Full of grace*, to her who is full of glory, and, *The Lord is with thee*, to her who is with the Lord!”

Verses 29, 30. *When she saw him she was troubled*—*Διεταραχθη*, disturbed or perplexed; *at his saying*—A salutation so unusual from a being of a superior order (for such his form, which was more than human, bespoke him to be) put Mary into a great perturbation of spirit; and no wonder; for if Zacharias, a venerable and aged minister of God, and one accustomed to have intercourse with heaven, was amazed at the appearance of an angel, how much more might a young virgin be so, her sex peculiarly subjecting her to the passion of fear. *And she cast in her mind*—*Διελογιζετο*, she reasoned with herself; *what manner of salutation this should be*—What should be its intention, and from what

A. M. 3398. manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 ^b And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and ¹ shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, ^k and shall be called

¹ Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 21.—^d Chap. ii. 21.—^k Mark v. 7. 12 Sam. vii. 11, 12; Isa. ix. 6, 7; xvi. 5; Jer. xxiii. 5; Psa.

original it could come. It is not improbable but she suspected that it might possibly proceed from the artifice of some evil spirit, to inspire her with sentiments of vanity and pride. *And the angel*—Speaking with a gentle and smooth accent, in order to remove her doubts, and inspire her with confidence and courage; *said, Fear not, Mary*—Thus preparing her for the reception of his message; for all passions, but particularly that of fear, disquiets the heart, and makes it unfit to receive messages from God. *For thou hast found favour with God*—And I have no other design but to assure thee of it. Observe, reader, those that have found favour with God ought not to give way to disquieting, distrustful fears. Does God favour thee? then fear not, though the world frown upon thee. Is he for thee? then it signifies little who is against thee.

Verses 31–33. *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb*—Though a virgin, strange to say, thou shalt have the honour of being a mother; thou shalt bring forth a son, and that son no ordinary person, but the restorer of human nature, and Saviour of the world; and therefore *thou shalt call his name Jesus*—Or *Joshua*, a Saviour. *He shall be great*—Great indeed! greater than all others that ever partook of the human nature: great in respect of his person, his offices, and his kingdom: for *he shall be called*, and shall be, *the Son of the Highest*—And that in a peculiar sense, a sense in which no man or angel is or can be God's son, being not only unspeakably dear to him, as a son is dear to his father, but of the same nature with him, as a son is of the same nature with his father. Therefore, *the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his earthly father, David*—Or the throne typified by that of David. *And he shall reign over the house of Jacob*—The spiritual Israel, even over all who imitate the faith and obedience of that good patriarch; *and of his kingdom there shall be no end*—So Isaiah, chap. ix. 8, *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end*. All other kingdoms have had, or shall have, their periods, but the gospel church, which is Christ's kingdom, shall continue for ever; first on earth, in its militant state, and then in heaven, in a state triumphant. See the notes on the places referred to in the margin. "The kingdom of Christ," the reader must observe, "is twofold: 1st, His spiritual kingdom, or the dominion of righteousness in the minds of men. 2d, His temporal kingdom, or the outward dispensation of

the Son of the Highest; and ¹ the A. M. 3398. Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

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

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

cxviii. 11; Rev. iii. 7.—^m Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14, 27; Obad. 21; Mic. iv. 7; John xii. 34; Heb. i. 8.

the gospel, together with an exercise of government over the world, by which all events are ordered, so as to promote the empire of righteousness in the hearts of men. This distinction removes the difficulty arising from 1 Cor. xv. 28, where we are told, that after the worlds are judged, Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father; compared with what Gabriel said to Mary, on this occasion, and with the other passages of Scripture, which affirm that our Lord's kingdom shall be everlasting. His temporal kingdom, or the gospel dispensation, will end with the world, being of no further use. At that period, likewise, he will deliver up to God the government of the world, that was committed to him for the good of his church, after having accomplished the end of his coming by putting down all rule, and all authority, and power opposite to God's. But his spiritual kingdom, or the dominion of righteousness in the minds of reasonable beings, which he came down to establish, will continue with them to all eternity; and Jesus will still preside as head over the redeemed society in heaven, and perform such acts of government as their condition allows and circumstances require, though still in subordination to the Father. See 1 Cor. xv. 28, and Macknight."

Verses 34–38. *Then said Mary, How shall this be*—How can I immediately conceive a child, (for so the angel meant, and so she understood him to mean,) *seeing I know not a man?*—This was not the language of distrust, or of doubt, respecting what the angel said, but of a desire to be further instructed, for the direction of her conduct. She so inquired concerning the manner, as not to doubt of the fact. Some would render the clause, *What? shall this be, if I have no intercourse with a man?* as if she desired to be resolved, whether the birth were to be produced in a common, or a miraculous manner. But it is much more natural to suppose, that she understood the former words as an intimation that the effect was immediately to take place, to which her present circumstances seemed, humanly speaking, an invincible objection. She, however, asks no sign for the confirmation of her faith, as Zacharias had done, nor insinuates that she would not believe till a miracle was wrought to convince her; but only that she did not understand how her pregnancy could be effected in her virgin state, and desired him to explain it to her, not doubting but it was possible. Wherefore, the weakness of her

A. M. 3398. 35 And the angel answered and _____ said unto her, ^a The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called ^o the Son of God.

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

37 For ^p with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid ^q of the Lord; be it unto me according ^r to thy

^a Matthew i. 20.—^o Matthew xiv. 33; xxvi. 63, 64; Mark i. 1; John i. 34; xx. 31; Acts viii. 37; Romans i. 4.—^p Genesis xviii. 14; Jeremiah xxxii. 17; Zechariah viii. 6; Matthew

apprehension being consistent with faith, and her request being conceived with modesty and humility, the angel told her that the wonderful event should be accomplished by the interposition of the Holy Spirit, and special energy of the power of God, who would preserve her reputation entire, at least in the opinion of impartial judges, and protect her from any injury which this mystery might expose her to; for, by the Jewish law, a severe punishment was inflicted on women betrothed, who proved with child before cohabiting with their husbands. *Therefore also*—Because thou shalt conceive by the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost; *that holy thing which shall be born of thee*—That holy offspring of thine; *shall*—With regard to this miraculous conception, as well as another, and yet greater consideration, *be called the Son of God.* *And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, &c.*—For the confirmation of her faith the angel acquaints her with the pregnancy of her relation Elisabeth, who was then past the age of child-bearing; that being a thing similar, though inferior, to her own pregnancy, which he had been predicting. Mary and Elisabeth might be cousins, as the text affirms, although the former was a descendant of David, and the latter a daughter of Aaron; because the law, Num. xxxvi. 6, forbidding women to marry out of their own tribes, related only to heiresses, and consequently did not include the tribe of Levi, which had not heritable possessions that could be alienated by such marriages. Accordingly, Lev. xxii. 12, it is supposed a common case, that a priest's daughter might be married to a stranger. *And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, &c.*—In this answer Mary expressed both great faith and great resignation. She believed what the angel had told her concerning her conception, and wished for it; not regarding the inconveniences she might be exposed to thereby, well knowing that the power of God could easily protect her. Thus Mary, though a young virgin, readily believes an event much more wonderful than that which Zacharias, though an

word. And the angel departed from A. M. 3398. her.

39 ¶ And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, ^s into a city of Juda,

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

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

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

xix. 26; Mark x. 27; Chapter xviii. 27; Romans iv. 21. ^q Psalm cxvi. 16.—^r Genesis xvii. 17.—^s Joshua xxi. 9-11. ^t Verse 28; Judges v. 24.

aged priest, had found it so difficult to credit: and thus does God, as it were, *out of the mouths of babes and sucklings perfect his praise.* It is not improbable, that this time of the virgin's humble faith, consent, and expectation, might be the very time of her conceiving.

Verses 39-45. *Mary arose in those days*—That is, soon after the time that she had received the extraordinary message mentioned above; *and went into the hill-country*—Where Elisabeth dwelt, although it was at least seventy miles distant from Nazareth. It is probable she was eager to know the certainty of her cousin's pregnancy, which the angel had mentioned, to show her the possibility of her own. *Into a city of Juda*—Probably Hebron, which belonged to the house of Aaron, and was situated in Judea, the mountains of which, running from south to north, gave the name of *the hill-country* to a part of it. *And saluted Elisabeth*—Immediately on her entering Zacharias's house: and she no sooner spake than the child in the womb of Elisabeth leaped, as transported with joy, as if sensible of the approach of Him whose forerunner he was appointed to be. And the holy woman Elisabeth was so enlightened by the extraordinary influence of the Holy Ghost, that she instantly knew her cousin Mary had conceived with child of the Messiah, and therefore saluted her by the grand title of, *the mother of my Lord.* Being also in a divine and prophetic ecstasy, she uttered things which had an evident relation to the particulars of Mary's interview with the angel; things, therefore, which she could only know by revelation; so that she astonished Mary exceedingly, and exalted her faith beyond every doubt. *And she spake with a loud voice*—Such as testified the greatness of the emotion of her mind; *and said, Blessed art thou among women*—The same salutation wherewith Gabriel had addressed Mary; *and blessed is the fruit of thy womb*—Alluding probably to the child's being the promised seed in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, and who for that reason

A. M. 3898. 43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

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

45 And blessed is she ³ that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

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

³ Or, which believed that there.—1 Sam. ii. 1; Psa. xxxiv. 2, 3; xxxv. 9; Hab. iii. 18.—¹ 1 Sam. i. 11; Psa. cxxxviii. 6.

was blessed himself. Psa. lxxii. 17. *And whence is this, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?*—If Elisabeth had not been extraordinarily inspired, she could not so much as have suspected that Mary was to be the mother of the Messiah; but this being revealed to her, she was greatly struck with the honour that was done her, and expressed her sense thereof by asking, in a rapture of astonishment, how it came to be conferred upon her. As if she had said, "How have I deserved this honour, that the mother of the Messiah, my Lord and Saviour, should deign to visit me?" *And blessed is she that believed*—Here Elisabeth plainly commends the faith and humility which Mary had expressed, when the angel assured her that she should become pregnant in her virgin state; contrary to the behaviour of Zacharias, who, it seems, had informed Elisabeth by writing of all that had happened, or she might come to the knowledge of it by revelation. *For there shall be a performance of those things, &c.*—Dr. Campbell reads this clause in connection with the preceding, thus: *Happy is she who believed that the things which the Lord hath promised her shall be performed*; understanding the latter clause to be the object of Mary's faith: and for this reading he assigns solid reasons. Indeed, it is the reading of the margin.

Verses 46-48. *And Mary said*—Under a prophetic impulse, several things which perhaps she herself did not then fully understand. Having heard Elisabeth speak, as above related, she likewise was filled with the Holy Ghost, and under his influence uttered extempore a hymn, remarkable for the beauty of its style, the sublimity of its sentiments, and the spirit of piety which runs through the whole of it: and manifesting the deep sense she had of her own unworthiness, and of the goodness of God in choosing her to the high honour of being the Messiah's mother. It is observable, most of the phrases which she uses are borrowed from the Old Testament, with which the pious virgin seems to have been very conversant; especially from the song of Hannah, in which there were so many passages remarkably suitable to her case. See 1 Sam. ii. 1-10. *My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*—She seems to turn her thoughts here to Christ himself, who was to be born of her, as the angel had told her he should be the Son of the Highest, whose name should be

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

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

49 For he that is mighty ^x hath done to me great things; and ^y holy is his name.

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

51 * He hath showed strength with his arm;

^u Mal. iii. 12; Chap. xi. 27.—^x Psa. lxxi. 19.—^y Psa. cxi. 9. * Gen. xvii. 7; Ex. xx. 6.—^z Ps. xcvi. 1; Is. xl. 10; li. 9; lii. 10.

Jesus, the Saviour. And she rejoiced in hope of salvation through faith in him, which is a blessing common to all true believers, more than in being his mother in the flesh, which was an honour peculiar to her. And certainly she had the same reason to rejoice in God her Saviour that we have: because he had *regarded the low estate of his handmaid*—In like manner as he regarded our low estate; and vouchsafed to come and save her and us, when we were reduced to the lowest estate of sin and misery. *All generations shall call me blessed*—*μακαριστοι, shall call me happy.* So Dr. Doddridge, who justly observes, that there are several other texts in which *μακαριος* should rather be rendered *happy*, than *blessed*, which is the proper signification of *ευλογητος*. See 1. Tim. i. 11; vi. 15; Rev. xx. 6.

Verses 49-51. *He that is mighty*—Beyond all our conceptions, even the Almighty God, to whom this strange event is not only possible, but easy; *hath done to me great things*—*Miracles*, as the words *μεγαλα* and *μεγαλεια* often signify in the Old Testament, being applied by the LXX. to the miracles wrought in Egypt, and in the wilderness. Probably, Mary had now in her eye her miraculous conception of the Messiah, being astonished that God should have chosen her, a person of the meanest condition, to be his mother. Yet from her belief of the divine perfections, she was convinced that all was done in wisdom and truth, and therefore she adds, *and holy is his name.* *And his mercy is on them that fear him*—It always has been so; he has ever looked on them with an eye of peculiar favour, who have looked up to him with an eye of filial fear. But he hath manifested his mercy, so as he had never done before, in sending his Son to bring in an everlasting righteousness, and work out an everlasting salvation for them that fear him, and this from *generation to generation*: for there are gospel privileges, transmitted by entail, and intended for perpetuity. Those that fear God, as their Creator and Judge, are encouraged to hope for mercy from him, through their Mediator and Advocate; and in him mercy is settled upon all such, while the world stands. In Christ he keepeth mercy for thousands. *He hath showed strength with his arm*—That is, he hath shown the exceeding greatness of his power. She speaks prophetically of those things as already done which God was about to do by the Messiah. Gro-

A. M. 3398. ^b he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

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

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

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, ^{*} in remembrance of *his* mercy;

^b Psa. xxxiii. 10; 1 Pet. v. 5.—^c 1 Sam. ii. 6, &c.; Job v. 11; Psa. cxlii. 6.—^d 1 Sam. ii. 5; Psa. xxxiv. 10.—^e Psa. xlviii. 3; Jer. xxxi. 3, 20.

55 ^f As he spake to our fathers, to A. M. 3398. Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

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

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

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy

^f Genesis xvii. 19; Psalm cxxii. 11; Romans xi. 28; Galatians iii. 16.—^{*} St. John Baptist's day, gospel, verse 57 to the end.

tius observes, that God's great power is represented by his *finger*, his greater by his *hand*, and his greatest by his *arm*. The production of lice was by the finger of God, Exod. vii. 18; and the other miracles in Egypt were done by his right hand, Exod. iii. 20. But the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea was brought to pass by his arm, Exod. xv. 16. Wherefore the virgin's meaning is, that in this dispensation of his providence, God mightily manifested his sovereign power. *He hath scattered the proud, &c.*—In the course of God's providence it is his usual method to cross the expectations of men, and proceed quite otherwise than they promise themselves. Proud men expect with ease to effect their purposes, and carry all before them; but he *scatters* them *in the imagination of their hearts*; breaks their measures, blasts their projects; nay, and brings them low by those very counsels, with which they thought to advance and establish themselves. Some read this clause, *He hath scattered those that prided themselves in the imagination, or thought, of their heart*. But the words will better bear the translation which we give them, which certainly expresses a more emphatical sense, and one "peculiarly applicable to the gospel, in which God doth not only *cast down imaginations and every high thing, &c.*, (2 Cor. x. 5,) by the humbling scheme of his recovering grace, but hath remarkably confounded his most insolent enemies in their own most elaborate projects, and established his sacred cause by the violent attempts they have made to suppress it: compare Psa. ii. 1-3; a triumph of divine wisdom, of which succeeding ages furnish out memorable and frequent instances."—Doddridge.

Verses 52-56. *He hath put down the mighty from their seats*—The mighty think to secure themselves by might in their seats, but he puts them down and overturns their seats; while, on the other hand, those of low degree, who despaired of ever advancing themselves, and thought of nothing else but being very low, are wonderfully exalted. To apply this to the subject which gave occasion to this divine hymn: "The kings who sprang from David, had, no doubt, one after another expected to be the parents of the Messiah; and when the kingdom was taken from them, such of the royal progeny as were in the highest station, would reckon this their certain and high privilege. But now their hope was

wholly overthrown. They were brought down by God from that height of dignity to which, in their own imagination, they had exalted themselves; and a person in the meanest condition of all the royal seed was raised to it." *He hath filled the hungry, &c.*—"Both the poor and the rich are here represented as waiting at God's gate in the condition of beggars, the rich in expectation of receiving the honour of giving birth to the Messiah; the poor in expectation, not of that blessing, but hoping for such small favours as suited their condition. While they wait in this state, God, by an exercise of his sovereignty, bestows the favour, so much courted by the rich, on a poor family, to its unspeakable satisfaction, and sends the rich away disappointed and discontented." See Macknight, and notes on 1 Sam. ii. 3-9. *He hath holpen his servant Israel*—Dr. Campbell reads this and the next verse, *He supporteth Israel his servant, (as he promised to our fathers,) ever inclined to mercy toward Abraham and his race*. The word *αυτελαβετο*, here rendered *he hath holpen*, properly signifies, to interpose in favour of a person in great necessity or extreme danger; and also to hold by the hand, to sustain from falling, or to lift up when fallen, and so to afford aid or help; this he hath done, saith the virgin, in remembrance of his mercy; for then God is said signally to remember his people, when, after a long oppression, in which he seemed to have forgotten them, he works a mighty salvation for them, (see Psa. cxxxvi. 23.) And he did this, also, in pursuance of his promise made to our forefathers, to send the Messiah to be an everlasting blessing to all that should believe in him, and so become the seed of Abraham by faith. *And Mary abode with her about three months*—Till very near the time of her delivery; *and returned to her own house*—Having, to her unspeakable satisfaction and great comfort, found all things as the angel had told her; and soon after took a journey with Joseph to Bethlehem.

Verses 57-66. *Now Elisabeth's full time came*—Exactly according to the prediction of the angel; *that she should be delivered*—Though this child was conceived in the womb by a miracle, he continued in the womb according to the ordinary course of nature, as did our Saviour also. Promised mercies are to be expected when the full time for them is come, and not before. *And her neighbours and*

A. M. 3398. upon her; and ^a they rejoiced with her.

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

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

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

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

63 And he asked for a writing-table, and

^c Verse 14.—^b Gen. xvii. 12; Lev. xii. 3.—ⁱ Verse 13.
^k Verse 13.—^j Verse 20.—^d Or, things.—^m Verse 39.

cousins rejoiced with her—Having heard that the Lord, in so illustrious and remarkable a manner, had magnified his mercy to her, they came together to testify their joy, and sincerely congratulated her on the happy occasion. *And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child*—According to the appointment in the law: not before that day, because the mother was considered as unclean seven days, Lev. xii. 1, 2; and so was the child, by touching her, and therefore was not then fit to be admitted into covenant: moreover, till that time he was weak, and could not well endure the pain of circumcision. *And they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father*—The law did not enjoin that the child should have his name given him at circumcision; but it was customary to do it then, because at the institution of the rite, God changed the names of Abraham and Sarah, Gen. xvii. 5, 16. *And his mother said, Not so; but he shall be called John*—In this she might be influenced by revelation; or Zacharias might have explained the whole affair to her in writing. *They said, There is none of thy kindred*—None of the relations of thy family that is called by this name; and therefore, if he may not have his father's name, yet let him have the name of some of his kindred, who will consider it as a token of respect to have such a child named from them. *And they made signs to his father, &c.*—Wishing to know his mind in the matter, for it was properly his office to name the child. From their inquiring of him by signs, we may conclude with certainty he was deaf as well as dumb. *He asked for a writing-table*—Πιστικτον, either a tablet, or little book. The ancients frequently wrote on a thin board, smeared over with wax. *And he wrote, His name is John*—The name which the angel had commanded him to give the child; a name very proper for him who was to be the first preacher of the kingdom of grace, and who was to point out him *from whose fulness we receive grace for grace*, John i. 16. See note on verse 13. *And his mouth was opened immediately*—He had no sooner done writing than he recovered his speech; the angel's prediction being then fully accomplished. Accordingly, with an

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wrote, saying, ^k His name is John. A. M. 3398. And they marvelled all.

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

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these ⁴ sayings were noised abroad throughout all ^m the hill-country of Judea.

66 And all they that heard *them* ⁿ laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And ^o the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 ¶ And his father Zacharias ^p was filled

ⁿ Chap. ii. 19, 51.—^o Gen. xxxix. 2; Psa. lxxx. 17; lxxxix. 21; Acts xi. 21.—^p Joel ii. 28.

audible, articulate voice, he praised God in holy raptures, to the astonishment of all present. *And fear*—That is, a religious awe and fear of offending God; *came on all that dwelt round about them; and all these sayings* (or rather things, as τα ρηματα here signifies, and as it frequently does elsewhere) *were noised abroad, &c.*—Being very extraordinary events, they were much talked of in that country, and people formed many conjectures concerning the child. *And the hand of the Lord was with him*—Here, by *the hand of the Lord*, we are not to understand the *spirit of prophecy*, which is frequently the meaning of the expression in the book of Ezekiel; but that he was remarkable, even from his infancy, for the qualities both of his body and mind; and was favoured in an eminent degree with the grace, protection, and blessing of God. It is of importance to observe here, that the extraordinary circumstances above mentioned, namely, “the appearing of the angel to Zacharias in the temple; Zacharias's dumbness; Elisabeth's pregnancy when past the age of child-bearing; and the restoration of Zacharias's speech on the day of his son's circumcision; were all wisely ordered by Providence to accompany the conception and birth of John, that he, who was the Messiah's forerunner, might not seem an obscure and ordinary man, but one that was the peculiar object of the decrees and counsels of heaven. He was introduced into the world in this magnificent manner, that the attention of his countrymen being awakened, and high expectations of him raised, he might execute the duties of his ministry with greater advantage, and effectually prepare the people for receiving the Messiah, who was soon to appear in person.”—Macknight.

Verse 67. *And Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost*—Was endued with a more than ordinary measure of the Spirit of God, supernaturally enlightening his mind in the knowledge of divine things, and even of future events. God not only forgave him his unbelief and distrust, which was signified by discharging him from the punishment of it, but, as a specimen of his abounding grace and mercy toward believers, he filled him with the

A. M. 3998. with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

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

69 ^a And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David :

^a 1 Kings i. 48; Psa. xli. 13; lxxii. 18; cvi. 48.—^a Ex. iii. 16; iv. 31; Psa. cxi. 9; Chap. vii. 16.—^a Psa. cxxxii. 17.

Spirit of wisdom and revelation, that he might speak to his praise, and the instruction and edification of mankind of that and every future age and nation. *And he prophesied*—Of things immediately to follow, which proved the accomplishment of God's promises made to Abraham, and the other patriarchs and prophets, concerning the redemption and salvation of God's people by the Messiah. By *prophesying*, no more is sometimes meant in the Scriptures than celebrating the praises of God with great elevation and affection of soul, as 1 Chron. xxv. 1, where Asaph and Jeduthun are said to prophesy with the harp and cymbal, which, verse 3, is explained by their *giving praise and thanks to God*. But as Zacharias is said, on this occasion, to have uttered predictions concerning the kingdom and salvation of the Messiah, and the office and ministry of his own son, the ordinary sense of the word *prophesy* may be here very properly admitted.

Verses 68–70. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*—Who is also the God of the spirits of all flesh: but Zacharias, speaking of the work of redemption calls him only the God of Israel, because to Israel the prophecies, promises, and types of redemption, had hitherto been given, and to them the first offers and proposals of it were now to be made. Israel, as a chosen people, was a type of the people of God to be called out of all nations and ages, whom God had a particular eye to in sending the Saviour. *For he hath visited, &c., his people*—In sending the Messiah, God made a gracious visit to his people, whom, for many ages, he had seemed to neglect, and be estranged from. He is said to have visited his people in bondage, when he delivered them, Exod. iii. 16; to have visited them in famine, when he gave them bread, Ruth i. 6. He had often sent to them by his prophets, and had kept up a correspondence with them, but now he himself made them a visit, for Christ was *Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh*. *And redeemed his people*—Ἐποίησε λυτρωσιν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ. He hath wrought out redemption for his people, complete and illustrious redemption. This was the errand on which Christ came into the world, to redeem those that were sold for sin and sold under sin; even God's own people, his Israel, need to be redeemed, and are undone if they be not. Christ redeems them by price out of the hands of God's justice, and redeems them by power out of the hands of Satan's tyranny, as Israel out of Egypt. *And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us*—That is, a mighty, victorious, and glorious Saviour, who saves his people with an abundant salvation. The expression is metaphori-

70 ^a As he spake by the mouth of A. M. 3998. his holy prophets, which have been since the world began :

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

72 ^a To perform the mercy promised to our

^a Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; xxx. 10; Dan. ix. 24; Acts iii. 21; Rom. i. 2. ^a Lev. xxvi. 42; Ps. xcvi. 3; cv. 8, 9; cvi. 45; Ez. xvi. 60; Yer. 54.

cal, taken from beasts, whose strength, defence, and victory over other animals, lies chiefly in their horns, as also the beauty and glory of several of them; the property likewise of the ancients consisting chiefly in their flocks and herds. Accordingly, the word *horn* is used in Scripture emblematically, to denote strength or power, Lam. ii. 3, 17; Psa. lxxv. 10; also honour and triumph, as, when the *horn is exalted*, Psa. lxxxix. 24. From the union of these, it signifies the power of a king or kingdom, Rev. xiii. 1. This is the chief import of the word in this place, the house of David being the regal family, and the word *Saviour*, implying deliverer, protector, and ruler; the *horn of salvation in the house of David* denotes the kingdom of Christ. *As he spake*—That is, as he promised; *by his holy prophets, which have been since the world began*—Ἀπ' αἰῶνος, from the beginning of ages, the promise being made to Adam, Gen. iii. 15, that *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; and to Abraham and the other patriarchs, that in their seed all nations of the earth should be blessed*. "It cannot," however, as Dr. Doddridge justly observes, "certainly be inferred from hence, as some have argued, that there was from the beginning of the world a series of prophets, or that every individual prophet spoke of the Messiah, which can never be proved without doing great violence to the remaining writings of some of them." The words of Zacharias only amount to this, that the generality of prophecies in all ages refer to this great event. See Acts x. 43.

Verses 71–75. *That we should be saved from our enemies*—Spiritual as well as temporal, invisible as well as visible; *and from the hand of all that hate us*—From Satan and his angels, and all adverse power, and especially from our sins. This certainly was the mind of the Spirit that now inspired Zacharias, as appears by the whole tenor of Scripture; but whether he fully understood his own words is impossible for us to say. It is certain the older prophets, in some cases, did not fully understand the prophecies which they themselves uttered. See 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. *To perform the mercy*—Thus he speaks because our redemption and salvation have their origin in the divine mercy, that is, in his compassion for us in our fallen state, and in his free, gratuitous grace, and goodness toward us. The original expression, ποιῆσαι ελεος μετὰ τὸν πατέρων ἡμῶν, literally signifies, *to exercise, or show, mercy toward or with, our fathers*. Dr. Campbell translates the verse, *In kindness to our forefathers, and remembrance of his holy covenant; the tenor of which*

A. M. 3998. fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 * The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might ^v serve him without fear,

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

* Gen. xii. 3; xvii. 4; xxii. 16, 17; Heb. vi. 13, 17.—^v Rom. vi. 18, 22; Heb. ix. 14.—^v Jer. xxxii. 39, 40; Eph. iv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. ii. 12; 1 Pet. i. 15; 2 Pet. i. 4.

covenant was, that Abraham's spiritual seed, being delivered from their enemies by the Messiah, should, under his government, worship and serve God acceptably through all generations. *The oath which he sware to our father Abraham*—By which oath he confirmed the fore-mentioned covenant, that, as the apostle observes, by two immutable things, God's promise given in the covenant, and oath, in either of which, much more in both, *it was impossible for God to lie*, all that should truly embrace the covenant, by complying with the conditions of it, in repentance, faith, and new obedience, might have strong consolation in life, in death, and for ever. *That he would grant unto us*—For the salvation here mentioned is his free, undeserved gift; *that being delivered out of the hand of our enemies*—Especially our spiritual enemies, the devil, the world, and the flesh, the guilt, and power, and consequences of our sins, (the Messiah being therefore called *Jesus*, because *he saves his people from their sins*, Matt. i. 21,) *we might serve him*—Might worship and glorify him, in and with our *body and spirit*, which are his; *without fear*—Not without a reverential fear of God, or filial fear of offending him; a watchful fear of our enemies, or a jealous fear of ourselves, *lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, we should come short of it*, in which senses, *blessed is the man that feareth always*; but without any slavish fear of God, or that spirit of bondage from which the spirit of adoption is given to deliver true believers, Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 5-7; 2 Tim. i. 7; and without any tormenting fear of death, or of any suffering antecedent to death, which we may be called to pass through; to deliver us from which fear Christ assumed our flesh and blood, Heb. ii. 14, 15. *In holiness*—Toward God, in devotedness to his glory, conformity to his image, subjection to his authority, and obedience to his will; *and righteousness*—Toward our fellow-creatures, that is, in the continual exercise of truth, justice, mercy, and charity; *before him*—Conscious we are in his presence, and under the continual notice of his eye, setting him always before us, and aiming to please him in every temper, word, and work, in all our desires and designs, our cares, labours, and pursuits. Here, then, we have the substance of God's great promise, that, if we embrace and live up to our privileges, as true believers in Christ, we shall be always holy, always useful, always happy; that,

76 And thou, child, shalt be called A. M. 3998. the Prophet of the Highest, for ^a thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

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

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

^a Isa. xl. 3, Mal. iii. 1; iv. 5; Matt. xi. 10; Ver. 17.—^b Mark i. 4; Chap. iii. 3.—^c Or, *for*.—^d Or, *bowels of the mercy*.
^e Or, *sun-rising*, or, *branch*.

being delivered from Satan and sin, from every uneasy, from every unhappy and unholy disposition and affection, we shall joyfully love and serve God in our whole spirit and conduct, and that not only on sabbath days, or times of peculiar solemnity and devotion, but *all the days of our life*, and every hour of every day; *whatsoever we do in word or deed*, and doing *all in the name of the Lord Jesus*, and giving thanks to God, *even the Father, through him*. This is the great gospel *salvation prepared before the face of*, and free for, *all people*, chap. ii. 30, 31.

Verses 76-78. *And thou child*—He now speaks to John his son, yet not as a parent, but as a prophet; *shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest*—Thou shalt be the messenger of God Most High. Our Lord declares that John was *more than a prophet*: that is, he was a great preacher of righteousness, who called aloud to the people to repent, that they might be forgiven; and he foretold that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. *For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his way*—Thou shalt go before the Lord Christ, to point him out as the Messiah to his people, and to dispose and prepare them to receive him as such by repentance toward God, productive of fruit worthy of repentance, and by faith in him and subjection to him as a divinely-commissioned teacher, a mighty Saviour, and righteous governor. See note on Matt. iii. 3. *To give knowledge of salvation to his people*—To preach to God's people the glad tidings of salvation, present and eternal, as attainable; to show them the way of attaining it, namely, by repentance and faith in the Messiah, and to give all such as should comply with these terms the knowledge of their having attained it, at least in part, by assuring them of the remission of their sins, that blessing being a branch of present, and a pledge and earnest of future salvation. *Through the tender mercy of our God*—*σπλαγχνία ελεος*, the *bowels of mercy*, a strong Hebraism, implying God's tender compassions for mankind, immersed as they are in sins and miseries. "These two words are often used in Scripture both jointly and separately. They signify pity, because that passion in us is commonly attended with a motion of the bowels, especially when the object of it is one we have an interest in. See Isa. lxiii. 15; Phil. ii. 1; Col. iii. 12; where bowels of mercy signify the most tender mercy. The word *σπλαγχνία*, *bowels*, used by itself

A. M. 3998. 79 ° To give light to them that sit
in darkness and in the shadow of
death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

° Num. xxiv. 17; Isa. xi. 1; Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12;

signifies any strong affection whatever, Philem. 7." John the Baptist gave people to understand, that though their case was deplorable, by reason of sin, it was not desperate, because pardon might be obtained through the tender and unspeakable mercy of God. *Whereby the day-spring*—The dawning day of morning light; that is, the gospel dispensation, as superior to the patriarchal or Mosaic, with their types and shadows, as the light of the rising sun is superior to that of the moon and stars. This gospel-day dawned in the ministry of John the Baptist; and it increased more and more during the personal ministry of Christ, and it shone out with meridian splendour on the day of pentecost, and thenceforward, when, in consequence of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, the Holy Spirit, in his various gifts and graces, ordinary and extraordinary, was poured out on the Christian Church. It is true the word *αυροση*, here rendered *day-spring*, may signify, as some render it, *the rising sun*: for Zacharias is here alluding to the passages in the prophetic writings which describe the Messiah by the metaphors of the *light* and *sun*, particularly Mal. iv. 2; where he is called *the Sun of righteousness*, both on account of the light of his doctrine, and the joy produced by his appearing. See the note there, and on Isa. lx. 1, 2, 19. "Indeed no figure was ever more happily imagined, or more naturally applied, than this which represents the promised seed under the notion of the sun. For most aptly may Jesus be likened to the *rising sun*; his doctrine being to the souls of men what *light* is to their bodies. It is altogether necessary for directing our steps in the paths of truth and righteousness; it is exceedingly sweet to the spiritual taste, by discovering the most important and delightful truths; nay, like the light, it throws a beauty and pleasantness upon every thing in this lower world, which, without the assurance of God's reconcileableness, would be but a dark and dreary scene to sinners, however noble and beautiful in itself."—Macknight.

Verse 79. *To give light to them that sit in darkness*—The Messiah at his coming would enlighten with the knowledge of salvation the Gentile nations,

80 And ^d the child grew, and wax- A. M. 3998.
ed strong in spirit, and ° was in the
deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.

Mal. iv. 2.—^d Chap. ii. 40.—^e Matt. iii. 1; xi. 7.

who had long lived in ignorance and wickedness, the cause of death. *To guide our feet into the way of peace*—And he would guide the feet, even of the Jews, into the way of finding peace with God, peace of mind, and true happiness, by making them more perfectly acquainted with the method of salvation, and the will of God concerning them. Such phrases as *darkness* and *the shadow of death*, describe with peculiar propriety the ignorant and miserable state of the Gentile world: and, probably, the former clause might be intended principally of them. But as Christ's preaching to the Jews in Galilee is said, Matt. iv. 14–16, to be an accomplishment of Isa. ix. 1, 2, to which Zacharias here seems to refer, we must not confine the sense of it merely to the Gentiles; for indeed the sad character and circumstances of the Jews at this time too well suited the representation here made. Such are the elevated strains in which this pious man, under the extraordinary influence of the Holy Ghost, described the great blessings which mankind were to enjoy by the coming of the seed promised to Adam, to Abraham, and to David.

Verse 80. *And the child grew, &c.*—The years of John's infancy expiring, he grew daily in wisdom and stature; *and was in the deserts, &c.*—During the whole course of his private life, he continued in the deserts, or hill-country of Judea, verse 39, till his ministry commenced, about the thirtieth year of his age. It is probable that the deserts here mentioned were those of Ziph and Maon, where Saul pursued David. Though there were several country towns and villages in these deserts, yet, as they were but thinly inhabited, they were in the Jewish idiom called deserts. Now it was wisely ordered, to prevent a personal acquaintance between Jesus and John, that the latter should continue in one of these deserts, at the distance of probably one hundred miles from Nazareth, till the time of his entering upon his ministry. There, in a state of solitude and retirement from the world, he lived an austere and mortified life, that his character might be suited to his office—the preaching of repentance, self-denial, and deadness to the world and sin.

CHAPTER II.

In this chapter we have an account of the birth and infancy of Christ. (1.) By a singular providence he is born at Bethlehem, according to the prediction of the Prophet Micah, and laid in the manger of a stable, 1–7. (2.) His birth is announced to shepherds by an angel, a heavenly host attending with songs of praise, 8–14. (3.) The shepherds go to Bethlehem, and prove the truth of the tidings brought them by the angel, 15, 16. (4.) They spread the report of his birth, and return glorifying God, 17–20. (5.) He is circumcised, named, and presented in the temple, 21–24. (6.) Simeon and

Anna, two eminently holy and devout persons, acknowledge him as the Messiah, praise God for his birth, and prophesy concerning him, 25-39. (7.) He increases in stature, wisdom, and other endowments, 40. (8.) He discourses with the doctors in the temple, astonishing all that hear him with his understanding and answers, 41-50. (9.) He returns to Nazareth with his parents, to whom he is subject, 51.

A. M. 3999. **AND** *it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from

Cesar Augustus, that all the world A. M. 3999. should be ¹taxed.

* Before the account called Anno Domini, the fifth year.

¹ Or, enrolled.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *And it came to pass in those days*—That is, about the time in which John the Baptist was born, and Christ conceived, in the manner related in the preceding chapter; *there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus*, the Roman emperor, *that all the world should be taxed*—The word *οικουμενη*, here rendered *world*, “means strictly the inhabited part of the earth, and therefore, *πασα η οικουμενη*, *all the world*, in the common acceptation of the phrase. But it is well known that this expression was, in ancient times, frequently employed to denote *the Roman empire*. It was probably a title first assumed through arrogance, afterward given by others through flattery, and at last appropriated by general use to this signification. That it has a more extensive meaning in this place is not pretended by any. But there are some who, on the contrary, would confine it still further, making it denote no more than Judea and its appendages. Of this opinion are several of the learned; Beausobre, Doddridge, Lardner, Pearce, and others. In support of it they have produced some passages in which this phrase, or expressions equivalent, appear to have no larger signification. But, admitting their explanation of the passages they produce, they are not parallel to the example in hand. Such hyperboles are indeed current, not only in the language of the evangelists, but in every language. In those cases, however, wherein they are introduced, there rarely fails to be something, either in what is spoken or in the occasion of speaking, which serves to explain the trope. For example: the term, *a country*, in English, denotes properly a region, or tract of land, inhabited by a people living under the same government. By this, which is the common acceptation, we should say that England is *a country*. Yet the term is often used without any ambiguity in a more limited sense. Thus an inhabitant of a country town or parish says to one of his neighbours, speaking of two persons of their acquaintance, ‘All the country says they are soon to be married;’ yet so far is he from meaning by the phrase, *all the country*, all the people of England, that he is sensible not a thousandth part of them know that such persons exist. He means no more than all the neighbourhood. Nor is he in the smallest danger, by speaking thus, of being misunderstood by any hearer. But if he should say, ‘The parliament has laid a tax on saddle-horses, throughout all the country,’ nobody could imagine that less than England was intended by the term *country*, in this application. Here the term must be considered as it stands related to parliament; in other words, it must be that which, in the style of

the legislature, would be named *the country*. In like manner, though it might not be extraordinary that a Jew, addressing himself to Jews, and speaking of their own people only, should employ such an hyperbole as, *all the world*, for all Judea; it would be exceedingly unnatural in him to use the same terms, applied in the same manner, in relating the resolves and decrees of the Roman emperor, to whom all Judea would be very far from appearing all the world, or even a considerable part of it. Add to this, that the Syriac interpreter (as also all the other ancient interpreters) understood the words in the same manner, *all the people in his* (the emperor’s) *dominions*.”—Campbell. The chief, if not the only objection to this sense of the expression is, the silence of historians. But what Grotius observes, greatly lessens the force of that objection; “I do not so understand the evangelist,” says he, “as if a census were made through the whole Roman world, at one and the same time; but when Augustus wished thoroughly to know the whole power of the Roman empire, he appointed a census to be made through all the kingdoms and provinces subject to it, at one time in one part, and at another in another. Thus Dion, *επεμψεν αλλες αλλη, τα τε των ιδιωτων και τα των πολιων απογραφομενες*, *he sent some persons one way and some another, who might take an account of the property, as well of private persons as of cities*. Of the census made through Gaul by order of Augustus, Claudius, in an oration which is preserved at Ancyra, the abbreviator of Livy, and Dio, have made mention.”

Should be taxed—Greek, *απογραφεσθαι*, *enrolled*: that is, that all the inhabitants, male and female, of every town in the Roman empire, with their families and estates, should be registered. Many of the modern translations, particularly those into Italian, French, and English, have rendered the word *taxed*: and as registers were commonly made with a view to taxing, it may, no doubt, in many cases, be so rendered with sufficient propriety: but, “as in this place there is some difficulty, it is better to adhere strictly to the import of the words. For though it was commonly for the purpose of taxing that a register was made, it was not always, or necessarily so; and in the present case we have ground to believe that there was no immediate view to taxation, at least with respect to Judea. Herod, called *the Great*, was then alive, and king of the country, and though in subordination to the Romans, of whom he may justly be said to have held his crown, yet, as they allowed him all the honours of royalty, there is no ground to think that, either in his lifetime, or before the banishment of his son Archelaus,

A. M. 3999. 2 (* And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every A. M. 3999. one into his own city.

* Acts v. 37.

the Romans levied any toll or tribute from the people of Judea. Nay, we have the testimony of Josephus, that they did not till after the expulsion of Archelaus, when the country was annexed to Syria, and so became part of a Roman province."—Campbell. The reader will observe, such a census, or account, as that here spoken of, "used to be taken of the citizens of Rome every fifth year, and they had officers on purpose appointed for it, called censors. Their business was to take an account, and make a register, of all the Roman citizens, their wives and children, with the age, qualities, trades, offices, and estates of them all. Augustus first extended this to the provinces. He was then at work on the composure of such a book, containing such a survey and description of the whole Roman empire, as that which our Doomsday-book doth of England. In order whereto, his decree for this survey was made to extend to the depending kingdoms, as well as the provinces of the empire:—however, taxes were only paid by the people of the provinces to the Romans; and those of the dependant kingdoms to their own proper princes, who paid their tributes to the Roman emperors. Three times during his reign he caused the like description to be made. The second is that which St. Luke refers to. The decree concerning it was issued out three years before that in which Christ was born. So long had the taking of this survey been carrying on through Syria, Cælo-Syria, Phœnicia, and Judea, before it came to Bethlehem. No payment of any tax was made (on this survey) till the twelfth year after. Till then Herod, and after him Archelaus his son, reigned in Judea. But when Archelaus was deposed, and Judea put under the command of a Roman procurator, then first were taxes paid to the Romans for that country."—Prideaux.

Verse 2. *And this taxing* (rather *this enrolling*) *was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria*—According to the Jewish historian, Josephus, Cyrenius was not governor of Syria till ten or twelve years after our Saviour's birth, after Archelaus was deposed, and the country brought under a Roman procurator; yet, according to our translation of Luke here, he was governor before the death of Herod, the father and predecessor of Archelaus, and in the same year when Christ was born. Now as, on the one hand, it cannot be supposed that a writer so accurate as Luke (were he considered only as a common historian) should make so gross a mistake as to confound the enrolment in the reign of Herod with that taxation under Cyrenius, which happened many years after; so, on the other hand, it is hard to conceive that Josephus should be mistaken in an affair of so public a nature, so important, and so recent when he wrote his history. To remove this difficulty, 1st, Some have supposed a corruption of the original text in Luke; and that, instead of Cyrenius, it ought to be read Saturninus, who, ac-

ording to Josephus, was prefect of Syria within a year or two before Herod's death. 2d, Others have thought it probable, that the original name in Luke was Quintilius; since Quintilius Varus succeeded Saturninus, and was in the province of Syria when Herod died. But all the Greek manuscripts remonstrate against both these solutions. Therefore, 3d, Mr. Whiston and Dr. Prideaux suppose, that the words of the preceding verse, *In those days there went out a decree, &c.*, refer to the time of making the census; and the subsequent words, *This enrolment was first made, &c.*, to the time of levying the tax. "When Judea," says the latter, "was put under a Roman procurator, then taxes were first paid to the Romans—and Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, who is in Greek called Cyrenius, was governor of Syria: so that there were two distinct particular actions in this matter, done at two distinct and different times: the first was making the survey, and the second the levying the tax thereupon. And the first verse here is to be understood of the former, and the second only of the latter. And this reconciles that evangelist with Josephus; for it is manifest from that author, that Cyrenius was not governor of Syria, or any tax levied on Judea, till Archelaus was deposed. And therefore the making of the description cannot be that which was done while Cyrenius was governor of Syria;—but the levying the tax thereon certainly was." In accordance with this interpretation of the passage, Dr. Campbell reads the verse, *This first register took effect when Cyrenius was president of Syria*, observing that, by this translation of the words, divers objections are obviated. "The register," says he, "whatever was the intention of it, was made in Herod's time, but had then little or no consequences. When, after the banishment of Archelaus, Judea was annexed to Syria, and converted into a province, the register of the inhabitants formerly taken served as a directory for laying on the census, to which the country was then subjected. Not but that there must have happened considerable changes on the people during that period. But the errors which these changes might occasion, could, with proper attention, be easily rectified. And thus it might be justly said, that an enrolment which had been made several years before, did not take effect, or produce consequences worthy of notice, till then." Dr. Hammond and Dr. Lardner, however, give what many think a still easier solution of this difficulty, rendering the words thus: *This was the first enrolment of Cyrenius, governor of Syria*, supposing that Cyrenius (afterward governor of Syria, and at the time Luke wrote well known by that title) was employed in making the first enrolment of the inhabitants of Judea in the reign of Herod; to which purpose Dr. Hammond quotes Suidas as relating, on the authority of an ancient author, that "Cesar Augustus, desiring to know the strength and state of his dominions, sent

A. M. 3999. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto ^b the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (^c because he was of the house and lineage of David,)

^b 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 4; John vii. 42.

twenty chosen men, one into one part, another into another, to take this account; and that Publius Sulpicius Quirinius had Syria for his province." The reader will of course adopt the interpretation which he judges most probable.

Verse 3. *And all went to be taxed, (enrolled,) every one to his city*—"When the census was made in any country, the inhabitants were obliged to attend in the cities to which they belonged, Livy, l. xlii. c. 10. The reason was, without a precaution of this kind, the census would have been excessively tedious, and people who were abroad might have been omitted, or registered among the inhabitants of other cities, where they would not have been found afterward, or they might have been enrolled twice, which would have produced confusion in the registers." In the dominions of Herod, however, probably by his order, a small alteration seems to have been made in the method of executing the census. For instead of the people being directed to appear, as usual, in the cities where they resided, or to whose jurisdiction the places of their abode belonged, they were ordered to appear according to their families; every one in his native city, or the place where his paternal inheritance lay, to be there enrolled; a circumstance wisely ordered by Providence to verify the truth of ancient prophecies; for thus the parents of Christ were providentially brought to Bethlehem, the place where the Messiah was to be born, without leaving any room to suspect them of artifice and design. And thus, also, by their coming to be registered among the subjects of the Roman empire, the subjection of the Jews to the Romans was very remarkably manifested.

Verse 4. *And Joseph also went up from Galilee*—Being thus obliged by the emperor's decree; *out of the city of Nazareth*—Where he then dwelt; *into Judea*—Properly so called; *unto the city of David, called Bethlehem*—The town where his ancestors had formerly been settled; *because he was of the house, &c., of David*—Notwithstanding, he was now reduced so low as to follow the trade of a carpenter. *To be enrolled with Mary*—Who also was a descendant of David: *his espoused wife*—The propriety of this expression appears from Matt. i. 25, where we are told that Joseph knew not his wife till she had brought forth her firstborn son. *Being great with child*—It may seem strange that Mary, in this condition, should undertake so great a journey. Perhaps the order for the census required that the wives, as well as their husbands, should be present. Or, the persons to be registered being classed in the roll, according to their lineage, Mary might judge it proper on this occasion to claim her descent from David, in order to her being publicly

5 To be taxed with Mary ^d his A. M. 3999. espoused wife, being great with child.

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

^c Matt. i. 16; Chap. i. 27.—^d Matt. i. 18; Chap. i. 27.

acknowledged as one of his posterity, and the rather as she knew herself to be miraculously with child of the Messiah.

Verses 6, 7. *And while they were there, the days were accomplished, &c.*—Whatever views Mary might have in going up to Bethlehem, her going there was doubtless by the direction of Divine Providence, in order that the Messiah might be born in that city, agreeably to the prophecy of Micah, chap. v. 2. *And she brought forth her firstborn son*—*Τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτοτόκον, her son, the firstborn*; that excellent and glorious person, who was the first-born of every creature, and the heir of all things. See note on Matt. i. 25. *And wrapped him in swaddling-clothes*—By her doing this herself, it is thought her labour was without the usual pangs of child-bearing. *And laid him in a manger*—Though the word *φάρνη*, here used, sometimes signifies a stall, yet it is certain it more frequently signifies a manger, and certainly the manger was the most proper part of the stall in which the infant could be laid. As to the notion of Bishop Pearce, that not a manger is here meant, but a bag of coarse cloth, like those out of which the horses of our troopers are fed when encamped; and that this bag was fastened to the wall, or some other part, not of a stable, but of the guest-chamber, or room for the reception of strangers, where Joseph and Mary were lodged; this odd notion is amply confuted by Dr. Campbell in a very long note on this passage. Tradition informs us that the stable, in which the holy family was lodged, was, according to the custom of the country, hollowed out of a rock, and consequently the coldness of it, at least by night, must have greatly added to its other inconveniences. *Because there was no room for them in the inn*—The concourse of people at Bethlehem being very great on this occasion. It seems there was but one principal inn at Bethlehem, now but a small village, and that when Joseph came thither it was full, so that he and Mary were obliged to lodge in a stable, fitted up as a receptacle for poor travellers, in which they, and the animals that brought them, were meanly accommodated under the same roof. Now also there is seldom room for Christ in an inn. It will not be improper to observe, on this humiliating circumstance of our Lord's birth in a stable, how, "through the whole course of his life, he despised the things most esteemed by men. For though he was the Son of God, when he became man he chose to be born of parents in the meanest condition of life. Though he was heir of all things, he chose to be born in an inn, nay, in the stable of an inn, where, instead of a cradle, he was laid in a manger. The angels reported the good news of his birth, not to

A. M. 3999. 7 And ^o she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 ¶ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping ² watch over their flock by night.

9 And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon

* Mat. i. 25.—³ Or, *the night-watches*.—⁴ Ch. i. 12.—⁵ Gen. xii. 3; Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark i. 15; Verses 31, 32; Ch. xxiv.

the rabbis and great men, but to shepherds, who, being plain honest people, were unquestionably good witnesses of what they heard and saw. When he grew up he wrought with his father as a carpenter. And afterward, while he executed the duties of his ministry, he was so poor that he *had not a place where to lay his head*, but lived on the bounty of his friends. Thus, by going before men in the thorny path of poverty and affliction, he has taught them to be contented with their lot in this life, however humble it may be."

Verse 8. *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field*—Here we see, that as Abraham and David, to whom the promise of the Messiah was first made, were shepherds, so the completion of this promise was first revealed to shepherds. *Keeping watch over their flocks by night*—Which it was necessary they should do, to guard against the wolves and other beasts of prey, common there. The original words, *φυλασσοντες φυλακας της νυκτος*, may be more literally rendered, *watching the watches of the night*. These watches were four; the first is mentioned, Lam. ii. 19; the second and third, Luke xii. 38; and the fourth, Matt. xiv. 25; being the morning watch. It seems there was a considerable number of the shepherds together here, for the expression implies that they watched by turns according to these divisions of the night. "As it is not probable," says Dr. Doddridge, "that they exposed their flocks to the coldness of winter nights in that climate, where, as Dr. Shaw (*Trav.*, p. 379) has shown, they were so very unwholesome, it may be strongly argued from this circumstance that those who have fixed upon December for the birth of Christ have been mistaken in the time of it." The birth of Christ has been placed in every month of the year. The Egyptians placed it in January—Wagenseil, in February—Bochart, in March—some mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, in April—others, in May—Epiphanius speaks of some who placed it in June—and others who supposed it to have been in July—Wagenseil, who was not sure of February, fixed it probably in August—Lightfoot, on the 15th of September—Scaliger, Casaubon, and Calvisius, in October—others, in November. But the Latin Church, being infallible in judgment, and supreme in power, has settled the matter by declaring that he was born on the 25th of December. See Labbæi, *Concil. Fabricii, Bibliot. Antiq.*, cap. x.

them, and the glory of the Lord ^{A. M. 3999.} shone round about them; ¹ and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, ² which shall be to all people.

11 ³ For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, ⁴ a Saviour, ⁵ which is Christ the Lord.

47; Col. i. 23.—³ Isa. ix. 6.—⁴ Matt. i. 21.—⁵ Matt. i. 16; xvi. 16; Chap. i. 43; Acts ii. 36; x. 36; Phil. ii. 11.

It is happy for us that the particular day and hour, or even year, in which he was born is not necessary to be ascertained in order to our salvation; nor at all material to true religion. It is sufficient for us to know that he was born, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, assumed our nature, and in consequence thereof is become an all-sufficient Saviour and Redeemer, in whom *whosoever believeth*, with a right faith, *shall not perish, but have eternal life*.

Verses 9-12. *And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them*—*Επεση αυτοις*, stood over them, that is, appeared in a visible form, standing in the air over their heads; *and the glory of the Lord shone round about them*—Not only a great light, but such a glorious splendour as used to represent the presence of God, and was often attended with a host of angels, as here, verse 13. *And they were sore afraid*—At so uncommon and so awful an appearance. *And the angel said*—In the mildest and most condescending manner; *Fear not*—Thus the angel Gabriel had encouraged Zacharias and Mary, chap. i. 12, 30. As if he had said, The design of my appearing to you hath nothing terrible in it, but the contrary: *for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy*—The original expression here is peculiar, *εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην*, *I evangelize unto you great joy*. So the Vulgate. Or, *I announce unto you good tidings*, which shall be matter of great joy, and that not only to you, and the Jewish nation in general, but *to all people*, to the whole human race: *for unto you*, and all mankind, *is born this day*, this welcome, blessed day, *a Saviour*—That is, 1st, *A Deliverer* from ignorance and folly, from guilt, condemnation, and wrath, from depravity and weakness, in which the whole human race are involved through the fall of their first parents and their own actual transgressions; in other words, from sin, and all its consequences: 2d, *A Restorer* (so *σωτηρ* also means) to the favour and image of God, and communion with him, lost by the same fall: and, 3d, *A Preserver*, (as the same word also implies,) namely, unto eternal life; one as willing as able to *keep* such as perseveringly believe in him, *through faith, unto final salvation*; to *keep* them *from falling*, and to *present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*. *Who is Christ*—The Messiah, the divinely-appointed Prophet, Priest, and King of his people; their *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; and

A. M. 3999. 12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

13 ¹ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 ^m Glory to God in the highest, and on earth ⁿ peace, ^o good-will toward men.

15 ¶ And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, ³ the shep-

¹ Gen. xxviii. 12; xxxii. 1, 2; Psa. ciii. 20, 21; cxlviii. 2; Dan. vii. 10; Heb. i. 14; Rev. v. 11.—^m Chap. xix. 38; Eph. i. 6; iii. 10, 21; Rev. v. 13.

who is sufficiently qualified to sustain these unspeakably important offices and characters, because he is *the Lord*, God as well as man, *God manifest in the flesh, the Lord that in the beginning laid the foundations of the earth, &c.*, Heb. i. 10; and without whom *was not any thing made that was made*, John i. 3; Col. i. 16. The message refers to Isa. ix. 6, *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. And this shall be a sign unto you*—The angel gives them a sign for the confirmation of their faith in this important matter. *You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, &c.*—Doubtless they would expect to be told that they should find him, though a babe, dressed up in fine robes, and lying in state, in the best house of the town, with a numerous train of attendants: no, you will find him *lying in a manger*. And surely they might know him by this token, for what other babe could be found in so mean a condition? For the shepherds to have found the Messiah lying in a manger, might have scandalized them. It was therefore very proper that the angel should forewarn them of this circumstance, and make it the signal whereby they should distinguish him. When Christ was here on earth, he distinguished himself, and made himself remarkable, by nothing so much as the instances of his humiliation.

Verses 13, 14. *And suddenly there was with the angel, &c.*—The welcome news was no sooner published, than a multitude of heavenly beings were heard celebrating, in songs and hymns divine, the praises of God, on account of his unspeakable mercy and love to men; *and saying, Glory to God in the highest, &c.*—The shouts of a multitude are generally broken into short sentences, and are commonly elliptic; which is the cause of some ambiguity in these words, which may be understood in different senses. Some read them thus: *Glory to God in the highest, that is, in heaven, and on earth peace, yea, favour, toward men*. Others understand them as signifying, That the *good-will*, or favour, which was now shown to men, is the *Glory of God in the highest*, and is the *peace* and happiness of those who dwell on earth. This is doubtless an important sense, and what the original will very well bear, but it changes the doxology into a kind of proverb, and destroys much of its beauty. As Dr. Campbell ob-

herds said one to another, *Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.*

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

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

18 And all they that heard *it* wondered at

ⁿ Isa. lvii. 19; Chap. i. 79; Rom. v. 1; Eph. ii. 17; Col. i. 20. ^o John iii. 16; Eph. ii. 4, 7; 2 Thess. i. 16; 1 John iv. 9, 10. ³ Gr. *the men, the shepherds.*

serves, "The most common interpretation of the passage is the most probable." The words are doubtless to be considered as expressions of rejoicing exclamation, strongly representing the piety and benevolence of these heavenly spirits, and their affectionate good wishes for the prosperity of the Messiah's kingdom; as if they had said, "Glory be to God in the highest heavens, and let all the angelic legions resound his praises in the most exalted strains, for, with the Redeemer's birth, *peace* and all happiness come down to dwell on earth; yea, the overflowings of divine benevolence and favour are now exercised toward sinful men, who through this Saviour become the objects of his complacential delight." The words, considered in a doctrinal point of view, teach us, what it is of great importance to know, 1st, That the birth of Christ is an event which, above all others, brings glory to God, giving such a display of several of his perfections as had never been made before, particularly of his *holiness* and *justice*, in requiring such a sacrifice as was hereby to be prepared for the expiation of human guilt, and his *mercy*, in providing and accepting it; his *wisdom*, in devising such a plan for the redemption of lost man, and his *power*, in executing it. 2d, It brings *peace on earth*, that is, peace to man, peace with God, through the atonement and mediation of Christ; peace of conscience, as the consequence of knowing that we have peace with God, and peace one with another. 3d, It displays the *good-will*, the benevolence, the love of God to man, as no other of his works or dispensations ever did, or could do. See 1 John iv. 7, &c.; John iii. 16.

Verses 15–20. *As the angels were gone away*—Probably they saw them ascend; *the shepherds said, Let us now go*; without delay; *and see this thing*—This wonderful and important event; *which is come to pass: and they came and found Mary and Joseph, &c.*—Though it is not mentioned, it seems the angel had described to them the particular place in Bethlehem where Christ was born. And, having found the child lying where the angel had said, they were by that sign fully confirmed in their belief, and with boldness declared both the vision which they had seen, and the things which they had heard pronounced by the angel, and the heavenly

A. M. 3999. those things which were told them
by the shepherds.

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

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

21 ¶ ^a And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called ^r JESUS, which was so

^p Gen. xxxvii. 11; Chapter i. 66; Verse 51.—^a Gen. xvii. 12; Lev. xii. 3; Chapter i. 59.—^r Before the account called Anno Domini, the fourth year.—Matt. i. 21, 25; Chap. i. 31.

host with him. *And all they that heard wondered at those things, &c.*—Joseph and Mary, with the people of the inn who attended them, and such of their relations as were come up to Bethlehem to be enrolled, and happened to be with them on this occasion, were exceedingly astonished at the things which the shepherds openly declared; and the rather, because they could not understand how one born of such mean parents could be the Messiah. *But Mary kept all these things, &c.*—Mary was greatly affected with, and thought upon, the shepherds' words, the import of which she was enabled to understand, in consequence of what had been revealed to herself. She said nothing, however, being more disposed to think than to speak: which was an excellent instance of modesty and humility in so great a conjuncture. *And the shepherds returned, glorifying God, &c.*—They returned to their flocks, and by the way praised God for having condescended, by a particular revelation, to inform them of so great an event as the birth of the Messiah, and because they had seen the signs by which the angel in the vision pointed him out to them. To this we may add, that, "besides what they had heard from the angel and seen at Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary would doubtless give them an account of those particulars which the sacred historian has related above, respecting the conception of this divine infant; and this interview must have greatly confirmed and comforted the minds of all concerned."—Doddridge.

Verse 21. *And when eight days were accomplished*—That is, not when the eighth day was ended, but when it was come: *for the circumcising of the child*—A ceremony which the law of Moses required to be performed on every male child at that age, and to which Christ was made subject, that he might wear the badge of a child of Abraham, and that he might visibly be *made under the law* by a sacred rite, which obliged him to keep the whole law. It is true, he had not any corruptions of nature to mortify, which was in part represented by that institution, but nevertheless it was necessary that he should be thus initiated into the Jewish Church, and thereby be engaged to the duties, and entitled to the privileges, of a son of Abraham, according to God's covenant with that patriarch and his seed; as also that he

named of the angel before he was A. M. 4000. conceived in the womb.

22 ¶ [†] And when ^r the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord;

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

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to ^u that

[†] Purification B. V. Mary, gospel, verse 22 to verse 24.—^r Lev. xii. 2-4, 6.—^u Ex. xiii. 2; xxii. 29; xxxiv. 19; Num. iii. 13; viii. 17; xviii. 15.—^u Lev. xii. 2, 6, 8.

might put an honour on the solemn dedication of children to God.

Verses 22-24. *When the days of her purification were accomplished*—"It appears, from Lev. xii. 1-6, that for the first seven days, every woman who had borne a child, was considered as unclean in so great a degree, that whoever touched or conversed with her was polluted. For thirty-three days more, she was still, though in an inferior degree, unclean, because she could not all that time partake in the solemnities of public worship. At the conclusion of this term, she was commanded to bring certain sacrifices to the temple, by the offering of which the stain laid on her by the law was wiped off, and she restored to all the purity and cleanness she had before. This was the law of the purification after bearing a son. But for a daughter, the time of separation was double; the first term being fourteen days, and the second sixty-six; in all eighty days before she could approach the sanctuary. Now as Jesus was circumcised, though perfectly free from sin, so his mother submitted to the purifications prescribed by the law, notwithstanding she was free from the pollutions common in other births. It was evident, indeed, that she was a mother, but her miraculous conception was not generally known." *They brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord*—Because the law required that he should be presented in the temple at the end of forty days from his birth, and that the usual offerings should be made, his parents would find it more convenient to go up with him from Bethlehem, where he was born, at the distance of six miles only, than, after Mary's recovery, to carry him first to Nazareth, which was a great way from Jerusalem. We may, therefore, reasonably enough suppose that they tarried in Bethlehem all the days of her purification, and that from Bethlehem they went straightway to Jerusalem. Here, entering the temple, the sacrifices prescribed for the purification of women, after child-bearing, were offered for Mary, who, according to custom, waited in the outer court till the service respecting her was performed. *As it is written, Every male that openeth the womb, &c.*—See this explained in the note on Exod. xii. 2. *And to offer a sacrifice, a pair of turtle doves, &c.*—

A. M. 4000 which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

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

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

27 And he came ^c by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

^a Isa. xl. 1; Mark xv. 43; Verse 38.—^b Psa. lxxxix. 48; Heb. xi. 5.—^c Matt. iv. i.—^d Gen. xlv. 30; Phil. i. 23.—^e Isa. lu. 10; Chap. iii. 6.—^f Isa. ix. 2; xli. 6; xlix. 6; lx. 1-3;

This was the offering required from the poor, Lev. xii. 6, 8. Those in better circumstances were commanded to bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt-offering, and a turtle-dove, or a young pigeon, for a sin-offering. It is evident, from the offering they made, that although Joseph and Mary were of the seed royal, they were in very mean circumstances. The evangelist mentions the presentation of the child to the Lord before the offering of the sacrifice for the mother's purification; but in fact this preceded the presentation, because, till it was performed, the mother could not enter the temple; accordingly Luke himself introduces both the parents as presenting Jesus.

Verses 25-33. *Behold there was a man, &c.*—There was now in Jerusalem one Simeon, venerable on account of his age, piety, and virtue. For, he was just and devout—Righteous toward his fellow-creatures, and holy toward God; waiting for the consolation of Israel—A common phrase for the Messiah, who was to be the everlasting consolation of the Israel of God. And the Holy Ghost was upon him—That is, as the word here signifies, he was a prophet. And it was revealed unto him, &c.—God, in reward of his piety, had favoured him so highly as to assure him by a particular revelation, that he should not die till he had seen the Messiah. And he came by the Spirit into the temple—That is, by a secret but powerful direction and impulse of the Holy Spirit; when the parents brought in the child Jesus—Just at that very juncture of time when they brought him into the court of Israel there. Then took he him up in his arms—Having discovered him by the supernatural illumination with which he was favoured; and blessed God, and said—Aloud, it seems, in the hearing of all the people then present; Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, &c.—Let me depart hence with the satisfaction of having seen the Messiah, according to the gracious promise thou wast pleased to make me. This good old man, having attained that which

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

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

30 For mine eyes ^b have seen thy salvation,

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

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

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

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

Matt. iv. 16; Acts xiii. 47; xxviii. 28.—^d Isa. viii. 14; Hcs. xiv. 9; Matt. xxi. 44; Rom. ix. 32, 33; 1 Cor. i. 23, 24; 2 Cor. ii. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.—^e Acts xxviii. 22.

had long been his highest wish, the happiness of seeing God's Messiah, and having no further use for life, desired immediate death. Yet he would not depart of himself, knowing that man cannot lawfully desert his station till God, who placed him therein, calls him off. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation—Thy Christ, the Saviour. Simeon, being well acquainted with the prophetic writings, knew from them that the Messiah was to be the author of a great salvation, which, because it had its origin in the wisdom, power, and love of God, he refers to him; and, putting the abstract for the concrete, or the effect for the cause, he terms the Messiah God's salvation. Thus, God is called, our defence, our song, our hope; that is, our defender, the subject of our song, the object of our hope. Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people—Here it appears that Simeon knew that this salvation was not confined to the Jews, but was designed for all mankind. A light to lighten the Gentiles—Who then sat in darkness, and who were to receive the knowledge of God, of true religion, and of divine things in general, especially of a future state, through him; and the glory of thy people Israel—It was an honour to the Jewish nation, that the Messiah sprung from one of their tribes, and was born, lived, and died among them. And of those who were Israelites indeed, of the spiritual Israel, he was indeed the glory, and will be so to all eternity, Isa. lx. 19. For in him shall the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory, Isa. xlv. 25. And Joseph and his (Jesus's) mother marvelled at those things which were spoken—For they did not yet thoroughly understand them; or they marvelled how Simeon, a stranger, came to the knowledge of the child.

Verses 34, 35. And Simeon blessed them—Name-ly, Joseph and Mary. He pronounced them blessed who had the honour to be related to this child, and were intrusted with the bringing him up. He prayed for them, that God would bless them, and, doubtless, wished others to do the same. Behold, this child is

A. M. 4000. 35 (Yea, ^f a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also;) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

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

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers ^g night and day.

^f Psa. xlii. 10; John xix. 25.—^g Acts xxvi. 7; 1 Tim. v. 5.
^h Mark xv. 43; Verse 25; Chap. xxiv. 21.

set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel—As he shall, in fact, be the means of bringing aggravated ruin upon some through their rejecting him; as well as of procuring salvation and recovery to others, on their believing on him. In other words, He will be a savour of death to some, to unbelievers: a savour of life to others, to believers. Simeon here alludes to Isaiah viii. 14; and xxviii. 16; which passages Paul has joined in one citation. *Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling-stone, and a rock of offence, and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* And for a sign which shall be spoken against—A sign from God, yet rejected of men; or a mark to be shot at; the butt of the malice of wicked men. *Yea, a sword*—*Ρομφαία*, a javelin, or dart; shall pierce through thy own soul also—The darts that are shot at thy son shall pierce thee to the heart; the calumnies, persecutions, and sufferings which he shall be exposed to, especially in his death, shall prove matter of the greatest affliction to thee, and shall sting thee with the bitterest griefs; that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed—All these things are ordered by Providence, that the real characters of men may be discovered, and the sincerity of those who are approved may be made manifest; while the hypocrisy and earthly-mindedness of those who intend only their own secular advantage, under the specious pretence of waiting for the Messiah's kingdom, shall be exposed; for they will soon be offended at the obscure form of his appearance, and at the persecutions which will attend him and his cause.

Verses 36–38. *And there was one Anna, a prophetess*—A person of some note; she was a widow of about fourscore and four years—These were the years of her life, and not of her widowhood only; who departed not from the temple—The meaning is, not that she abode continually in the temple: for none lived there save the priests and Levites; but she attended there constantly at all the stated hours of prayer. *But served God with fastings and prayers*—Even at that advanced age; *night and day*—That is, spending therein a considerable part of the night, as well as of the day. *She coming in at that instant*—The providence of God so ordering it, that another important testimony might be borne to the child Jesus; gave thanks likewise unto the Lord—Praised the Lord, as Simeon had done, for sending

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

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

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

41 ¶ ^{*} Now his parents went to Jerusalem

^{*} Or, *Israel*.—ⁱ Verse 52; Chap. i. 80.—^{*} First Sunday Epiphany, gospel, verse 41 to the end.

the long-expected Messiah: or, in her turn confessed to the Lord, as *ανθυμολογειτο τω Κυριω*, properly signifies. The expression seems to have a reference to Simeon's speech, and might be intended to intimate that this of Anna was a kind of response, or counterpart to his. *And spake of him to all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem*—She spake afterward of the child, under the character of the Messiah, to all her acquaintance at Jerusalem, that had any sense of religion, or faith in its promises. The sceptre now appeared to be departing from Judah, though it was not actually gone: Daniel's weeks were plainly near their period. And the revival of the spirit of prophecy, together with the memorable occurrences relating to the birth of John the Baptist, and of Jesus, could not but encourage and quicken the expectation of pious persons at this time. Ought not the example of these aged saints to impress and animate those, whose hoary heads, like theirs, are a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness? Should not those venerable lips, so soon to be silent in the grave, be employed in the praises of their Redeemer, that they may have the pleasure to see, through their pious attempts, the rising generation improve in true religion? and that they may quit the world with the greater tranquillity, in the view of leaving those behind them, to whom Christ will be as precious as he hath been to them, and who will be waiting for God's salvation when they are gone to enjoy it?

Verses 39, 40. *And when they*—Namely, the parents of Jesus; *had performed all things according to the law*—Which they made conscience of doing, that they might fulfil all righteousness; *they returned into Galilee, &c.*—Full of admiration, doubtless, at the glorious testimonies that were given to their child; *to their own city Nazareth*—Which was the place of their usual residence, and where this blessed infant passed the days of his childhood and youth. *And the child grew, &c.*—In bodily strength and stature; and waxed strong in spirit—The powers of his human mind daily improved; filled with wisdom—By the light of the indwelling Spirit, which gradually opened itself in his soul; and the grace of God was upon him—That is, the peculiar favour of God rested upon him, even as man.

Verses 41–47. *Now his parents went to Jerusalem*

A. M. 4012. ^k every year at the feast of the pass-
A. D. 8. over.

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

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

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and

^k Ex. xxiii. 15, 17; xxxiv. 23; Deut. xvi. 1, 16.

at the passover—As it was usual for those families to do that were remarkably religious, though only the adult males were, by the law, obliged to appear before the Lord on that occasion. *And when he was twelve years old*—And so, according to the Jewish maxims, came under the yoke of the law; *they went up to Jerusalem, &c.*—And thought it proper to take him with them, to celebrate that glorious deliverance which God had so many ages before wrought for his people, when he brought them out of Egypt; the memory of which was carefully to be transmitted to every succeeding generation. *And when they had fulfilled the days*—Eight days in all, one the passover, and seven the days of unleavened bread: *as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind*—Being engaged with the sacred ordinances of the festival, and the religious conversation attending it. *And Joseph and his mother knew not of it*—It appears, they supposed that he had set out with some of his relations, or acquaintance, and was in the company—*Εν τη συνωδία*, a word that properly means, a company of travellers. As at the three great festivals, not only all the men that were able, but many women likewise, usually attended “the celebration at Jerusalem, they were wont, for their greater security against the attacks of robbers on the road, to travel in large companies. All who came, not only from the same city, but from the same canton or district, made one company. They carried necessaries along with them, and tents for their lodging at night. Sometimes in hot weather, they travelled all night and rested in the day. This is nearly the manner of travelling in the East to this hour. Such companies they now call *caravans*; and in several places have got houses fitted up for their reception, called *caravanseries*. This account of their manner of travelling furnishes a ready answer to the question, How could Joseph and Mary make a day's journey without discovering, before night, that Jesus was not in the company? In the daytime, we may reasonably presume, that the travellers would, as occasion, business, or inclination led them, mingle with different parties of their friends and acquaintance; but that in the evening, when they were about to encamp, every one would join the family to which he belonged. As Jesus did not appear when it was growing late, his parents first sought him where they supposed he would most probably be, among his relations and

they sought him among *their kins-* A. M. 4012.
folk and acquaintance. A. D. 8.

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

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

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

^l Matt. vii. 28. Mark i. 22; Chap. iv. 22, 32; John vii. 15, 46.

acquaintances, and, not finding him, returned to Jerusalem;” in the utmost anxiety, to try if they could learn what was become of him. *After three days*—That is, on the morrow after their arrival, which was the third day from their leaving the city, they found him, to their great joy, in one of the chambers of the temple, *sitting in the midst of the doctors*—Who, at certain seasons, and particularly in time of the great festivals, taught there publicly. It appears there were no less than three assemblies of the doctors, who had apartments in the temple. In these it was customary to propose doubts concerning the meaning of the precepts of the law, and the traditions of the elders, which was generally done by way of question. It is certainly a great injury to the character of our blessed Redeemer to represent this story, whether in pictures or words, as if Christ went up into the seats of the doctors, and there disputed with them. Nothing is said by the evangelist of his disputing, but only of his asking some questions and answering others; which was a very usual thing in these assemblies, and indeed the very end of them; for they were principally designed for catechetical examination and instruction of young people; always conducted, no doubt, with the utmost modesty and decorum. And if Jesus were, with others, at the feet of these teachers, (where learners generally sat,) he might be said to be *in the midst of them*, as they sat on benches of a semi-circular form raised above their hearers and disciples. See Lightfoot, Drusus, and Doddridge. *And all that heard him were astonished*—The word *ἐξίστασαν*, here rendered *were astonished*, and *ἐξεπλάγησαν*, in the next verse, are much more forcible expressions than the words whereby we translate them. They import, that they were in a transport of astonishment, and struck with admiration. As our Lord himself hath told us that, on this occasion, he was employed on his *Father's business*, it is probable that, in these his answers and objections, he modestly insinuated corrections of the errors wherewith the Jewish teachers had now greatly disfigured religion. If we recollect that the school learning of the Jews was at this time at its highest pitch, and that our Lord, at the age of twelve years, was superior to the greatest doctors which the Jews could boast of, there will appear very just grounds for the admiration here mentioned.

A. M. 4012. 48 And when they saw him, they
A. D. 8. were amazed: and his mother said
unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with
us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee
sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye

John ii. 16.

Verses 48-50. *And when they saw him they were amazed*—The clause, thus rendered, signifies, that Joseph and Mary were amazed when they saw him, but it may be translated, *They who saw him were amazed*, namely, not his parents only, or chiefly, but others. In this sense Dr. Campbell understands it, as suiting better the scope of the passage. "His parents," says he, "may be said to have had reason of surprise, or even amazement, when they discovered that he was not in their company; but surely, to them at least, there was nothing peculiarly surprising in finding that he was not amusing himself with boys, but was in the temple, among the doctors, discoursing on the most important subjects. I may say justly, that to them who knew whence he was, there was less ground of amazement at the wisdom and understanding displayed in his answers than to any other human being. Again: it appears to be the intention of the evangelist, in this passage, to impress us with a sense of the extraordinary attainments of our Lord in wisdom and knowledge, even in childhood, from the effect which the discovery of them produced on others. All in the temple, who, though they did not see him, were within hearing, and could judge from what they heard, were astonished at the propriety, the penetration, and the energy they discovered in every thing he said; but those whose eye-sight convinced them of his tender age were confounded, as persons who were witnesses of something preternatural." *His mother said, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us*—Why hast thou put us into such fear for thy safety? Why hast thou given us such occasion for anxiety and distress? *Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing*—Being not only troubled that we lost thee, but vexed at ourselves for not taking more care of thee. The word *οδυνημενοι*, here rendered *sorrowing*, is expressive of the most racking anguish, and is often applied to the distress and pains of a woman in travail; it has therefore been rendered, *with great concern—with inexpressible anxiety and distress*. *And he said, How is it that ye sought me?* He does not blame them for losing, but for thinking it needful to seek him; and intimates that he could not be lost nor found anywhere but doing the will of a higher Parent. *Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business*—His words imply, that they had no reason to be angry with him for leaving them without their knowledge, nor even to be grieved on that account, since they might have understood by his miraculous conception, and the revelations which accompanied it, that he was not to continue always with them, but was to employ himself in the business of Him

sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? A. M. 4012. A. D. 8.

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

51 ¶ And he went down with them, and

Chap. ix. 45; xviii. 34.

who really was his father. The original expression here used, *εν τοις τε πατρος μου ειναι με*, is ambiguous, and is translated by Dr. Waterland and many other learned men, following the Syriac version, *Knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house*; a translation which the words will very well bear; and, so understood, the reply of Christ will signify, that though they thought him lost, yet he was at home; he was *in his Father's house*, John ii. 16; and that, in staying behind at Jerusalem, he had not left his true Father. "It is to be remembered," says Dr. Doddridge, "that this is the first visit Christ had ever made to the temple since he was a child in arms; and it is no wonder, therefore, that the delight he found there inclined him to prolong it." How happy those children who, like the holy Jesus, love the house and ordinances of God, and thirst for the instructions of his good word! *They understood not the saying*—Christ having expressed himself in a somewhat concise and ambiguous manner, his parents did not fully comprehend his meaning; either because they now doubted his being the Messiah, or because they had few just conceptions of the end for which the Messiah was to come into the world. It is observable that Joseph is not mentioned after this time, whence it is probable he did not live long after.

Verse 51. *And he went down with them to Nazareth*—That he might not seem to encourage disobedience in children, by withdrawing himself in that weak age from under the government of his parents, he very willingly retired with them into the obscure city of Nazareth, where for many years he was, as it were, buried alive. Doubtless he came up to Jerusalem to worship at the feast three times a year: but whether he ever went again into the temple to dispute with the doctors there, we are not told; it is, however, not improbable that he might. But we learn here, what it is more important that all children should know, namely, that he was subject to his parents. Though his parents were poor and mean, though his father, so called, was only his supposed father; yet he was subject to them; though he was *strong in spirit and filled with wisdom*, nay, though he was in a peculiar and proper sense the *Son of God most high*, yet he was subject to his human parents: how then will they answer it to God who, though ignorant, foolish, weak, and wretched, yet are disobedient to their parents? *But his mother kept all these sayings in her heart*—She was deeply impressed with them, and thought much upon them, though she did not perfectly understand them. Doubtless she expected that hereafter they

A. M. 4012. came to Nazareth, and was sub-
A. D. 8. ject unto them : but his mother ° kept
all these sayings in her heart.

° Verse 19 ; Dan. vii. 28.

would be explained to her, and she should not only fully comprehend their meaning, but derive important instruction from them.

Verse 52. *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature*—In the perfections of his divine nature there could be no increase ; but this is spoken of his human nature, consisting of a reasonable soul and human flesh ; his body increased in stature and bulk, and his soul in wisdom and in all the endowments of a human spirit. It received distinct and gradual illuminations as he advanced in years : for though the eternal Word was united to his human soul from his birth, or even conception, yet the divinity that dwelt in him manifested itself to his humanity by degrees, *ad modum recipientis*, as that humanity

52 And Jesus ^p increased in wis- A. M. 4012.
dom and ^e stature, and in favour with A. D. 8.
God and man.

^p 1 Sam. ii. 26 ; Verse 40.—^e Or, age.

was capable of receiving those manifestations ; and as the faculties of his human soul opened more and more, larger communications of knowledge, wisdom, and other gifts were made to it. *And he increased in favour with God and man*—That is, in all those graces that rendered him acceptable both to God and man. All this was suitable to his state of humiliation ; for as he condescended to be an *infant*, a *child*, a *youth*, so the image of God must have shone brighter in him when he was grown up to be a youth, than it did or could do when he was an infant and a child. Let young people observe, that as they grow in stature they should grow in wisdom and grace ; and then, as they grow in these, they will grow in favour with God and man.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter we have, (1.) *The beginning of John's baptism, and the scope and intention of it, 1-6.* (2.) *His exhortation to the multitude, and the particular instructions he gave to those who desired to be informed of their duty to God and man, 7-14.* (3.) *The notice he gave them of the approach of the Messiah, 15-18 ; to which is added, (though it happened after what follows,) the mention of his imprisonment, 19, 20.* (4.) *Christ's coming to be baptized of John, and his entrance upon the execution of his prophetic office, 21, 22.* (5.) *His genealogy recorded up to Adam, 23-38.*

A. M. 4030. NOW in the fifteenth year of the
A. D. 26. reign of Tiberius Cesar, Pontius

Pilate being governor of Judea, and A. M. 4030.
Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and A. D. 26.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1, 2. *Now in the fifteenth year of Tiberius*—Reckoning from the time when Augustus made him his colleague in the empire: *Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea*—He was made governor in consequence of Archelaus being banished, and his kingdom reduced into a Roman province. See note on Matt. ii. 22. *And Herod*—Namely, Herod Antipas ; *being tetrarch of Galilee*—The dominions of Herod the Great were, after his death, divided into four parts or tetrarchies: this Herod, his son, reigned over that fourth part of his dominions. His brother Philip reigned over another fourth part, namely, the region of *Iturea* and that of *Trachonitis* ; (that tract of land on the other side Jordan, which had formerly belonged to the tribe of Manasseh ;) and *Lysanias*, (probably descended from a prince of that name, who was some years before governor of that country,) was *tetrarch of Abilene*, which was a large city of Syria, whose territories reached to Lebanon and Damascus, and contained great numbers of Jews. *Annas and Caiaphas being the high-priests*—“By the original constitution of the Israelitish state, one only could be high-priest at one time, and the office was for life. But after the nation had fallen under

the power of foreigners, great liberties were taken with the sacred office ; and high-priests, though still of the pontifical family of Aaron, were put in or out arbitrarily, as suited the humour, the interest, or the political views of their rulers. And though it does not appear that they ever appointed two to officiate jointly in that station, there is some probability that the Romans about this time made the office annual, and that Annas and Caiaphas enjoyed it by turns. See John xi. 49 ; xviii. 13 ; Acts iv. 6. If this was the case, which is not unlikely ; or if, as some think, the sagan, or deputy, is comprehended under the same title, we cannot justly be surprised that they should be named as colleagues by the evangelist. In any event it may have been usual, through courtesy, to continue to give the title to those who had ever enjoyed that dignity, which, when they had no king, was the greatest in the nation.”—Campbell. Thus the time of the public appearance of John the Baptist, the harbinger of the Messiah, is distinctly marked by Luke ; for he tells us the year of the Roman emperor in which it happened, and mentions, not only the governor or procurator of Judea, and the high-priest who then officiated, but several contemporary princes who reigned in the neighbouring

A. M. 4030. his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea
A. D. 26.

and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

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

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

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, ^d The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the

^a John xi. 49, 51; xviii. 13; Acts iv. 6.—^b Matt. iii. 1; Mark i. 4.—^c Chap. i. 77.—^d Isa. xl. 3; Matt. iii. 3;

kingdoms. By his care, in this particular, he has fixed exactly the era of the commencement of the gospel. *The word of God came unto John*—John, the son of Zacharias and forerunner of Jesus, was a priest by descent, and a prophet by office, (Luke i. 76.) He was surnamed *the Baptist*, from his baptizing his disciples; (see note on Matt. iii. 1;) and was foretold anciently under the name of Elijah, because he was to come *in the spirit and power of that prophet*. From his infancy he dwelt *in the wilderness*, or hill-country, with his father, till the word of God, by prophetic inspiration, or, as some think, by an audible voice from heaven, such as the prophets of old heard, and which he knew to be God's by the majesty thereof, *came to him*—Called him forth to enter upon the work to which he was destined before he was conceived in the womb, namely, to prepare the Jews for the reception of the Messiah.

Verses 3-6. *And he came into all the country about Jordan*—He made his first public appearance in the wilderness of Judea, Matt. iii. 1; that is, in the uncultivated and thinly-inhabited parts of the hill-country round Hebron, where his father dwelt; Luke i. 39, 40; but after his fame was spread abroad, and many came to him, he left Judea and passed over Jordan, residing chiefly at Bethabara, for the conveniency of baptizing, John i. 28; x. 40. He travelled, however, through all that country; *preaching the baptism of repentance*—That is, calling sinners of all descriptions to repentance, and admitting the penitent to the baptism of water as an outward or visible sign, or emblem of the free and full remission of all their sins. In other words, he enjoined the penitent to be baptized, as a testimony, on their part, of the sincerity of their repentance, and on the part of John, who administered this ordinance by the commandment of God, as a seal or token that their sins were remitted. *As it is written in the book of Esaias, The voice of one crying, &c.*—See the notes on Isa. xl. 3-5. The evangelist, by citing this prophecy, as accomplished in the Baptist's preaching, shows us its true meaning. Isaiah, by expressions taken from the custom of kings, who commonly have the roads through which they pass prepared for them, signified that

way of the Lord, make his paths ^{A. M. 4030.} straight. ^{A. D. 26.}

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

6 And ^e all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

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

Mark i. 3; John i. 23.—^e Psa. xcvi. 2; Isa. lii. 10; Chap. ii. 10.—^f Matt. iii. 7.

the Messiah's forerunner was to prepare his way, by intimating that the institutions of Moses were to be relinquished as the means of salvation, and by exhorting the people to repentance and amendment of life. Matthew tells us, that John enforced his exhortations to repentance from the consideration that the Messiah's kingdom was at hand; the kingdom of heaven, foretold by Daniel the prophet, the new dispensation of religion, wherein all ceremonial observances were to be abolished, and nothing but repentance, partly flowing from, and partly followed by, faith in the Messiah, and producing sincere obedience, would avail toward the pardon of sin, acceptance with God, and the enjoyment of eternal life. According to Luke, the argument whereby John enforced his exhortations to repentance was, that sinners would thereby obtain the remission of their sins. The two evangelists, therefore, being compared, show, that the great and distinguishing privilege of the new dispensation is, that therein pardon is promised to, and conferred on, penitents who believe in Jesus, and that the kingdom of God, including *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, (Rom. xiv. 17,) is set up in their hearts and governs their lives. *Every valley shall be filled, &c.*—Of these metaphors, which are plainly taken from the making of roads, the meaning is, that the Messiah's forerunner, by preaching the doctrine of repentance, and thereby affecting men's minds with remorse and shame for their past conduct, and producing amendment of life, should be instrumental in effecting such a change in the hearts and lives of the Jews, that many of them should acknowledge, receive, and become subject to the Messiah, when he appeared. *And all flesh shall see the salvation of God*—After such a preparation of the way as is now described, mankind shall behold, not a splendid temporal monarch, accompanied with a magnificent retinue, but the author of that salvation which God has prepared before the face of all people. Luke ii. 30, 31; see notes on Matt. iii. 3.

Verses 7-9. *Then said he to the multitude, O generation of vipers*—See note on Matt. iii. 7. *Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance*—The Baptist did not stop at preaching re-

A. M. 4030. 8 Bring forth therefore fruits ¹ worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

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

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

11 He answereth and saith unto them, ⁱ He

¹ Or, meet for.—² Matt. vii. 19.—³ Acts ii. 37.—⁴ Chap. xi. 41; 2 Cor. viii. 14; James ii. 15, 16; 1 John iii. 17; iv. 20.

penitance, and rest satisfied with the people's making a profession thereof, but he insisted on the necessity of their bringing forth fruits suitable to such a profession, or a thorough reformation of their conduct in all respects. See this explained particularly in the notes on Matt. iii. 8–10. *Begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father*—That is, trust not in your being members of the visible church, or in any external privileges whatsoever; for God requires a change of heart, and that now, without delay. *For the axe is laid to the root of the trees*—That is, the patience of God is very near come to an end, with respect to you, and his judgments are at hand and ready to be inflicted; so that if you continue unfruitful, notwithstanding the extraordinary means now to be tried with you, destruction will speedily overtake you. The drift of all John's sermons was to root out their prejudices, and give them a sense of this important truth, that acceptance with God does not depend upon flowing garments, broad phylacteries, frequent ablutions, much fasting, and long prayers; but that good works, proceeding from faith and love, are necessary thereto.

Verses 10–14. *And the people asked him, What shall we do then?*—To avoid the judgments of God. *He answereth, He that hath two coats, &c.*—Be careful, not only to observe the ceremonies of religion, but to attend to the great duties of justice, mercy, and charity. The sum of all is: *Cease to do evil, learn to do well*: these are the fruits worthy of repentance. *Then came also publicans*—A set of men whose office it was to collect the taxes which the Romans had imposed on the Jews, and to pay them to others, who were called the chief of the publicans; and these people, being generally persons of an infamous character for their injustice and oppression, applied themselves to John, under a strong conviction of their guilt, and said, *Master, what shall we do?*—Namely, to testify the sincerity of our repentance. *And he said, Exact no more than is appointed you*—As if he had said, I do not require you absolutely to quit your employment, but take care that, in levying the taxes,

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that hath two coats, let him impart ^{A. M. 4030.} to him that hath none; and he that ^{A. D. 26.} hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then ² came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13 And he said unto them, ¹ Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, ² Do violence to no man, ^m neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your ³ wages.

¹ Matt. xxi. 32; Ch. vii. 29.—² Ch. xix. 8.—³ Or, Put no man to fear.—^m Ex. xxiii. 1; Lev. xix. 11.—³ Or, allowance.

you compel no man to pay you more than his just proportion of the sum which you are allowed by the law to raise. *And the soldiers* applied themselves to him on the same occasion, *saying, What shall we do?*—The Baptist's sermons were so affecting, that they impressed men even of the most abandoned characters, such as the private soldiers in all countries commonly are. *And he said, Do violence to no man*—Commit no violence on any man's person or property. "The word *δρακονιστε* properly signifies, to take a man by the collar and shake him; and seems to have been used proverbially for that violent manner in which persons of this station of life are often ready to bully those about them, whom they imagine their inferiors in strength and spirit; though nothing is an argument of a meaner spirit, or more unworthy that true courage which constitutes so essential a part of a good military character?"—Doddridge. *Neither accuse any falsely*—Do not turn informers, and give false evidence against innocent persons, in order that with the protection of the law you may oppress them, and enrich yourselves with their spoils. The word *συκοφαντειν*, which we render, to accuse falsely, answers to the Hebrew *שׁוּר*, and signifies also to circumvent and oppress. *And be content with your wages*—Live quietly on your pay, and do not mutiny when your officers happen not to bestow on you donations and largesses to conciliate your favour. It is well known the word *σφραγις*, here rendered wages, signifies provision, or food; but, when applied to soldiers, it is generally used to signify the pay that was allotted for their subsistence. It appears that the soldiers who now addressed the Baptist were not heathen, but Jews; otherwise one part of his advice to them would certainly have been, that they should relinquish idolatry, and embrace the worship of the true God. To account for this it must be observed, that it was the custom of the Romans to recruit their armies in the conquered provinces, and, as the Jews did not scruple to engage in a military life, many of them may now have been in the emperor's service. Or, we may suppose that after Judea was

A. M. 4030. 15 ¶ And as the people were ⁴ in ex-
A. D. 26. pectation, and all men ⁵ mused in their

hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto *them* all,
⁶ I indeed baptize you with water; but one
mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose
shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall
baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

17 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he ⁷ will
thoroughly purge his floor, and ⁸ will gather
the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he
will burn with fire unquenchable.

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

⁴ Or, in suspense.—⁵ Or, reasoned, or, debated.—⁶ Matt.
iii. 11.—⁷ Mich. iv. 12; Matt. xiii. 30.

made a province, the Romans took into their pay
the Jewish troops which Herod and his son Ar-
chelaus had maintained. See Macknight.

Verses 15-17. *And as all the people were in ex-
pectation, &c.*—The austerity of John's life, the
important subjects of his sermons, the fervency of
his exhortations, and the freedom, impartiality, and
courage with which he rebuked all classes of sin-
ners, raised him very high in the esteem of the
generality of people; insomuch that many be-
gan to be of opinion he might be the Messiah.
And possibly the extraordinary events which had
occurred thirty years before, namely, the vision
which his father Zacharias had seen in the tem-
ple, the coming of the eastern sages to Jerusalem,
the prophecies of Simeon, and the testimony of
Anna, which doubtless would be fresh in the memo-
ries of many of them, and would all be applied to
John, might strengthen that opinion. And, if John
had aspired after grandeur, he might for a while
have possessed honours greater than any of man-
kind could justly claim. But he was too upright
and pious to assume a character which he had no
right to, and therefore he declared plainly that he
was not the Messiah, but one of the lowest of his
servants; one sent to *prepare his way before him*.
At the same time, to give his hearers a just idea
of his Master's dignity, he described the authority
and efficacy of his ministry. *John answered, say-
ing, I indeed baptize you with water, &c.* I am
sent from God, and the message I bring is, that
all ranks and orders of persons must *repent*.
Withal, to impress this doctrine more deeply on
their minds, I address their senses by baptizing
all my disciples with water. *But one mightier
than I cometh*—There is an infinitely greater pro-
phet than I am, ready to appear, namely, the Mes-
siah; *the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to
unloose*—For whom I am not worthy to perform
the meanest servile office. *He shall baptize with
the Holy Ghost and with fire*—His baptism shall be
unspeakably more efficacious than mine, for he will
bestow on you the gifts and graces of his Holy Spi-

19 ¶ ⁹ But Herod the tetrarch, being ¹⁰ re-
A. M. 4034. A. D. 30. proved by him for Herodias his bro-

ther Philip's wife, and for all the evils which
Herod had done,

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

21 ¶ Now when all the people were baptized,
¹¹ it came to pass, that Jesus also being bap-
tized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

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

23 ¶ And Jesus himself began to be ¹² about

⁹ Matt. xiv. 3; Mark vi. 17.—¹⁰ Matt. iii. 13; John i. 32.
¹¹ Num. iv. 3, 35, 39, 43, 47.

rit. *Whose fan is in his hand*—See this and the
preceding verse explained at large, in the notes on
Matt. iii. 11, 12.

Verses 18-20. *And many other things preached
he unto the people*—In this manner did John incul-
cate the doctrine of repentance, and declare his
Master's greatness. But his sermons were not con-
fined to these matters. He discoursed also on many
other important subjects, according as he knew they
would be profitable to his hearers. *But Herod the
tetrarch, being reprov'd by him, &c.*—In the whole
course of John's ministry he showed great integrity
and courage, but especially in his intercourse with
Herod the tetrarch, who, it seems, had heard him,
and admitted him into conversation; for he was so
bold as to address the tetrarch on the subject of his
favourite sins, particularly his adultery with Her-
odias. This he represented to him in its true colours,
and reprov'd him for it. But the effect of his ex-
hortation was not what it ought to have been. It
did not bring Herod to repentance. On the contrary,
it so provoked him, that he cast the Baptist into
prison, and thereby put an end to his ministry, after
it had lasted a considerable time. This circumstance,
though it happened after, is here mentioned before
our Lord's baptism, that his history (that of John
being concluded) might then follow without any
interruption.

Verses 21, 22. *When all the people were baptized*
—If we reflect on the number of the people who
followed John, and were baptized by him, and the
regard they expressed for him before and after his
death, and yet that no sect was produced in conse-
quence of such belief and baptism, it will afford a
very good argument in favour of the superior power,
dignity, character, and office of Jesus. *Jesus, pray-
ing, the heaven was opened*—It is observable, that
the three voices from heaven (see Luke ix. 29, 35;
John xii. 28) by which the Father bore witness to
Christ, were pronounced, either while he was pray-
ing, or quickly after it. *Thou art my beloved Son,
&c.*—See note on Matt. iii. 16, 17.

Verses 23-35. *And Jesus*—John's beginning was

A. M. 4030. thirty years of age, being (as was
A. D. 26. supposed) * the son of Joseph, which
was the son of Heli,

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

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

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

27 Which was the son of Joanna, which was
the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zoro-
babel, which was the son of Salathiel, which
was the son of Neri,

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

29 Which was the son of Jose, which was

* Matt. xiii. 55 ; John vi. 42.—† Zech. xii. 12.—‡ 2 Sam.
v. 14 ; 1 Chron. iii. 5.

computed by the years of princes: our Saviour's by
the years of his own life, as a more august era:
began to be about thirty years of age—The Greek
here, και αυτος ην ο Ιησους ωσει ετων τριακοντα αρχομενος,
should rather be rendered, (as many commentators
understand it,) *And Jesus, beginning,* (or, *when be-
ginning,*) namely, the public exercise of his minis-
try, *was about thirty years of age.* "I can recollect
no sufficient authority," says Dr. Doddridge, "to
justify our translators in rendering the original
words, *began to be about thirty years of age,* or,
was now entering on his thirtieth year. To express
that sense, it should have been ην αρχομενος ειμαι, &c.,
as Epiphanius, probably by a mistake, has quoted it."
The author of the Vindication of the beginning of
Matthew's and Luke's gospel, [with whom Dr.
Campbell agrees,] extremely dissatisfied with all the
common versions and explications of these words,
would render them, *And Jesus was obedient,* or
lived in subjection [to his parents] *about thirty
years*; and produces several passages from approved
Greek writers, in which αρχομενος signifies *subject*.
But in all those places it is used in some connection
or opposition, which determines the sense; and
therefore none of them are instances parallel to this.
Luke evidently uses αρχομενων, chap. xxi. 28, in the
sense we suppose it to have here: and since he had
before expressed our Lord's subjection to his parents
by the word υποτασσομενος, chap. ii. 51, there is great
reason to believe he would have used the same word
here, had he intended to give us the same idea. The

the son of Eliezer, which was the son A. M. 4030.
of Jorim, which was the son of Mat- A. D. 26.
that, which was the son of Levi,

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

31 Which was the son of Melea, which was
the son of Menan, which was the son of Mat-
tatha, which was the son of † Nathan, ‡ which
was the son of David,

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

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

34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was
the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abra-
ham, † which was the son of Thara, which was
the son of Nachor,

35 Which was the son of Saruch, which was

* Ruth iv. 18, &c.; 1 Chronicles ii. 10, &c.—† Genesis
xi. 24, 26.

meaning of the evangelist, therefore, evidently is,
that Jesus, having received those different testimo-
nies from his Father, from the Spirit, and from John
the Baptist, all given in presence of the multitudes
assembled to John's baptism, began his ministry
when he was about thirty years old, the age at
which the priests and Levites entered on their sacred
ministrations in the temple. Both Jesus and John
deferred entering on their public ministry till they
were that age, because the Jews would not have re-
ceived any doctrines from them if they had begun
it sooner. Our great Master, as it seems, attained
not to the conclusion of his thirty-fourth year. Yet
what glorious achievements did he accomplish with-
in those narrow limits of time! Happy that ser-
vant, who, with any proportionate zeal, despatches
the business of life! And so much the more happy,
if his sun go down at noon. For the space that is
taken from the labours of time, shall be added to
the rewards of eternity.

Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which
was the son of Heli—That is, the son-in-law: for
Eli was the father of Mary. So Matthew writes the
genealogy of Joseph, descended from David by So-
lomon; Luke that of Mary, descended from David
by Nathan. In the genealogy of Joseph (recited by
Matthew) that of Mary is implied, the Jews being
accustomed to marry into their own families. The
genealogy inserted here by Luke will appear with
a beautiful propriety, if the place which it holds in
his history be attended to. "It stands immediately

A. M. 4030. *the son of Ragau, which was the son*
A. D. 26. *of Phalec, which was the son of He-*
ber, which was the son of Sala,

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

^a Gen. xi. 12.—^a Gen. v. 6, &c.;

after Jesus is said to have received the testimony of the Spirit, declaring him the *Son of God*, that is to say, *Messiah*; and before he entered on his ministry, the first act of which was, his encountering with and vanquishing the strongest temptation of the arch enemy of mankind. Christ's genealogy by his mother, who conceived him miraculously, placed in this order, seems to insinuate that he was *the seed of the woman*, which, in the first intimation of mercy vouchsafed to mankind after the fall, was predicted to break the head of the serpent. Accordingly Luke, as became the historian who related Christ's miraculous conception, carries his genealogy to Adam, who, together with Eve, received the forementioned promise concerning the restitution of mankind by the seed of the woman."—Macknight.

Verses 36, 37. *Which was the son of Cainan*—"There is no mention made of this Cainan in either of the genealogies which Moses gives, Gen. x. 24, and xi. 12; but Salah is there said to be the son of Arphaxad. Cainan must therefore have been introduced here from the translation of the Seventy in-

37 Which was *the son of Mathu-* A. M. 4030.
sala, which was the son of Enoch, A. D. 26.
which was the son of Jared, which was the
son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,

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

xi. 10, &c.—^b Gen. v. 1, 2.

terpreters, who have inserted him in both these places in the same order as we find him here; and as this translation was then commonly used, and was more generally understood than the Hebrew, it is probable that some transcriber of this gospel added Cainan from that version. Unless we suppose that Luke himself might choose, in writing this genealogy, to follow the LXX., as he appears to do in several other passages that he has quoted from the Old Testament." The evangelist's design was only to present us with the genealogy of Christ in its ascent to Adam, and this is equally clear, whether we reckon Salah as the immediate descendant of Arphaxad, or whether we consider him as his grandson by Cainan.

Verse 38. *Adam, which was the son of God*—Adam, being descended from no human parents, but formed by the power of a divine creating hand, might with peculiar propriety be called *the son of God*, having, in his original state, received immediately from God, whatever the sons of Adam receive from their parents, sin and misery excepted.

CHAPTER IV.

Christ having been newly baptized, and owned as the Son of God by a voice from heaven, and by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, is, (1.) Further prepared for his public ministry by forty days' fasting, and repeated temptations of the devil, 1-13. (2.) Having preached in other places of Galilee, he preaches at Nazareth to the hazarding of his life, 14-30. (3.) Having astonished his hearers with his discourses at Capernaum, he casts out a devil, cures Peter's mother-in-law of a fever, and many other sick and possessed persons, 31-41. (4.) He preaches and heals diseases in other cities of Galilee, 42-44.

A. M. 4031. **AND** ^a *Jesus being full of the*
A. D. 27. *Holy Ghost, returned from Jor-*

^a Matt. iv. 1; Mark i. 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *And Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, &c., was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, &c.*—Supposed by some to have been in Judea; by others to have been the great desert of Horeb, or Sinai, where the children of Israel were tried for forty years, and Moses and Elijah fasted forty days. Here we see that our blessed Lord began his ministry immediately after his baptism, not by going directly to Jerusalem, the seat of power, preceded by

dan, and ^b was led by the Spirit into A. M. 4031.
the wilderness, A. D. 27.

^b Verse 14; Chap. ii. 27.

the Baptist, and with the divine glory surrounding his head, but by retiring into a wilderness, that, without interruption, he might prepare himself for his work by fasting, meditation, and prayer, and by sustaining temptations. Hence his journey to the wilderness is said to have been undertaken by the direction, or strong impulse, of the Spirit, by which Mark says he was *driven*. See note on Mark i. 12, 13, and especially on Matt. iv. 1, where the nature and design of our Lord's temptation are explained at large.

A. M. 4031. 2 Being forty days tempted of the
A. D. 27. devil. And ° in those days he did
eat nothing: and when they were ended, he
afterward hungered.

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

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

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

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

7 If thou therefore wilt ¹ worship me, all
shall be thine.

° Ex. xxxiv. 28; 1 Kings xix. 8.—^d Deut. viii. 3.—^e John
xii. 31; xiv. 30; Rev. xiii. 2, 7.—^f Or, fall down before me.

Verse 2. *Being forty days tempted*—According to Luke here, and Mark i. 12, he was tempted of Satan during the whole of these forty days; but we are favoured with no account of the various subtle arts which that evil spirit used in the course of so long a temptation. Only the three assaults which he made at the expiration of the forty days are recorded; perhaps because they were more violent than the rest, or more for the instruction of mankind. *In those days he did eat nothing*—And therefore was supported all the time by a miracle; for he found no inconvenience from so long and preternatural a fast. He did not, it seems, even feel the sensation of hunger till the forty days were expired. Moses, who was a type of Jesus, was remarkable for fasts of this kind; for at two different times he was forty days and forty nights with the Lord, Deut. ix. 9–25; x. 10. In like manner Elijah, who was a type of Christ's forerunner, went in the strength of the meat he had eaten, for *forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, the mount of God*. Moreover, as Moses, during his forty days' fast, received from God the laws which he afterward delivered to the Israelites, and, by continuing so long without food, proved the reality of his intercourse with God; so Jesus, during the whole of his fast, enjoyed continual converse with his heavenly Father, and received the new law, or evangelical doctrine, which he communicated to his first disciples, to be by them transmitted to future ages, John viii. 26; and xv. 15; and by the miracle of a total abstinence from food for so long a time, demonstrated the truth of his mission. And it is probable, that this solemn fast of Christ, like those of Moses and Elias, was intended partly, at least, to prove the divinity of his mission, and to inculcate the necessity of subduing the animal pas-

8 And Jesus answered and said A. M. 4031.
unto him, Get thee behind me, Sa- A. D. 27.
tan: for ^f it is written, Thou shalt worship the
Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou
serve.

9 ° And he brought him to Jerusalem, and
set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said
unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thy-
self down from hence:

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

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

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

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

^f Deut. vi. 13; x. 20.—^g Matthew iv. 5.—^h Psalm xci. 11.
ⁱ Deuteronomy vi. 16.—^k John xiv. 30; Hebrews iv. 15.

sions and fleshly lusts, and vanquishing the pleasures of sense, before a man takes on himself the high character of an instructor of others in the knowledge of divine things.

Verses 3–12. *The devil said, If thou be the Son of God, &c.*—For an explanation of this whole paragraph, see notes on Matt. iv. 3–10. *The devil taketh him up into a high mountain, &c.*—This temptation, which stands here as the second, is by Matthew placed the last of the three. To reconcile the evangelists, it may be observed, that Matthew recites the temptations in the order in which they occurred; for he plainly affirms this order by the particle *then*, verse 5, and again verse 10, and at the conclusion of this temptation says, that then the devil left him. In this order they appear to rise progressively in strength one above another; Matthew, therefore, having preserved the true order of the temptations, Luke must be supposed to have neglected it as a thing not very material. And the supposition may be admitted without weakening his authority in the least, for he connects the temptations only by the particle *καί, and*, which imports that he was tempted in these several ways, without marking the time or order of the temptations, as Matthew appears to do.

Verse 13. *When the devil had ended, &c., he departed from him for a season*—This implies that he assaulted him afterward, which, if not before, he certainly did in the garden of Gethsemane, chap. xxxii. 53, where Jesus saith to the Jews, *This is your hour, and the power of darkness*. When the tempter was gone, a number of good angels came and ministered to Jesus, bringing him every thing he had need of; as appears from the force of the expression, *διηκονουν αυτω*. See note on Matt. iv. 11.

A. M. 4034. 14 ¶¹ And Jesus returned ² in the
A. D. 30. power of the Spirit into ³ Galilee:

and there went out a fame of him through
all the region round about.

15 And he taught in their synagogues, being
glorified of all.

16 ¶ And he came to ⁴ Nazareth, where he
had been brought up: and, as his custom was,

¶ he went into the synagogue on the A. M. 4034.
sabbath day, and stood up for to read. A. D. 31.

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

18 ⁵ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, be-
cause he hath anointed me to preach the gospel

¹ Matt. iv. 12; John iv. 43.—² Verse 1.—³ Acts x. 37.
⁴ Matt. ii. 23; xiii. 54; Mark vi. 1.

⁵ Acts xiii. 14; xvii. 2.—⁶ Isa. lxi. 1.

Verses 14-16. *Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*—Being more abundantly strengthened after his conflict; and prepared to exercise his ministry with success, and to confirm his doctrine by miracles. *And there went out a fame of him through all the region*—Now that he was come, the fame of the miracles which he had performed in Jerusalem at the passover, and in Judea during the course of his ministry there, spread the more through Galilee: for at this time he had done only one miracle there, namely, the turning of water into wine. *And he taught in their synagogues*—He spent a considerable time in Galilee preaching, for the most part in their synagogues, particularly on the sabbath days, when there was the greatest concourse of people. *Being glorified of all*—The effect of this first exercise of his ministry in Galilee was, that the excellence of the doctrines which he taught, and the greatness of the miracles which he wrought, caused all the people to admire and applaud him exceedingly. But neither their approbation, nor the outward calm which he enjoyed, continued long. *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up*—That by his example, says Theophylact, he might teach us especially to instruct and do good to those of our own family and place of abode. *And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue, &c.*—That the synagogue was then loaded with ceremonies of human invention, and that the manners of those who met there were much corrupted, no man, who is acquainted with the Scriptures and the Jewish history, can doubt; and yet Christ, with his disciples, went customarily to these synagogues, as members of the Jewish Church, every sabbath day. *And stood up*—Showing, by so doing, that he had a desire to read the Scriptures to the congregation, on which the book was given to him. The reading of the Scriptures made an essential part of the Jewish public worship. But this office was not confined to those who were properly the ministers of religion. The rulers of the synagogue assigned it to such persons in the congregation as they knew were capable of it. Nay, they sometimes conferred the honour upon strangers, and incited them to give the people an exhortation on such subjects as were suggested by the passage read; see Acts xiii. 15; wherefore, their now assigning it to Jesus was not contrary to the regulations of their worship. Perhaps the rulers, knowing the reports which went abroad of his miracles, and

having heard of the Baptist's testimony concerning him, were curious to hear him read and expound the Scriptures; and the rather, because it was well known in Nazareth that he had not had the advantage of a learned education. And, as the Hebrew was now a dead language, and Jesus had not been taught to read, his actually reading, and with such facility, the original Hebrew Scriptures, as well as his expounding them, was a clear proof of his divine inspiration, and must have greatly astonished every intelligent and considerate person present.

Verses 17-19. *There was delivered to him the book of Esaias*—A paragraph of the law having, according to custom, been read before. See on Acts xiii. 15. *When he had opened the book—ἀναπτύξας, having unrolled the volume of the book.* The books of the ancients, as is well known, consisted of one long sheet of paper or parchment, which they rolled up neatly on a round piece of wood. When a book of this kind was to be read, they unrolled it gradually as they read it, and put what was read round another piece of wood of the same sort with the former. *He found the place*—The expression, *εὑρε τον τοπον*, seems to imply, that upon unrolling the book, the passage here mentioned immediately met his eye, by the particular providence of God. Many commentators, however, think, that as the Scriptures were read in order, the passage mentioned was that which fell of course to be read in the synagogue that day. And according to the custom of all the synagogues, this passage was to be read with the fiftieth section of the law, appointed for the last sabbath of the sixth, or the first of the seventh month, answering to our August and September. So that if our Lord read this passage as the ordinary lesson for the day, the chronology of this part of the history is thereby determined. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*—This was said of the prophets, when they were under an immediate afflatus of the Holy Spirit; but it was here, doubtless, primarily meant of the Messiah: *because he hath anointed me*—That is, hath commissioned me with authority, qualified me with gifts, and set me apart for the important offices here mentioned. The expression is used in allusion to the Jewish prophets, priests, and kings, who were consecrated to their offices by anointing them with oil. The unction of the Messiah was the Holy Spirit, which he had without measure. *To preach the gospel to the poor*—The reason why I, the Messiah, enjoy so great a degree

A. M. 4035. to the poor; he hath sent me to heal
A. D. 31. the broken-hearted, to preach deli-
verance to the captives, and recovering of sight
to the blind, to set at liberty them that are
bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the
Lord.

† Psa. xlv. 2; Matt. xiii 54;

of inspiration, and am endowed with the power of working such astonishing miracles is, because God hath commissioned me to preach the glad tidings of salvation to the poor, and by so doing, to heal the broken-hearted—That is, to relieve and comfort all those, without distinction, whose hearts are broken by sharp convictions of sin, and fears of future punishment. The passage of Isaiah here quoted, in our translation stands thus: *To preach good tidings to the meek*—But the word *קַוִּי*, signifies more properly persons in a low and afflicted condition. It is certainly an unspeakable recommendation of the gospel dispensation, that it offers the pardon of sin, and salvation, to all on the same terms. The rich, here, have no pre-eminence over the poor; as they seem to have had under the law, which prescribed such costly sacrifices for the atonement of sin as were very burdensome to the poor. The Prophet Isaiah, therefore, in describing the happiness of gospel times, very fitly introduces the Messiah mentioning this as one of the many blessings which would accrue to the world from his coming, that the glad tidings of salvation were to be preached by him and his ministers to the poor, and consequently were to be offered to them *without money and without price*. *To preach deliverance to the captives*—To proclaim to the captives of sin and Satan liberty from the power of their tyrannical masters, on the terms of repentance toward God, and faith in the Messiah, now manifested: and to confer that liberty on such as complied with these terms. *And recovering of sight to the blind*—Not merely to confer bodily sight on a few blind individuals, but to open the eyes of the understanding of millions, and cure their spiritual blindness, by imparting to them the *spirit of wisdom and revelation*. Thus, Isa. xlii. 6, 7, the Messiah is said to be given for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes. And the commission given to Paul, as recorded, Acts xxvi. 18, was, *I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light*: in both which passages spiritual illumination is undoubtedly solely intended. *To set at liberty them that are bruised*—With the heavy load of their fetters and chains; with the guilt and power of their iniquities, and the condemnation and wrath due to them on that account. Here is a beautiful gradation, in comparing the spiritual state of man to the miserable state of those captives who were not only cast into prison, but, like Zedekiah, had their eyes put out, and were laden and bruised with chains of iron. *To preach the acceptable year of the Lord*—To pro-

20 And he closed the book, and he
gave it again to the minister, and sat
down. And the eyes of all them that were in
the synagogue were fastened on him.

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

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered

Mark vi. 2; Chap. ii. 47.

claim that happy period of the divine dispensations toward mankind, in which a full and free remission of all their offences was to be offered to them, and which might be fitly represented in prophecy by the Jewish jubilee, wherein debts were forgiven, slaves released, and inheritances restored to their original owners. For a further explanation of this passage, see the notes on Isa. lxi. 1-3; and xlii. 6, 7.

Verses 20, 21. *And he closed the book, and gave it again to the minister*—To *υπαρτην*, to the servant, who had brought it to him. “From the manner in which we apply the word *minister*, in speaking of our churches, the English reader is apt to be led into a mistake by the common version, and to consider the word here as meaning the person who presided in the service; whereas it denotes only a subordinate officer, who attended the minister, and obeyed his orders in what concerned the more servile part of the work. Among other things he had the charge of the sacred books, and delivered them to those to whom he was commanded by his superiors to give them. After the reading was over, he deposited them in their proper place.”—Campbell. *And sat down*—The Jewish doctors, to show their reverence for the Scriptures, always stood when they read them, but when they taught the people they sat down. See Matt. xxiii. 2. Thus we here find our Lord sitting down in the synagogue to preach, after he had read the passage in the prophet, which he made the subject of his discourse. The custom of preaching from a text of Scripture, which now prevails throughout all the Christian churches, seems to have derived its origin from the authority of this example. *And the eyes of all were fastened on him*—They looked on him with great attention, expecting him to explain the passage. And in addressing the congregation on it, he told them, it was that day fulfilled in their ears—Namely, by what they heard him speak; words which imply, that, whatever allusion there might be in the prophecy to the good news of the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, it was primarily and principally intended to be understood of the spiritual salvation of mankind from ignorance and error, sinfulness and guilt, depravity and misery, by the Messiah, who, and not Isaiah, nor any other prophet, is to be considered as speaking in the passage, as is explained more fully in the notes there.

Verse 22. *And all the congregation bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words, &c.*—By this it appears, that our Lord proved and illustrated his assertion, (that the passage he had read was that

A. M. 4035. at the gracious words which proceeded
A. D. 31. out of his mouth. And they said, "Is
not this Joseph's son?"

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

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

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

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent,

^a John vi. 42.—^r Matt. iv. 13; xi. 23.—^u Matt. xiii. 54;
Mark vi. 1.—^s Matt. xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4; John iv. 44.

day fulfilled,) in a discourse of considerable length,
the subject of which only is mentioned by Luke.
And it seems also, that on this occasion he delivered
his thoughts with such strength of reason, clearness
of method, and, perhaps also, beauty of expression,
that his townsmen, who all knew he had not had the
advantage of a liberal education, were so astonished,
that in their conversation one with another they
could not forbear expressing their admiration. At
the same time, however, their carnal and worldly
spirit, not to say the malevolence also of their dis-
position, led them to mingle with their praises a
reflection, which they thought sufficiently confuted
his pretensions of being the Messiah, and showed
the absurdity of the application which he had made
of Isaiah's prophecy to himself, in that character;
And they said, *Is not this Joseph's son?* &c.

Verses 23, 24. *And he said, Ye will surely say—*
That is, your approbation now outweighs your pre-
judices. But it will not be so long. You will soon
ask, why my love does not begin at home? why I
do not work miracles here, rather than at Capernaum?
It is because of your unbelief. Nor is it
any new thing for a messenger of God to be de-
spised in his own country. So were both Elijah
and Elisha, and thereby driven to work miracles
among heathen, rather than in Israel. *And he said,*
Verily, no prophet is accepted in his own country
—That is, in his own neighbourhood. It generally
holds, that a teacher sent from God is not so accept-
able to his neighbours as he is to strangers. The
meanness of his family, or lowness of his circum-
stances, brings his office into contempt: nor can
they suffer that he, who was before equal with
or below themselves, should now bear a superior
character.

Verses 25–27. *Many widows were in Israel in the
days of Elias, &c.*—“By putting them thus in mind
of Elijah's miracle in behalf of the widow of Sarepta,
a heathen inhabitant of a heathen city, in a time of
famine, while many widows of Israel were suffered
to starve; and of Elisha's miracle on Naaman the

save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, A. M. 4035.
unto a woman that was a widow. A. D. 31.

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

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

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

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

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

^r 1 Kings xvii. 9; xviii. 1; James v. 17.—^s 2 Kings v. 14.
^a Or, edge.—^b John viii. 59; x. 39.—^c Mat. iv. 13; Mark i. 21.

Syrian leper, while many lepers in Israel remained
uncleansed, he showed them both the sin and pun-
ishment of their ancestors, and left it to themselves
to make the application.” *When the heaven was
shut up, &c.*—Such a proof had they that God
had sent him. *Three years and six months*—In
1 Kings xviii. 1, it is said, *The word of the Lord
came to Elijah in the third year*: namely, reckon-
ing, not from the beginning of the drought, but from
the time when he began to sojourn with the widow
of Sarepta. A year of drought had preceded this,
while he dwelt at the brook Cherith. So that the
whole time of the drought was (as St. James like-
wise observes) three years and six months.

Verses 28–30. *And all they in the synagogue were
filled with wrath*—The Nazarenes, perceiving the
purport of his discourse, namely, that the blessings
which they despised would be offered to, and ac-
cepted by, the Gentiles, were enraged to such a
pitch, that, forgetting the sanctity of the sabbath,
they gathered around him tumultuously, forced
him out of the synagogue, and rushed with him
through the streets to the brow of the hill whereon
their city was built; that they might cast him down
headlong. So changeable are the hearts of wicked
men! So little are their starts of love to be de-
pendent on! So unable are they to bear the close
application, even of a discourse which they most
admire! *But he, passing through the midst of them*
—Probably by making himself invisible; or by
overawing them: so that, though they saw, they
had not power to touch him.

Verses 31, 32. *And came down to Capernaum*—
And dwelt there, entirely quitting his abode at Na-
zareth, in consequence of the rude treatment which
he met with from his townsmen. Here let it be ob-
served, that by settling in Capernaum our Lord ful-
filled Isaiah's prophecy, chap. ix. 1, which elegantly
describes the effect of the Messiah's residence in
Galilee. See notes on Matt. iv. 13–16. *And he
taught them on the sabbath days*—Namely, accord-
ing to Matt. iv. 17, and Mark i. 15, proclaimed that

A. M. 4035. 32 And they were astonished at his
A. D. 31. doctrine: ° for his word was with power.

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

34 Saying, ³Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? ° I know thee who thou art, ^fthe Holy One of God.

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

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

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

38 ¶^e And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's

^c Matt. vi. 28, 29; Tit. ii. 15.—^d Mark i. 23.—^e Or, away. ° Verse 41.—^f Psa. xvi. 10; Dan. ix. 24; Ch. i. 35.—^g Matt. viii. 14; Mark i. 29.—^h Matt. viii. 16; Mark i. 32.

the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and exhorted them to *repent and believe the gospel*. This was his testimony during the time of his abode at Capernaum, and this he made the subject of his preaching in their synagogue on the sabbath days, not being discouraged by the ill usage that he had met with at Nazareth, upon his bearing the same testimony there. *And they were astonished*—Powerfully struck, and very much affected; *with his doctrine*. For his word was with power—With authority and majesty, which incomparably exceeded that low and servile manner of preaching which the scribes and Pharisees commonly used, in retailing their precarious traditions and insipid comments to the people. Our Lord, however, did not confine himself to Capernaum, for he frequently made excursions into the neighbouring country, and on such occasions, no doubt, preached several times every day.

Verses 33–37. See this paragraph explained at large in the notes on Mark i. 23–28. *What have we to do with thee*—Thy present business is with men, not with devils. *I know thee who thou art*—But did he, did even the prince of devils know Jesus, some time before, when he dared to say to him, verse 6, *All this power is delivered to me, and to whomsoever I will I give it? The Holy One of God*—Either this confession was extorted from him by terror, (for *the devils believe and tremble*,) or, he made it with a design to render the character of

wife's mother was taken with a great ^{A.M.4035.} fever; and they besought him for her. ^{A. D. 31.}

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

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

41 ¶ⁱ And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And ^hhe, rebuking *them*, suffered them not ⁴to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

42 ¶¹ And when it was day he departed and went into a desert place; and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

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

44 ^mAnd he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

¹ Mark i. 34; iii. 11.—^h Mark i. 25, 34; Verses 34, 35. ⁴ Or, to say that they knew him to be Christ.—¹ Mark i. 35. ^m Mark i. 39.

Christ suspected. *And Jesus rebuked him*—*The Holy One of God* was a title of the Messiah, Psa. xvi. 10; but Jesus did not allow the devils to give it him, for the reason mentioned in the notes on Mark i. 25, 34. Possibly, however, it was from hence the Pharisees took occasion to say, *He casteth out devils by the prince of devils*. *And when the devil had thrown him in the midst*—That is, had cast him down on the ground, the effect of this possession being an epilepsy.

Verses 38–44. *He entered into Simon's house*—See notes on Matt. viii. 14–17; and Mark i. 29–35. *When the sun was setting*—And consequently the sabbath ended, which they considered as continuing from sunset to sunset; *all that had any sick brought them*—Fully persuaded that he could and would heal them; which he accordingly did; *he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them*—Like the Pharisees, they seem to have questioned whether it was lawful for him to do cures on the sabbath day. Reader, he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: he is still able to do cures, and is he not willing? Try him: bring thy sick soul, or even thy sick body, or that of thy relative or friend, to him in prayer, and have faith in him, that he can and will heal it. Remember, *His eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers*—None ever trusted in him and were confounded. See note on Mark xi. 22–24.

CHAPTER V.

(1,) Christ preaches to the people out of Peter's boat, 1-3. (2,) Recompenses Peter for the loan of his boat by a miraculous draught of fishes; and intimates his design of making him and his partners fishers of men, 4-11. (3,) He cures a leper; charges him to show himself to the priest, and make the enjoined oblation; but to conceal the manner of his cure, 12-15. (4,) He retires for prayer, and heals a paralytic, to the grief of the Pharisees and lawyers present, and the astonishment of the multitude, 16-26. (5,) He calls Levi, the publican; and on that occasion eats and converses with publicans and sinners, 27-32. (6,) He vindicates his disciples in not fasting so frequently as the disciples of John and the Pharisees did, 33-36.

A. M. 4035. **AND** * it came to pass, that as the
A. D. 31. people pressed upon him to hear
the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gen-
nesaret,

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

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

* Fifth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 1 to verse 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verses 1-10. *As the people pressed upon him, with great eagerness, to hear the word of God*—In-
somuch that no house could contain them: they per-
ceived Christ's word to be the *word of God*, by the
divine power and evidence that accompanied it, and
therefore they were eager to hear it. It seems the
sermons which Jesus had preached in his last tour
through the country had made a great impression
on the minds of the people who heard him; for they
either followed him to Capernaum, or came thither
soon after his return in great numbers, in expecta-
tion of receiving still further instruction from him.
He stood by the lake of Gennesaret—Elsewhere
called *the sea of Galilee*, Mark i. 16; and *the sea of*
Tiberias, John vi. 1; being distinguished by these
names, because it was situated on the borders of
Galilee, and the city of Tiberias lay on the western
shore of it. The name Gennesaret seems to be a
corruption of the word *Cinnereth*, the name by
which this lake was called in the Old Testament.
See note on Matt. iv. 18. It appears from Mark
i. 16, that Jesus had been walking on the banks of
this lake. *And he saw two ships*—*Two small ves-*
sels, as the word *πλοια*, frequently occurring in the
gospels, evidently means, though in the common
versions rendered *ships*. They were a sort of large
fishing-boats, which Josephus calls *σκαφαι*, observing
that there were about two hundred and thirty of
them on the lake, and four or five men to each.
Standing by the side of the lake, or aground near
the edge of the lake, as Dr. Campbell renders *ερωτα*
παρα την λιμνην, observing that the vessels are said
to be, not *εν τη λιμνη*, in the lake, namely, at anchor,
but *παρα την λιμνην*, at, or beside the lake. *But the*
fishermen were gone out of them—After the labour
of a very unsuccessful night; and were washing
their nets—Namely, in the sea, as they stood on the
shore. *And he entered into one of the ships*—Namely,

down, and taught the people out of A. M. 4035.
the ship. A. D. 31.

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

5 And Simon answering, said unto him, Mas-
ter, we have toiled all the night, and have
taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will
let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they en-

* Matt. iv. 18; Mark i. 16.—^b John xxi. 6.

Simon's—With whom, as well as with his brother
Andrew, he had formed some acquaintance on the
banks of Jordan, while John was baptizing there.
See John i. 37-42: and *prayed that he would thrust*
out a little from the land—Jesus desired this, that he
might avoid the crowd, and at the same time be
more conveniently heard. *And he taught the people*
out of the ship—The subject of his discourse at this
time is not mentioned by the evangelist; he intro-
duces the transaction only because it was followed
by an extraordinary miracle, which he is going to
relate. *When he had left speaking, he said unto*
Simon—Who was the owner of the boat, and his
own disciple; *Launch out into the deep, and let down*
your nets for a draught—Christ intended by the
multitude of fishes, which he would make Simon
catch, to show him the success of his future preach-
ing, even in cases where little success was reason-
ably to be expected. *And Simon said, We have*
toiled all the night and taken nothing—A circum-
stance this, which “one would have thought,” says
Henry, “should have excused them from hearing
the sermon; but such love had they to the word of
God, that it was more reviving and refreshing to
them than the softest slumbers.” *Nevertheless, at*
thy word—In obedience to it, and dependance on it;
I will let down the net—Though they had toiled to
no purpose all night, yet at Christ's command they
are willing to renew their toil, knowing, that by re-
lying on him, their strength should be renewed as
work was renewed upon their hands. Observe,
reader, we must not presently quit the callings in
which we are engaged, because we have not the suc-
cess in them which we promised ourselves. The
ministers of the gospel in particular must continue
to let down their nets, though they have, perhaps,
toiled long, and caught nothing. They must perse-
vere unwearied in their labours, though they see not
the success of them. And in this they must have

A. M. 4035. closed a great multitude of fishes :
A. D. 31. and their net brake.

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

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

° 2 Sam. vi. 9; 1 Kings xvii. 18.—^d Matt. iv. 10; Mark i. 17.

an eye to the word of Christ, and a dependance thereupon. We are then likely to have success, when we follow the conduct of Christ's word. *And they enclosed a great multitude of fishes*—The net was no sooner let down, than such a shoal of fishes ran into it, that it was in danger of breaking, or rather did break in many parts. How vast was that power which brought such a multitude of fishes into the net! But how much greater and more apparently divine was the energy which, by the ministration of one of these illiterate men, converted at once a much greater number of souls, and turned the despisers and murderers of Christ into his adorers! *And they beckoned to their partners which were in the other ship*—Namely, James and John, who, it seems, were at such a distance from them, that they were not within call; *that they should come and help them*—To secure this vast draught of fishes, and bring them safe to the shore. Such a draught had, doubtless, never been seen in the lake before. Wherefore it could not miss being acknowledged plainly miraculous, by all the fishermen present, especially as they had toiled in that very place to no purpose the whole preceding night, a season much more favourable than the daytime for catching fish in such clear waters. Peter in particular was so struck with the miracle, that he could not forbear expressing his astonishment in the most lively manner, both by words and gestures: *he fell down at Jesus's knees*—In amazement and confusion; *saying*, in deep self-abasement, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord*—And therefore utterly unworthy to be in thy presence. He believed the holy God was peculiarly present with the person who could work such a miracle; and a consciousness of sin made him afraid to continue in his presence, lest some infirmity or offence should expose him to some more than ordinary punishment. Observe here, reader, 1st, Peter's acknowledgment was very just, and one which it becomes us all to make, *I am a sinful man, O Lord*: for even the best of men are sinful men, and should be ready upon all occasions to own it, and especially to own it to Jesus Christ; for to whom else but to him, who came into the world to save sinners, should sinful men apply themselves? 2d, His inference from it was not just: if we be sinful men, as indeed we are, we should rather say, "Lord, for that very reason, while we own ourselves most unworthy of thy presence, we most importunately entreat it: Come unto me, O Lord, for I am a sin-

9 For he was astonished, and all A. M. 4035.
that were with him, at the draught A. D. 31.
of the fishes which they had taken :

10 And so *was* also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not: ^d from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

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

° Matt. iv. 20; xix. 27; Mark i. 18; Chap. xviii. 28.

ful man, and if thou stand at a distance from me, I perish! Come and recover my heart from the tyranny of sin; come and possess it, and fix it for thyself." But, considering what reasons sinful men have before the holy Lord God to dread his wrath, Peter may well be excused in crying out, on a sudden, under a sense of his sinfulness and vileness, *Depart from me, O Lord*. Though Peter was the only person who spake on this occasion, the rest were not unaffected. *James and John, who were partners with him*—Were also struck with astonishment, and, doubtless, were also humbled before him. But Jesus encouraged them all, and especially Simon, saying, *Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch men*—Instead of doing thee any harm, I from this time design to employ thee in much nobler work, in which I will give thee such happy success, that thou shalt captivate men, in greater abundance than those fishes thou hast now caught: enclosing them in the net of the gospel, and drawing them out of the gulf of ignorance, sin, and misery, to the land of life eternal. The original expression here is very emphatical, *ἀνδραπνεύσει ἐσθ' ἑμὴν, Thou shalt be employed in catching men alive*: it is spoken in allusion to those fishes and beasts that are caught, not to be killed, but to be put into ponds and parks.

Thus by a signal miracle our Lord, 1st, Showed his dominion in the seas as well as on the dry land; and over its wealth as well as over its waves; and that he was that *Son of man*, under whose feet all things were put. 2d, He confirmed the doctrine he had just preached out of Peter's ship, and proved that he was at least a preacher come from God. 3d, He repaid Peter for the loan of his boat; and manifested that his gospel now, as his ark formerly, in the house of Obed-Edom, would be sure to make ample amends for its kind entertainment; and that Christ's recompenses for services done to his name would be abundant, yea, superabundant. And lastly, he hereby gave a specimen to those who were to be his ambassadors to the world, of the success of their embassy; that though they might for a time, and in some particular places, *toil and catch nothing*, yet that they should be made the instruments of enclosing many in the gospel net, and bringing them to Christ and salvation, present and eternal.

Verse 11. *And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, &c.*—Doubtless, before this the disciples entertained a high idea of their Master, as they believed him to be the Messiah, and had fol-

A. M. 4035. 12 ¶^f And it came to pass, when A. D. 31. he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

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

14 ¶ And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, ^h according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

^f Matthew viii. 2; Mark i. 40.—^g Matthew viii. 4.
^h Lev. xiv. 4, 10, 21, 22.

lowed him, John i. 43; till now, however, they did not forsake all, but continued to work at their ordinary calling. But this miracle of the fishes was such a striking demonstration of his power, that from this time they left their vessels and nets, nay, and all they had in the world, neglecting even the booty they had now taken, and became his constant followers; being henceforward more solicitous to serve the interest of his kingdom, than to advance any secular interests of their own whatever. Observe here, reader, the wonderful choice which Jesus makes of those who were to be the chief ministers in his kingdom! "Surely the same divine power which prevailed on these honest fishermen to leave their little all to follow him, could with equal ease have subdued the hearts of the greatest and wisest of the nation, and have engaged them to have attended him in all his progress through the country, with the exactest observance, and the humblest reverence: but he chose rather to preserve the humble form in which he had at first appeared, that he might thus answer the schemes of Providence, and by the *weak things of the world confound them that were mighty*." It must be remembered, however, that he did not "go to call them that stood all the day idle; but, on the contrary, conferred this honour upon honest industry; on them that had been toiling all the night in the proper duties of their station and profession in life. Let us pursue our business with vigilance and resolution; assuring ourselves, that, however mean it be, Christ will graciously accept us in it; and let us fix our dependance on his blessing, as absolutely necessary to our success."—Doddridge.

Verses 12-16. *Behold a man full of leprosy*—Of this miracle, see the notes on Matt. viii. 2-4, and Mark i. 45. *And he withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed*—The original expression, *ἦν ὑποχωρῶν ἐν ταῖς ἐρημίαις, καὶ προσευχόμενος*, implies that he frequently did this. Though no one was ever more busily employed than he was, or did so much good in public as he did, yet he found time for pious and devout retirement: not that he needed to avoid either distraction or ostentation; but he meant to set us an example, who have need so to order the circumstances of our devotion as to guard against both. It is likewise our wisdom so to order our affairs, that our

15 But so much the more went there A. M. 4035. a fame abroad of him: ⁱ and great A. D. 31. multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

16 ¶^k And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

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

ⁱ Matthew iv. 25; Mark iii. 7; John vi. 2.
^k Matt. xiv. 23; Mark vi. 46.

public work and our secret devotions may not intrench upon, or interfere with each other. Observe, reader, private prayer must be performed secretly; and how much soever we have to do in the best business in this world, we ought to have stated times for it, and steadily to attend to them.

Verses 17-25. *And on a certain day, as he was teaching*—Not on a sabbath day, as it appears, but on a week-day; and not in the synagogue, but in a private house. Preaching and hearing the word of God is good work, if it be performed properly, on any day in the week, as well as on the sabbath days; and in any convenient place, as well as in a place peculiarly set apart for divine worship: even there where we ordinarily converse with our friends, it is not improper to give and receive good instruction. *There were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by*—As being more honourable than the bulk of the congregation, who stood. These men of learning and influence had come from all quarters, on hearing the report of his miracles, to see his works, and scrutinize his pretensions of being a divinely-commissioned teacher. *And the power of the Lord was present to heal*—Namely, as many as then applied to him for the cure of their diseases. The sense is, that Christ not only preached such awakening sermons as might have converted them to righteousness, but his mighty and miraculous power was there to perform such cures as ought to have removed all their scruples with respect to his divine mission. Accordingly he embraced an opportunity, which now offered, of showing his power on a man afflicted with the palsy to such a degree that he could neither walk, nor stand, nor sit, nor move any member of his body, nor utter so much as a word importing the least desire of relief; but seemed a carcass rather than a man. This miserable object was carried in his bed, or couch, by four persons, who, when they could not bring him in at the door because of the crowd that was gathered to see how Jesus would behave before such learned judges, they bare him up, by some stairs on the outside, to the roof of the house, which, like other roofs in that country, was flat, with a battlement round it, and had a kind of trap-door, it seems, by which the members of the family could come out upon it to walk

A. M. 4035. 18 ¹And behold, men brought in
A. D. 31.

a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.

19 And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch, into the midst before Jesus.

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

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

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts,

¹ Matt. ix. 2; Mark ii. 3.—^m Matt. ix. 3; Mark ii. 6, 7.

and take the air, or perform their devotions. Through this they *let him down with his couch, into the midst of the company assembled, before Jesus*—Who, knowing the man to be a true penitent, and observing the faith of those who brought him, immediately gave him the consolation of knowing that his sins were all forgiven; and as a proof that he had authority to announce to him such glad tidings, he immediately so perfectly healed him of his disorder, as to enable him instantly to rise up before all that were present, take up his couch, and walk. For a more particular elucidation of the circumstances of this remarkable miracle, see notes on Mark ii. 3-12. To what is there observed, it may not be improper to add here, that by our Lord's manner of proceeding on this occasion we are taught two important lessons; 1st, That sin is the cause of all sickness, and the forgiveness of sin the only foundation on which the expectation of a recovery from sickness can be comfortably built. 2d, That when we are sick, we should be more concerned to get our sins pardoned than our sickness removed; Christ, in what he said to this man, directing us when we seek to God for health, to begin with seeking to him for pardon. And from the influence which the healing of this man's soul and body had upon his mind, inducing him as he departed to his house, bearing his couch, to praise and glorify God, we may learn to give God the praise of those mercies of which we have the comfort, and to acknowledge his hand in all our recoveries from affliction and escapes from death, and to glorify him for them, by whose mercy and power alone they are wrought.

Verses 26. *They were all amazed*—Greek, *εκστασις ελαβεν παντας*, *astonishment seized all*, that is, the Pharisees and doctors of the law, as well as the people: *and they glorified God*—Matthew says, *who had given such power unto men*; power not only to heal diseases, but to forgive sins. For they could not but acknowledge the authority of Christ's declaration, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*, when their eyes showed

he answering, said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

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

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thy house.

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

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

27 ¶ ^o And after these things he went forth,

^a Psa. xxxii. 5; Isa. xliiii. 25.—^o Matt. ix. 9; Mark ii. 13, 14.

them the efficacy of his command, *Arise and walk. And were filled with fear*—With a reverential kind of fear and dread, in consequence of this marvellous proof of the divine presence among them; *saying, We have seen strange things to-day*—Sins forgiven, miracles wrought. Greek, *παράδοξα, paradoxeis*, or, *incredible things*, as Dr. Campbell renders it; things which we should think impossible to be performed, and should conclude to be tricks and illusions, had we not indisputable proofs of their reality. Indeed, “whether we examine the nature of this miracle, as being a perfect and instantaneous cure of an obstinate, universal palsy, under which a person advanced in years had laboured, it seems, for a long time, a perfect cure produced by the pronouncing of a single sentence; or whether we consider the number and quality of the witnesses present, Pharisees and doctors of the law from every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem, together with a vast concourse of people; or whether we attend to the effect which the miracle had upon the witnesses;—namely, the Pharisees and doctors of the law, not able to find fault with it in any respect, though they had come with a design to confute our Lord's pretensions as a miracle-worker, were astonished, and openly confessed that it was a strange thing which they had seen; the multitude glorified God who had given such power unto men; the person upon whom the miracle was wrought employed his tongue, the use of which he had just recovered, in celebrating the praises of God: in short, view it in whatever light we please, we find it a most illustrious miracle, highly worthy of our attention and admiration.”—Macknight. Still, however, it does not appear that these Pharisees and doctors of the law, though struck with amazement at this miracle, were convinced thereby of the divine mission of Jesus, or induced to lay aside their enmity against him.

Verses 27-29. *He went forth and saw a publican, &c.*—Having performed this great miracle on the paralytic, Jesus thought proper to allow the Pharisees and doctors an opportunity of conferring upon it among

A. M. 4035. and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

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

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

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

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

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

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

¶ Matthew ix. 10; Mark ii. 15.—⁴ Chap. xv. 1.—⁵ Matthew ix. 13; 1 Tim. i. 15.

themselves, and of making what observations they pleased concerning it, in the hearing of the common people. He left the house, therefore, immediately. But on his going out the people accompanied him, eager to hear him preach. This good disposition which they were in, Jesus improved to their advantage. He went with them to the lake, and on the shore preached to a great multitude, Mark ii. 13. When he had made an end of speaking, he passed by the receipt of custom, or booth, where the collectors of the tax waited to levy it, possibly from the vessels which used the port of Capernaum. Here he saw a publican, Matthew or Levi, (for it was a common thing among the Jews for a person to have two names,) sitting, whom he ordered to follow him, and who immediately obeyed, being designed of God for a more honourable employment than that of collecting the taxes. Matthew, thinking himself highly honoured by this call, made a great feast, or entertainment, for Jesus and his disciples, inviting, at the same time, as many of his brother publicans as he could, hoping that Christ's conversation might bring them to repentance. In this action, therefore, Matthew showed both gratitude and charity; gratitude to Christ who had now called him, and charity to his acquaintance in labouring to bring about their conversion.

Verses 30-32. But their scribes and Pharisees murmured—The Pharisees of Capernaum, who knew both Matthew's occupation and the character of his guests, were highly offended that Jesus, who pretended to be a prophet, should have deigned to go into the company of such men; so offended that they could not forbear condemning his conduct openly, by asking his disciples, with an air of insolence, in the hearing of the whole company, why he

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

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

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

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

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

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

¶ Matthew ix. 14; Mark ii. 18.—¹ Matthew ix. 16, 17; Mark ii. 21, 22.

sat with publicans and sinners. Jesus answering, said, They that be whole, &c.—The Pharisees had not directed their discourse to Jesus, but having spoken so loud as to let all the guests hear their censure, he could not with propriety let it pass without showing the unreasonableness of it; which he does in a forcible manner, in these words: As if he had said, They that are in perfect health do not need the converse and advice of the physician, but those that are sick; and therefore, because of their need of him, he visits and converses with them, though it cannot otherwise be agreeable to him to do it; and I act on the same principles; for I am not come to call the righteous—As you arrogantly suppose yourselves to be, but such poor sinners as these; to repentance—Or, the persevering penitence, faith, and holiness of such as are truly righteous, is not so much the object of my attention, as the conversion of sinners. See a like form of expression, 1 Cor. i. 17. Some commentators imagine that self-righteous persons are here spoken of; but the scope and connection of the passage evidently confirm the former meaning. Indeed it is not true that our Lord did not come to call self-righteous persons to repentance: he certainly came as much to call them as any other class of sinners. Such were the scribes and Pharisees, and many of his discourses were evidently levelled at them, and intended to bring them to a sense of their sin and danger, in order to their humiliation, self-abasement, and conversion. See this paragraph more fully explained in the notes on Matt. ix. 9-13; Mark ii. 13-17.

Verses 33-39. The contents of these verses occur Matt. ix. 14-17, where they are explained at large. The disciples of John fast and make prayers—Long

and solemn prayers: *but thine eat and drink*—Freely, though thou professest a high degree of righteousness. *And he said, Can ye make, &c.*—That is, Is it proper to make men fast and mourn during a festival solemnity? My presence and converse render this a kind of festival to my disciples: for, as John taught his hearers but a little before his confinement, I am the bridegroom of my church; you cannot, therefore, in reason, expect I should command them to fast now, or that they should do it without such a command. *But the days will come*—And that very soon; *when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them*—And shall leave them exposed to much toil, hardship, and suffering; “with their hearts full of sorrow, their hands full of work, and the world full of enmity and rage against them.”—Henry. *Then shall they fast in those days*—They shall have great need, and even shall be compelled so to do. They shall both *hunger and thirst*, and even be destitute of clothing, 1 Cor. iv. 11. They shall also keep many religious fasts; shall serve the Lord with fastings, Acts xiii. 2, 3; for Providence shall call them to it. *He spake also a parable unto them*—Taken from clothes and wine, therefore peculiarly proper at a feast. See on Matt. ix. 16, 17. *No man*

having drunk old wine—As people, who have been accustomed to drink wine made mellow with age, do not willingly drink new wine, which for the most part is harsh and unpleasant; so my disciples, having been accustomed for some time to live without practising any of the severities for which John's disciples and the Pharisees are remarkable, cannot relish that new way of life which they recommend. They are not yet so fully acquainted with and established in my doctrine as to submit cheerfully to any extraordinary hardships. To this purpose is Le Clerc's interpretation of the verse; but Wolfius and others apply it to the Pharisees, who were much better pleased with the traditions of the elders than with the doctrines of Christ; because the latter prescribed duties more difficult and disagreeable to the corrupt natures of men than the former. Perhaps the general sense of the sentence may be, that men are not wont to be soon or easily freed from old prejudices. As if Christ had said, Judge how fit it is that I should not oblige my disciples to a new course of severities at once, but should rather gradually form their characters to what the duty of their future profession, and the usefulness of their lives, may require.

CHAPTER VI.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ, in vindicating his disciples for plucking ears of corn, and his own healing a withered hand, on the sabbath, shows that works of necessity and mercy are lawful on that day, 1–11. (2.) After retiring for solemn prayer, he chooses and appoints twelve of his disciples to be apostles, 12–16. (3.) Coming down to the multitude assembled in the plain, he cures many persons afflicted with different diseases, 17–19. (4.) In the audience of his newly-chosen apostles, he repeats many remarkable passages of his sermon before delivered on the mount, 20–49.

A. M. 4035. **AND** ^a it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn-fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in their hands.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto

^a Matt. xxi. 1; Mark ii. 23.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verses 1–5. *On the second sabbath after the first*—The original expression here, *ev Sabbato deuteroπρωτω*, says Dr. Whitby, “should have been rendered, *In the first sabbath after the second day*, namely, of unleavened bread; for, after the first day of the passover, (which was a sabbath, Exod. xii. 16,) ye shall count unto you (said God) seven sabbaths complete, Lev. xxiii. 15, reckoning that day for the first of the week, which was therefore called, *deuteroπρωτον*, the first sabbath from this second day of unleavened bread; (the 16th of the month;) the second was called *deuteroδευτερον*, the second sabbath from that day; and the third, *deuteroτριτον*, the

them, Why do ye that ^b which is A. M. 4035. not lawful to do on the sabbath days? A. D. 31.

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

^b Exod. xx. 10.—^c 1 Sam. xxi. 6.

third sabbath from that second day; and so on, till they came to the seventh sabbath from that day; that is, to the forty-ninth day, which was the day of pentecost. The mention of the seven sabbaths, to be numbered with relation to this second day, answers all that Grotius objects against this exposition. Epiphanius expressly says, Our Lord's disciples did what is here recorded, *τω σαββατω, τω μετα την ημεραν των αζυμων*, on the sabbath following the [second] day of unleavened bread. And if pentecost was called the feast of harvest, Exod. xxiii. 16, (as Borchart, Mr. Mede, Dr. Lightfoot, and the Jews say,) because then their barley and wheat harvest was gathered in, this feast could not be pentecost, as

A. M. 4035. 4 How he went into the house of
A. D. 31.

God, and did take and eat the show-bread, and gave also to them that were with him, ^d which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

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

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

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

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up

and stand forth in the midst. And A. M. 4035
he arose, and stood forth. A. D. 31.

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

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

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

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

13 And when it was day, he called unto him

^d Lev. xxiv. 9.—Matt. xii. 9; Mark iii. 1; Chap.

xiii. 14; xiv. 3; John ix. 16.—Matt. xiv. 23.

Grotius conjectures, because then the corn must have been gathered in, and therefore could not have been plucked by Christ's disciples in the field." There are other expositions of the phrase, but this seems by far the most probable. *He went through the corn-fields, &c.* This paragraph is largely explained in the notes on Matt. xii. 1-8; and Mark ii. 23-28.

Verses 6-11. *And on another sabbath he entered into the synagogue*—The service of which he and his disciples seem to have generally attended: *and there was a man whose right hand was withered*—Of the miracle here recorded, see notes on Matt. xii. 9-13; and Mark iii. 1-5; where all the circumstances of it are noticed.

Verses 12, 13. *And it came to pass in those days*—Namely, of his teaching near the sea of Galilee; *that he went out into a mountain to pray*—Jesus, seeing the general notice which was taken of his appearance, and the desire which multitudes manifested of being further informed concerning the design of his coming, and the nature of his doctrine, determined to choose a number of persons who should assist and succeed him in his ministerial work. And as the office which he intended to assign them was of great importance, even to the remotest ages, previous to his choice of them, he retired to a mountain in the neighbourhood, and, notwithstanding all the labours of the preceding day, continued all night in prayer to God; so much was his heart enlarged on this momentous occasion. The original phrase, *εν τη προσευχη τη θυε*, is singular and emphatical, being literally, *in the prayer of God*, implying an extraordinary and sublime devotion. Or, if the word *προσευχη* be taken for the proper name of a place, the clause may be rendered, *he continued all night in the oratory, or prayer-place, of God; the Jews having many houses on mountains, and by the sides of rivers, &c., set apart for prayer.* These houses, it is well known, were

open at the top, and planted round with trees. This is the sense in which Drusius, Prideaux, Whitby, Hammond, and many other good critics, understand the expression. This interpretation does not alter the meaning of the passage, for as Jesus went up to the mountain to pray, we cannot avoid supposing that he spent the greatest part of the night in acts of devotion. *And when it was day he called to him his disciples*—Mark says, *whom he would.* *And of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles*—A name which well expressed the office for which they were designed. These he now fixed upon, that for some time they might be always with him, in order that from his own mouth they might learn the doctrine which they were, in due time, to preach through the world; "that they might see his glory, John i. 14, the transcendent glory of the virtues which adorned his human life; and that they might be witnesses of all the wonderful works which he should perform, and by which his mission from God was to be clearly demonstrated. The twelve were thus to be qualified for supplying the people with that spiritual food which their teachers neglected to give them; and that both before and after their Master's death. Accordingly, when they had continued with Jesus as long as was necessary for this end, he sent them out by two and two into Judea, on the important work of preparing the people for his reception, who was the true shepherd. Hence he named them *apostles*, that is, *persons sent out.* But the name was more peculiarly applicable to them, and their office was raised to its perfection, after Christ's ascension, when he sent them out into all the world with the doctrine of the gospel, which he enabled them to preach by inspiration, giving them power at the same time to confirm it by the most astonishing miracles. That this was the nature of the new dignity which Jesus now conferred on the twelve, is evident from John xx. 21, where we find him confirming them in the apostolical

A. M. 4035. his disciples : "and of them he chose
A. D. 31. twelve, whom also he named apostles ;

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

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

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

^a Matt. x. 1.—^b John i. 42.—ⁱ Jude 1.

office: as my Father hath sent me, so send I you ; I send you upon the same errand, and with the same authority: I send you to reveal the will of God for the salvation of men. And I bestow on you both the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles, that you may be able to preach the doctrine of salvation in every country, and to confirm it as divine, in opposition to all gainsayers."—Macknight. Of the probable reason why the number of twelve was fixed upon rather than any other, and for a further elucidation of the passage, see the notes on Mark iii. 13-17; and Matt. x. 1-4. After their election, the twelve accompanied Jesus constantly, lived with him on one common stock as his family, and never departed from him, unless by his express appointment.

Verses 14-16. *Simon, whom he also named Peter*—Matthew, Mark, and Luke have all given us a catalogue of the names of the apostles; and their exactness in this particular is greatly to be praised. For as the apostleship clothed the person on whom it was conferred with the high authority of directing the religious faith of mankind, it was of no small importance to the world to know who they were to whom that dignity belonged. In these catalogues, Simon is first named, not because he was of greater dignity than the rest, but because he was one of the most early followers of Christ, and the first that was called to a stated attendance upon him, and a person whose remarkable zeal and piety rendered him a kind of leader among the others. These reasons are so evidently sufficient for his being named first, that it is strange any should have attempted to prove from that circumstance, that Christ invested him with authority over his brethren; when we never find any such thing declared by Christ, or claimed by Peter, or owned by any of the other apostles, but rather find many scriptures which appear to look a contrary way; Matthew and Luke mention Andrew next to Peter, as being his brother, and one of Christ's first disciples. The names of James and John follow, as having been called next, (see Matthew iv. 21,) and being persons of great eminence for piety and usefulness, and James is placed before John, as being the elder brother. The names of the others seem to be placed nearly, at least, in the order in which they became disciples. Judas Iscariot, however, though, perhaps, not last called, is named last, because he was

17 ¶ And he came down with them, ^{A. M. 4035.} and stood in the plain; and the com- ^{A. D. 31.} pany of his disciples, ^k and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

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

19 And the whole multitude ^l sought to touch

^k Matt. iv. 25; Mark iii. 7.—^l Matt. xiv. 36.

the traitor. But whatever might be the reason of ranking the apostles in the catalogue in the order in which we find them, we are certain they are not ranged according to their dignity; for, had that been the case, the order of the names would have been exactly the same in all the evangelists, which it is not, Andrew being placed the second in order, as we have observed, by Matthew and Luke, and the fourth by Mark; and Thomas being placed before Matthew by that apostle, and after him by Mark and Luke. To this may be added, on supposition that the apostles are ranked in the catalogues according to their dignity, it would follow, that John and Matthew, whose praise is in all the churches, on account of their writings, were inferior to apostles who are scarce once named, except in the catalogues. With regard to the epithet, or surname, (*Zelotes, the Zealous,*) added by Luke here to the name of Simon; because there was a particular sect or faction, among the Jews, termed the *Zealots*, who, in later times, under colour of zeal for God, committed all imaginable disorders, some are of opinion, that Simon the apostle had formerly been one of this faction. But as there is no mention made of that sect till a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, (Josephus, *Bell.*, iv. 3,) we may rather suppose that this epithet was added to his name on account of his uncommon zeal in matters of true piety and religion.

Verses 17-19. *And he came down with them, &c.*—After he had acquainted these twelve persons with his design, and had given them such private instructions as he judged necessary to render their attendance on him subservient to the execution of their important office, he *came down* from the mountain with them, and stood in the neighbouring plain; where were assembled, not only the rest of his disciples, but a great multitude of people collected from parts at a great distance from each other, namely, not only out of all Judea and Jerusalem, but from the coast of Tyre and Sidon—Many of whom came to hear and be instructed by his discourses, and others to be healed of their diseases: circumstances these which prove beyond contradiction, how universal the persuasion now was, that he was a divinely-commissioned teacher; and that real miracles were wrought by him. *And the whole multitude sought to touch him, &c.*—In order to multiply the proofs of his mission, and to render them indubitable, he

A. M. 4035. him; for ²⁰ there went virtue out of
A. D. 31. him, and healed *them* all.

20 ¶ And he lifted up his eyes on his dis-

• Mark v. 30; Chap. viii. 46.—Matt. v. 3; xi. 5; Jam. ii. 5.

caused virtue to go out from himself, and to heal all, without exception, who came and touched, though it were but his clothes, in expectation of being healed; and that, in some instances, in which Christ did not so much as take any apparent notice of the cases. By this benignity he put the cure in the power of the diseased themselves; and wrought many more miracles than could have been performed in the way of a formal application to him for a cure.

Verse 20. *And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples*—The multitude that pressed to touch Jesus, in order to be healed, being at length rendered still and quiet, he turned to his disciples, and in their audience, and that of the multitude, repeated, *standing on the plain*, many remarkable passages of the sermon he had before delivered, *sitting on the mount*; which for the importance and variety of matter contained in it was, of all his sermons, the most proper to be remembered by the twelve disciples, now that they were constituted apostles, and appointed to preach. “The Evangelist Matthew, having recorded the former sermon in its place, judged it unnecessary to give this repetition of it here. But if the reader is of opinion that the two sermons are the same, because this in Luke comes immediately after the election of the twelve apostles, as that in Matthew comes after the calling of the four disciples, Simon, Andrew, James, and John, let him consider, in the first place, that the calling of the four disciples, which precedes the sermon in Matthew, is without doubt a fact entirely different from the election of the twelve apostles preceding the sermon in Luke, and happened long before it. Besides, the sermon in Luke was preached immediately after the election of the twelve, whereas a large tour through Galilee, which may have taken up some months, intervened between the calling of the four disciples and the sermon in Matthew. And to name no more differences, the sermon recorded by Matthew was delivered *on a mountain*, in a *sitting posture*; whereas, when he pronounced this, which Luke speaks of, he was *in a plain*, or valley, where he could not sit because of the multitude which surrounded him, but *stood* with his disciples. But though there was not so much evident disagreement in the facts preceding these two sermons, the reader might easily have allowed that they were pronounced at different times, because he will find other instances of things really different, notwithstanding in their nature they may be alike, and were preceded, and also followed, by like events. For instance, the commission and instructions given to the seventy, were, in substance, the same with the commission and instructions given to the twelve, Matt. x., and were introduced after the same manner: *The harvest is plenteous, &c.*, Matt. ix. 37. Yet from Luke himself it appears they were different, that evangelist having related the mission

principles, and said, *“Blessed be ye poor; A. M. 4035. for yours is the kingdom of God. A. D. 31.”*

21 *“Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye*

• Isa. lv. 1; lxx. 13; Matt. v. 6.

of the twelve as a distinct fact, chap. ix. 1. So likewise the two miraculous dinners were not only like each other in their natures, but in their circumstances also, for they were introduced by the same discourses, and followed by like events; particularly at the conclusion of both, Jesus passed over the sea of Galilee. Nevertheless, both being found in the same evangelist, no reader can possibly think them the same.”—Macknight. Dr. Whitby and Dr. Doddridge view this subject in exactly the same light. “Hardly any thing,” says the latter, “that I have observed in the common harmonies surprises me more than that so many of them make this discourse to be the very sermon on the mount, recorded at large by Matthew. That was delivered by Christ sitting on a mountain, this standing in a plain; and, which weighs yet much more with me, there is such a difference in the expression, when the parallel passages come to be compared, that it seems evident the evangelists have not related it exactly, if they meant to give us the same. On the other hand, there appears not the least difficulty in supposing that Christ might here repeat a part of what he had delivered some months before to another auditory, and probably at some greater distance than just in the same neighbourhood. For it is plain from other instances, that this is nothing more than what he often had occasion to do. Compare Matt. ix. 32–34 with Matt. xii. 22, 24; and xvi. 21 with xvii. 23; and xx. 17–19.” This, therefore, for the reasons above stated, being evidently a different sermon from that delivered on the mount, and preached to a different auditory, and on a different occasion; and there being here only four of the eight beatitudes mentioned in that sermon, and not one of these being expressed in the same words which are there used; it is not necessary that they should be understood in the same sense. The *poor* here may either mean the poor in spirit; the *hungry*, those that hunger after righteousness; and the *mourners*, those that sorrow after a godly manner to repentance, 2 Cor. vii. 9; or the condition added to the last clause, verse 22, *for the Son of man’s sake*, may be understood as implied in all the clauses, and that those disciples of Christ only are pronounced blessed, who are exposed to, and patiently suffer, poverty, hunger, grief, or persecution for his sake, that they may obtain that kingdom, and that reward in heaven, which he hath promised to his faithful servants. Indeed our Lord’s words are only addressed to his disciples, verse 20, *he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed, (or rather, happy, as μακαριοι means,) are ye poor, &c.*—As to those who are not the true disciples of Christ, but are ignorant and wicked, or carnal and worldly, however poor, destitute, afflicted, or reproached they may be in this world, they are not happy, but miserable, and in the way to be mi-

A. M. 4035. shall be filled. ^p Blessed are ye
A. D. 31. that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

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

23 ^a Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy:

^p Isa. lxi. 3; Matt. v. 4.—^a Matt. v. 11; 1 Pet. ii. 19; iii. 14; iv. 14.—^r John xvi. 2.—^r Matt. v. 12; Acts v. 41; Col. i. 24; James i. 2.

serable for ever. We must therefore say, in explanation of this passage, the poor are happy if they be enriched with divine knowledge and grace; for they are entitled to the kingdom of God in all its transcendent and eternal glories. They that hunger now, and are destitute of all the comfortable accommodations of life, are happy if they feel that nobler appetite, by which the pious soul longs after improvements in holiness: for the time is near when they shall be filled with what they long for, and shall be made partakers of the most substantial and valuable blessings. Happy are they who now weep and mourn under a sense of sin, or under that wholesome discipline of affliction, by which God reduces his wandering children, and trains them up to superior virtue; for all their sorrow shall pass away like a dream, and they shall ere long laugh and rejoice in a complete deliverance from it. They whom men hate, separate from their company, and reproach, &c., for the Son of man's sake, are happy, for that glorious and powerful and gracious Person, on whose account they are thus treated, is abundantly able, and as willing as able, amply to recompense them for all they suffer for his sake. And therefore far from being dismayed and overwhelmed with trouble and distress, at such abuses and assaults, they ought to rejoice and leap for joy, fully assured that their reward in heaven will be in proportion to their sufferings on earth. Besides, such persecuted followers of Christ may comfort themselves with this consideration, that the servants of God, in all ages, have been treated in a similar manner.

Verses 24, 25. *But wo, &c.*—Here we see that this discourse differs very materially from the sermon on the mount; there our Lord pronounced blessings only, here he denounces curses; or, to speak more properly, he compassionately bewails the condition of persons of a contrary character to that of those pronounced happy in the preceding verses. For, as Grotius justly observes, the expression, *vai vuv, wo unto you*, “*vox est dolentis, non iræ incensi*,” is the expression of one lamenting, [or bewailing the unhappy condition of another,] not of one inflamed with anger. It is like that used by our Lord, Matt. xxiv. 19, *wo to them that are with child, &c., in those days*; an expression which no one can understand otherwise than as a declaration of the unhappiness of women in these circumstances, at such a time of general calamity as is

for behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

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

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

^a Acts vii. 51.—^a Amos vi. 1; James v. 1.—^x Chap. xii. 21.—^r Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16; Chap. xvi. 25.—^r Isa. lxx. 13. ^a Prov. xiv. 13.

referred to. The parallel passage in Luke xxiii. 29 where we have the same prophecy, makes this evident. As our Lord, therefore, in the former sentences, pronounces the poor, the needy, the mournful, and the persecuted happy, so he here pronounces the rich, the jovial, and the applauded, miserable; the circumstances in which such are placed being peculiarly insnaring, and the danger being great lest they should be so taken up with the transient pleasures of time, as to forget and forfeit everlasting happiness. His words may be thus paraphrased: Miserable are ye rich—If ye have received or sought your consolation or happiness in your riches. Miserable are you that are full—Of meat and drink, and worldly goods, and take up with these things as your portion; for you shall ere long hunger—Shall fall into a state of great indigence and misery, aggravated by all the plenty which you enjoyed and abused. Miserable are you that laugh—That spend your lives in mirth and gayety, or are of a light, trifling spirit; for you shall mourn and weep—You have reason to expect a portion in those doleful regions, where, without intermission and without end, you shall be abandoned to weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. “Our Lord’s malediction,” [declaration,] says a modern author, “is not inconsistent with the apostle’s precepts, which command Christians always to rejoice. Neither is the mirth against which the wo is here denounced to be understood of that constant cheerfulness of temper, which arises to true Christians from the comfortable and cheerful doctrines with which they are enlightened by the gospel, the assurance they have of reconciliation with God, the hope they have of everlasting life and the pleasure they enjoy in the practice of piety and the other duties of religion. But it is to be understood of that turbulent, carnal mirth, that levity and vanity of spirit, which arises, not from any solid foundation, but from sensual pleasure, or those vain amusements of life by which the giddy and the gay contrive to make away their time; that sort of mirth which dissipates thought, leaves no time for consideration, and gives them an utter aversion to all serious reflections.” Persons who continue to indulge themselves in this sort of mirth through life, shall weep and mourn eternally, when they are excluded from the joys of heaven, and banished for ever from the presence of God, by the light of whose

A. M. 4035. 26 ^b Wo unto you, when all men
A. D. 31. shall speak well of you! for so did
their fathers to the false prophets.

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

28 Bless them that curse you, and ^d pray
for them which despitefully use you.

29 ^o And unto him that smiteth thee on the
one cheek, offer also the other; ^f and him that

taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to ^{A. M. 4035.}
take thy coat also. ^{A. D. 31.}

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

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

32 ^f For if ye love them which love you,
what thank have ye? for sinners also love
those that love them.

^b John xv. 19; 1 John iv. 5.—^c Exod. xxiii. 4; Prov. xxv.
2; Matt. v. 44; Verse 35; Rom. xii. 20.—^d Chap. xxiii. 34;
Acts vii. 60.

^o Matthew v. 39.—^f 1 Cor. vi. 7.—^g Deut. xv. 7, 8, 10;
Proverbs xxi. 26; Matthew v. 42.—^h Matthew vii. 12.
ⁱ Matthew v. 46.

countenance all the blessed are enlightened, and
made transcendently happy.

Verse 26. *Wo unto you*—Miserable are you; *when
all men speak well of you*—Because such universal
applause is not to be gained without sinful compli-
ciances. "For," as Dr. Whitby observes, "he that
will be pleasing to all must speak things grateful to
all, and do what they like; now that cannot be good
which is grateful to bad men: thus the false pro-
phets, whom the Jews commended, spake to them
smooth things, and prophesied lies, because *the
people loved to have it so*; they prophesied of
peace, when war was at hand; they strengthened
the hands of evil doers, Jer. xxiii. 14, and daubed
the ruinous wall with untempered mortar, Ezek.
xiii. 10, 11."

Verses 27, 28. *But I say unto you which hear*—
You who hear me now, and you who in future ages
shall hear my gospel. Hitherto our Lord had
spoken only to particular sorts of persons; now he
begins speaking to all in general. *Love your ene-
mies, &c.*—The disposition which my gospel cher-
ishes in its votaries, is that of love and kindness,
even to the evil and unthankful; and therefore all
who hear the gospel ought to be of this disposition.
See on Matt. v. 44.

Verses 29, 31. *To him, &c.*—You who hear my
gospel ought to be patient under injuries, as well as
benevolent toward the unthankful. *To him that
smiteth thee on thy cheek—that taketh away thy
cloak*—These seem to be proverbial expressions, to
signify an invasion of the tenderest points of honour
and property. *Offer the other, &c. Forbid not thy
coat*—That is, rather yield to his repeating the
affront, or injury, than gratify resentment in righting
yourself, in any method not becoming Christian
love. *Give to every man*—Friend or enemy, what
thou canst spare, and he really wants; *and of him
that taketh away thy goods*—By borrowing; *ask
them not again*—If he be insolvent: or, do not
exact them if it will distress the person concerned
to repay thee: rather lose them, if consistent with
other duties, than demand them by a legal process.
Dr. Doddridge translates and paraphrases the clause
thus: "From him that taketh away thy possessions,
in an injurious manner, do not immediately demand
them back in the forms of law, but rather endeavour,

by gentle methods, to reduce the offender to reason."
The Greek expression, *τα αιροντας τα σα*, here ren-
dered, *taketh away thy goods*, properly signifies,
taketh them away violently, or by fraud. But, as
Dr. Macknight observes, "Whatever sense we put
on our Lord's precept, it must be understood with
the limitations which common sense directs us to
make; namely, that we give and lend freely to all
who ask, or permit them to retain what they have
unjustly taken, provided only that it be a thing of
small account, which we can easily spare, and the
persons who ask or take such things be in real
necessity." *And as ye would that men should do
unto you, &c.*—See note on Matt. vii. 12.

Verses 32–36. *If ye love them which love you,
what thank have ye*—What great thanks are due to
you on that account? For there are some senti-
ments of gratitude common even to the worst of
men, which incline the most scandalous *sinners* to
love those that love them, and to profess an affec-
tionate regard for those by whom they have been
treated with respect and kindness. Here, says
Theophylact, "If you only love them that love
you, you are only like the sinners and heathen; but
if you love those who do evil to you, you are like to
God; which therefore will you choose? to be like
sinners or like God?" Here we see that our Lord
has so little regard for one of the highest instances
of natural virtue, namely, the returning love for
love, that he does not account it even to deserve
thanks. *For even sinners*, saith he, *do the same*—
Men who do not regard God at all. Therefore he
may do this who has not taken one step in Chris-
tianity. *And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to
receive*—And that, perhaps, with considerable ad-
vantage to yourselves; *what thank have ye?*—What
favour do you show in that? or, what extraordinary
thanks are due to you on that account? *for sinners
also lend to sinners, to receive, τα ισα, equal favours*,
in return. *But love ye your enemies*—Ye who profess
to be my disciples. See on Matt. v. 43–45. *Do good
and lend, hoping for nothing again*—Do good to
those from whom you have no expectation of re-
ceiving any favour in return; and lend, in cases of
great distress, even when you have little reason
to expect what is lent to be repaid. Because the
Greek expression, *μηδεν απελπιζοντες*, has, in no Greek

A. M. 4035. 33 And if ye do good to them which
A. D. 31. do good to you, what thank have ye?

for sinners also do even the same.

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

35 But ^l love ye your enemies, and do good, and ^m lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ⁿ ye shall be the

^k Matt. v. 42.— Verse 27.—^m Psa. xxxvii. 26; Verse 30.—ⁿ Matt. v. 45.—^o Fourth Sunday after Trinity, gos-

author, the sense here, and in most translations, given to it, namely, *hoping for nothing again*; many commentators have declared in favour of the signification affixed to it by the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions; *neminem desperare facientes, causing no man to despair*: the copies from which these translations were made reading *μηδεν*, with an apostrophe, for *μηδενα*. But, as Dr. Whitby observes, "this is putting a double force upon the words; 1st, reading, without the authority of any MS., *μηδενα, no man, for μηδεν, nothing*; and, 2d, interpreting *απελπικειν, to cause to despair*; of which sense they give no instance." The context seems evidently to justify our translation of the clause; for the preceding words are, *If ye lend to them, παρ' ων ελπικετε απολαβειν, from whom ye hope to receive again*, namely, what you lend, or a similar favour, *what thank have ye, for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again*. It then naturally follows, *But do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again*—That is, lend not you on so mean an account, but even when you do not hope to have that returned which you lend, or to receive at some future time a like favour from the person you lend to. And whereas we are told that the word *απελπικω* bears no such sense, "I hope," says the doctor, "the credit of Stephanus, who says the word is rightly rendered by the Vulgate, *nihil inde sperantes, hoping for nothing thence*; and of Casaubon, who says *απελπικειν* is to *hope for something from a person or matter*; may be sufficient to support the credit of our translation; especially when we read, in the Life of Solon, that he made no law against parricides, *δια το απελπισαι, because he did not expect that such a crime would be committed*; and find this like composition of the word *απεχειν*, when it signifies *απο τινος εχειν, to receive from any one*; and in the word *απεσθειν*, which is used for *απο τινος εσθειν, to eat of any thing*." It must be acknowledged, however, that the more common and classical meaning of the term is, *despero, to despair*; and accordingly Dr. Campbell, with many others, renders the clause, *not at all, or nowise despairing*: observing, among several other arguments in support of this translation, "That what commonly proves the greatest hinderance to our lending, particularly to needy persons, is the dread that we shall never be repaid. It is, I imagine, to prevent the influence of such an over-cautious mistrust, that our Lord here warns us not to shut our

children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

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

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

38 ^q Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken to-

pel, verse 36 to verse 43.—^p Matt. v. 48.—^q Matt. vii. 1. ^r Prov. xix. 17.

hearts against the request of a brother in difficulties. Lend cheerfully, as though he had said, without fearing the loss of what shall be thus bestowed. It often happens that, even contrary to appearances, the loan is thankfully returned by the borrower; but if it should not, remember (and let this silence all your doubts) that God charges himself with what you give from love to him, and love to your neighbour: he is the poor man's surety." It may not be improper to add, that several Latin MSS., agreeably to this interpretation, read *nihil desperantes, "nothing despairing"*. Our Lord enforces the exhortation by adding, *and your reward shall be great*, probably even in this world, in the temporal prosperity with which God, in the course of his providence, will bless you: *for to him that hath, uses aright what he hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundance*, Matt. xiii. 12. But if you are not recompensed in this world you certainly shall be in the world to come: for God is not unfaithful to forget our work and labour of love, which we show to his name. *And ye shall be the children of the Highest*—His genuine children, resembling him, bearing the image of his goodness; *for he is kind unto the unthankful and the evil*—Causing the undeserved benefits of the sun and rain to descend upon them, and conferring on them of his free unmerited bounty other innumerable benefits daily. *Be ye therefore merciful*—Compassionate, kind, beneficent, to the unworthy; *as your Father also is merciful*—Continually setting you an example of gratuitous goodness; as all his works, whether of creation, providence, or grace, amply declare. See notes on Matt. v. 44–48.

Verses 37, 38. *Judge not, &c.*—See notes on Matt. vii. 1, 2; vi. 14, 15. *Give*—Liberally to those that need your assistance; *and it shall be given unto you*—For your kindness and liberality will naturally gain you love and respect; and God also, by his supernatural grace, will influence men's hearts in your favour. *Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over*—"Our Lord makes use of these three phrases to express all the different kinds of good measure, according to the different nature of the things measured. Some of them, to make the measure good, must be *pressed down* and trodden; some of them must be *shaken*, as the several kinds of grain; and some of them must be *running over*, such as all sorts of liquors. The

A. M. 4035. gether, and running over, shall men
A. D. 31. give into your bosom. For with
the same measure that ye mete withal, it
shall be measured to you again.

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

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

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

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

^a Psa. lxxix. 12.—^b Matt. vii. 2; Mark iv. 24; James ii. 13.
^c Matt. xv. 14.—^d Matt. x. 24; John xiii. 16; xv. 20.—^e Or,
shall be perfected as his master.—^f Matt. vii. 3.—^g Prov.

figure of giving this good measure into one's bosom, is an allusion to the eastern habits, which were long pieces of cloth wrapped round their bodies, and girded up with a girdle. Their garments being of this kind, they could receive into their lap or bosom a considerable quantity of such dry goods as they sold by measure."—Macknight. *For with the same measure that ye mete it shall be measured, &c.*—Amazing goodness! So we are permitted even to carve for ourselves! We ourselves are, as it were, to tell God, *how much* mercy he shall show us! And can we be content with less than the very *largest measure*? Give, then, to man, what thou designest to receive of God.

Verses 39, 40. *And he spake a parable, &c.*—Our Lord sometimes used parables, when he knew plain and open declarations would too much inflame the passions of his hearers. It is for this reason that he uses this parable. *Can the blind lead the blind*—Can the scribes teach this way, which they know not themselves? Will not they and their scholars perish together? *The disciple is not above his master*—Can they make their disciples any better than themselves? If the master be ignorant, foolish, and wicked, will not the scholar, or disciple, be so likewise? *But every one that is perfect*—Or, *perfected*, as *κατηριόμενος* means: that is, perfectly instructed by Christ's doctrine, and perfectly renewed by his grace: whose mind is fully enlightened, and his heart entirely changed: made wise unto salvation by God's word, and endued with all the graces of his Spirit; *shall be as his Master*—Shall come to the measure of the stature of his Master's fulness, shall be conformed to the image of

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

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

45 A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

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

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

48 He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehe-

xviii. 17.—^a Matt. vii. 16, 17.—^b Matt. xii. 33.—^c Greek, a grape.—^d Matt. xii. 35.—^e Matt. xii. 34.—^f Mal. i. 6; Matt. vii. 21; xxv. 11; Chap. xiii. 25.—^g Matt. vii. 24.

God's Son, and *as he was*, shall be in this world, 1 John iv. 17.

Verses 41, 42. *And why beholdest thou the mote*—See notes on Matt. vii. 3-5. Be not ye like the disciples of the Pharisees, censuring others, and not amending yourselves.

Verses 43-45. *For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit, &c.*—See notes on Matt. vii. 16-20; xii. 33-35. *For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh*—The meaning of this whole passage is, as a tree is known to be either good or bad by its fruit, so a man is known to be either good or bad by his words; especially when he speaks of the characters and actions of others, or pretends to rebuke them. On such occasions he will, either by the charitable and mild constructions which he puts upon the doubtful actions of others, show himself to be a good man; or, by his uncharitable and harsh interpretations, demonstrate the wickedness of his own heart.

Verses 46-49. *And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*—What will fair professions avail, without a life answerable thereto? Our Lord's words may also refer to what he had just spoken in praise of good words. As if he had said, Though I have thus spoken, you must take notice, that it is in a particular case especially that your good words will manifest the state of your hearts to be good, namely, when the characters and actions of others are spoken of and censured. Good words, on many other occasions, are of no avail; for the best advices given to others, verse 42, or the fairest speeches imaginable addressed to me, your Master, and your giving me the highest titles of

A. M. 4035. mently upon that house, and could
A. D. 31. not shake it: for it was founded upon
a rock.

49 But he that heareth and doeth not, is like

respect, are of no manner of signification, if you do not keep my commandments, and possess the graces, and practise the duties which I describe and enjoin. *And the flood arose*—Here is an allusion to the violent rains and sweeping floods in the eastern countries, in the winter. “Though the rains are not extremely frequent at that season, yet, when it does rain, the water pours down with great violence for three or four days and nights together, enough to drown the whole country. Such violent rains in so hilly a country as Judea must occasion inundations very dangerous to buildings within their reach, by washing the soil from under them, and occasioning their fall.”—Harmer. See the notes on Matt.

a man that without a foundation built A. M. 4035.
a house upon the earth, against which A. D. 31.
the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.

vii. 21-29; where the contents of this paragraph are explained. “May these beautiful, striking, and repeated admonitions, which our Saviour gives us of the vanity of every profession which does not influence the practice, be attended to with reverence and fear! We are building for eternity; may we never grudge the time and labour of a most serious inquiry into the great fundamental principles of religion! May we discover the sure foundation, and raise upon it a noble superstructure, which shall stand fair and glorious when hypocrites are swept away into everlasting ruin, in that awful day in which *heaven and earth shall flee away from the face of him that sits upon the throne!* Rev. xx. 11.”—Doddridge.

CHAPTER VII.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ confirms the doctrine he had preached in the plain, by two glorious miracles, the curing the believing centurion's servant at a distance, 1-10; and by raising a widow's only son from the dead, 11-18. (2.) He confirms the faith of John the Baptist and his disciples by an account of his miracles, 19-23; commends John, and reproves the Jews for their contempt of him and his doctrine, 24-35. (3.) He comforts a sorrowful, penitent woman; declares her sins pardoned; and justifies his kind treatment of her against the cavils of Simon, a proud Pharisee, by the parable of the two insolvent debtors, 36-50.

A. M. 4035. NOW when he had ended all his
A. D. 31. sayings in the audience of the
people, * he entered into Capernaum.

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

* Matt. viii. 5.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he A. M. 4035.
sent unto him the elders of the Jews, A. D. 31.
beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they be-

^b Prov. xxix. 21.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verses 1-10. *When he had ended all his sayings*—Namely, those contained in the preceding chapter; *in the audience of the people*—For though his discourse was immediately addressed to his disciples, he delivered it in the hearing of the people who stood round him in the plain; *he entered into Capernaum*—Near which town the plain was in which he had preached. *And a certain centurion's servant was sick*—See some of the circumstances of the miracle explained on Matt. viii. 5-10. *And when he heard of Jesus*—Of his miracles and of his arrival at Capernaum; *he sent unto him the elders of the Jews*—“*Magistratus oppidi, aut prepositos synagogæ*, either the magistrates of the town, or the rulers of the synagogue.”—Grotius. For, as it was anciently the custom of the Jews to intrust the management of public affairs to persons advanced in years, as having most wisdom and experience, they called all who discharged those offices *elders*,

even when, in later times, they were admitted to them without any regard to their age at all. It is plain, from the more circumstantial account here given of this miracle by Luke, than that given by Matthew, that when the latter says, *There came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, &c.*, he is not to be understood as signifying that the centurion came in person, but only by his messengers. Indeed, it is usual in all languages, especially in the Hebrew, to ascribe to a person himself the things which are done, and the words which are spoken, by his order. Accordingly, Matthew relates as said by the centurion himself, what others said by order from him. An instance of the same kind we have in the case of Zebedee's children: from Matt. xx. 20, we learn it was their mother that spoke those words which, Mark x. 35-37, they themselves are said to speak; because she was only their mouth. In John iv. 1, Jesus is said to baptize, when he baptized by his disciples. And John xix. 1, Pilate is said to

A. M. 4035. sought him instantly, saying, That he
A. D. 31. was worthy for whom he should do this:

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

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

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto ¹ one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

¹ Greek, *this man*.

take and scourge Jesus, when he did it only by his soldiers. Thus, in the following Jewish proverb, adduced by Le Clerc on this passage, "The messenger of any man is as, or equal to, the man himself. The ambassador of a king is as, or equal to the king." And nothing is more frequent, even at this day, in our courts of law, than to say that a person *comes into the court*, and asks a thing, which he asks perhaps only *at the third hand*,—by the counsel, whom his solicitor has employed in his cause. *They besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy*—This centurion seems to have been what they called a *proselyte of righteousness*; for he was a lover of the Jewish nation, on account of their religion, and therefore had built them a synagogue: which attachment to them, and uncommon generosity, had made him greatly beloved in that country. Hence these elders of Capernaum, where he now resided, heartily espoused his cause on this occasion, presented his petition to Jesus, and urged it also from the consideration of his character. *Then Jesus went with them*—As he constantly embraced every opportunity of doing good, whether to the bodies or souls of men; so he did not decline this that was now offered him, but cheerfully went with the elders as they desired, in order to heal the centurion's servant. *And when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him*—In the way, some of the centurion's friends, whom he had sent, met Jesus with a message from him, in which he expressed the highest opinion of our Lord's power, and desired him not to take the trouble of coming, but to order the cure, which he knew he could easily do. *When Jesus heard these things he marvelled at him*—Admired him, on account of his great humility, and the strength of his faith. See on Matt. viii. 5. *And turned him about, and said unto the people*—With great solemnity; *I say unto you*—What it is of great importance that you should consider and lay to heart; *I have not*

9 When Jesus heard these things, A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31. he marvelled at him, and turned

him about and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain: and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.*

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

* Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 11 to verse 18.

found so great faith—As now appears in this stranger; *no, not in Israel*—In all my journeys through the country, and converse with its inhabitants. Observe, reader, Christ will have those that follow him to observe and consider the great examples of faith that are sometimes set before them; especially when any such are found among those who do not profess to follow Christ so closely as they do; in order that, by considering the strength of the faith of such, they may be ashamed of the weakness and wavering of their own. *And they, returning, found the servant whole*—The cure was immediately and perfectly wrought. Observe also, 1st, The kindness of this centurion to his servant, and the anxiety he showed to get him cured, were suitable to the character of a humane master, and exhibit an excellent pattern of duty, very fit to be imitated by Christian masters, with whom it is but too common to treat their servants and dependants as if they were not creatures of the same rank with themselves, but of an inferior order. 2d, Christ will take cognizance of the distressed case of poor servants, and be ready to relieve them; for there is no respect of persons with him. Nor are the Gentiles excluded from the benefit of his grace. Nay, this was a specimen of that much greater faith which would be found among the Gentiles, when the gospel should be preached to them, than among the Jews.

Verses 11, 12. *He went into a city called Nain*—A town situated about a mile or two south of Tabor, and near Endor. *And many of his disciples went with him*—Among these, doubtless, were the twelve appointed to be apostles: for, "it is not to be imagined that he would suffer the chosen witnesses of his miracles to be absent, when so great a miracle was to be performed as the raising a person from the dead, and to be performed so publicly, in the presence of all those who were attending the funeral." *There was a dead man carried out*—"When Jesus

A. M. 4035. 13 And when the Lord saw her, A. D. 31. he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the ²bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, ^b Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and be-

^a Or, *coffin*.—^b Chap. viii. 54; John xi. 43; Acts ix. 40; Rom. iv. 17.

and the multitude that attended him came to the gates of Nain, they met the corpse of a youth, whom much people of the city were carrying out to burial, accompanied by his afflicted mother bathed in tears. This woman, being a widow, had no prospect of any more children, wherefore, as he was her only son, the loss she sustained in him was very great. Hence the sympathy which she received from her relations and friends was singular. In testimony of their concern for her, a crowd of people, much greater than was usual on such occasions, attended her while she performed the last duty to her beloved son. This circumstance the evangelist takes notice of to show, that though there had been no persons present at the miracle but those who attended the funeral, it was illustrious on account of the number of the witnesses."—Macknight.

Verses 13–15. *When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, &c.*—Jesus, whose tenderness made him susceptible of the strongest impressions from occurrences of this kind, knowing that the mother's affliction was bitter, and the occasion of it real, was greatly moved with compassion at the sorrowful scene. Here was no application made to him for her, not so much as that he would speak some words of comfort to her; but, *ex mero motu*, purely from the goodness of his nature he was troubled for her, and *said unto her, Weep not*. Observe, reader, Christ has a concern for mourners, for the miserable, and often prevents them with the blessings of his goodness. He undertook the work of our redemption and salvation *in his love and in his pity*, Isa. lxiii. 9. What a pleasing idea doth this give us of the compassion of the Lord Jesus, and the multitude of his tender mercies, which may be very encouraging to us, when at any time we are in sorrow! Let poor widows comfort themselves in their sorrows with this, that Christ pities them, and knows their souls in adversity; and, if others despise their grief, he does not. Christ said, *Weep not*; and he could give her a reason for it, which no one else could; weep not for a dead son, for he shall presently become a living one. This was a reason peculiar to her case; yet there is a reason, common to all *that sleep in Jesus*, (which is of equal force against inordinate and excessive grief for their death,) that they shall rise again, shall rise in glory, and therefore we must not *sorrow as those that have no hope*, 1 Thess. iv. 13. Let Rachel, that weeps for her children, *refrain her eyes from tears; for there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy chil-*

gan to speak: and he delivered him A. M. 4035. to his mother. A. D. 31.

16 ° And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, ° That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, ° That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth

° Chap. i. 65.—^a Chap. xxiv. 19; John iv. 19; vi. 14; ix. 17
° Chap. i. 68.

dren shall come again to their own border, Jer xxxi. 17. And let our passion at such a time be checked and calmed by the consideration of Christ's compassion. *And he came and touched the bier*—Which he could do without contracting pollution. The people of the East bury their dead without coffins, but they carry them to the grave on a bier that is shaped like one. By touching this, Jesus intimated to the bearers that they should not proceed. *And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise*—And no sooner had he uttered this command than *he that was dead sat up*—Without any human help, having received life from Jesus, which was thus evinced, as it was also by his *beginning to speak*. Thus, when Christ communicates spiritual life to a person who had been dead in trespasses and sins, he instantly arises out of the state of insensibility, darkness, and death, in which he had lain, and his lips are opened in prayer and praise. *And he delivered him to his mother*—Christ did not oblige this young man, to whom he had given a new life, to go along and continue with him, as his disciple to minister to him, though he owed him much, even his own self; much less as a trophy of his dominion over death, to get honour by him; but presented *him to his mother*, to attend her, as became a dutiful son, showing hereby, that it was in compassion of her affliction he had wrought the life-giving miracle. Indeed, all Christ's miracles were miracles of mercy; and a great act of mercy this was to this widow. Now she was comforted according to the time in which she had been afflicted, and much more; for she could now look upon this son as a particular favourite of Heaven, with more pleasure than if he had not died. And as this miracle was an illustrious display of our Lord's compassion for a person in distress, so it was a striking confirmation of his divine mission; this youth being raised from the dead near the gate of the city, a place of public resort, and in the presence of many witnesses, particularly the multitude which came with Jesus, the people who accompanied the corpse, and all who happened in that instant to be in or passing through the gate upon business.

Verse 16. *And there came a fear on all*—All the people present, being sensible that Jesus showed, in this instance, not only the greatness of his power, but the truth of his mission from God, were seized with a religious awe and reverence, which had him for its object. *And they glorified God*—For the Lord and his goodness, as well as the Lord and

A. M. 4035. throughout all Judea, and through-
A. D. 31. out all the region round about.

18 ¶ And the disciples of John showed him of all these things.

19 And John, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

22 ¶ Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; ^h how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, ⁱ to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

^f Matthew xi. 2.—^g Matthew xi. 5.—^h Isaiah xxxv. 5.
ⁱ Chap. iv. 18.

24 ¶ ^k And when the messengers A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31. of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is he, of whom it is written, ^l Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God, is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, ^m being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers ⁿ rejected

^k Matt. xi. 7.—^l Mal. iii. 1.—^m Matt. iii. 5; Chap. iii. 12.
ⁿ Or, frustrated.

his greatness, are to be feared and glorified; saying, *That a great prophet is risen up among us.* This was the inference which they drew from the miracle, that God had again graciously regarded his ancient people, by raising up among them an extraordinary prophet, as he had often done in former ages.—It was indeed reasonable to conclude that the person must be divinely inspired, who could thus restore the dead to life; nay, and that he was the great prophet they had been long looking for, and that in and by him God had visited his people to redeem them, as was expected, Luke i. 68. This would be life from the dead indeed, to all them that waited for the consolation of Israel. And when dead souls are thus raised to spiritual life, by a divine power going along with the gospel, we must glorify God, and look upon it as his graciously visiting his people. *And this rumour of him went forth*—Wherever this miracle was reported, which was not only in Judea, but in all the neighbouring regions, it produced the same opinion in those who heard of it, namely, that God had visited his people in an extraordinary way, and had raised up among them a very eminent prophet, which greatly heightened and increased the mighty expectations from him, which long before they had begun to entertain. “The ancients,” says Grotius, “observe, that in three of the miracles, performed by Jesus after his sermon on the mount, the three kinds of God’s benefits are represented to us: 1st, Of those which are conferred upon our suing to God for them ourselves, as in the case of the leper.

2d, Of those which are obtained for us by the prayers of others, as in the case of the centurion’s servant. And, 3d, Of those which God bestows out of his own free mercy, as in the present case. To which kind of mercy the apostles very justly refer the calling of the Gentiles.”

Verse 18. *And the disciples of John showed him these things*—All this while John the Baptist was in prison; Herod having confined him for the freedom which he took in reproving his adulterous commerce with Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife. But his confinement was not of the closest kind, for his disciples had access to him frequently. In one of those visits they gave him an account of the election of the twelve apostles to preach the gospel, and of Christ’s miracles, particularly that he had lately raised from the dead Jairus’s daughter and the widow of Nain’s son; as is plain from what Luke says in the following verses, who brings in the history of John’s message immediately after these miracles.

Verses 19–28. *And John, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them to Jesus, &c.*—See this whole paragraph explained in the notes on Matt. xi. 2–11. *To the poor the gospel is preached*—Which is the greatest mercy and the greatest miracle of all.

Verses 29–35. *And all the people*—That were present, and the publicans in particular, when they heard this discourse, having been formerly baptized with the baptism of John, justified God—Owned his wisdom and mercy, in having called them to repentance by John’s ministry, and prepared them for

A. M. 4035. ^a the counsel of God ^o against them—
A. D. 31. selves, being not baptized of him.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, ^o Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33 For ^p John the Baptist came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

^a Acts xx. 27.—^o Or, *within themselves*.—^p Matt. xi. 16.
^p Matt. iii. 4; Mark i. 6; Chap. i. 15.

him that was to come. *But the Pharisees and lawyers*—The good, learned, honourable men; *rejected the counsel of God against themselves*—That is, to their own prejudice. They made void God's gracious and merciful design, with regard to themselves; or disappointed all the methods of his love, and would receive no benefit from them. By calling the gospel *the counsel of God*, the grandest idea of it possible is given. It is nothing less than the result of the deep consideration and deliberation of God; for which reason the crime of men's rejecting it is very atrocious. Now, to show these Pharisees and lawyers the perverseness of their disposition, in resisting the evidence of John's mission, and the gracious design of God in calling them to repentance by his ministry, he told them they were like children at play, who never do what their companions desire them, but are so froward and perverse that no contrivance can be found to please them. It is plain, our Lord means that they were like the children complained of, not like those that made the complaint. *Whereunto shall I liken, &c.*—See this passage elucidated in the note on Matt. xi. 16-19. *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, &c.*—The application of this proverb to the Pharisees our Lord justified by observing, that the Divine Wisdom had tried every method proper for converting them, but in vain. For, first of all, the Baptist was sent unto them in the stern dignity of their ancient prophets, so that it was natural to think they would have revered him; nevertheless, they rejected him altogether. *John came neither eating bread, as others do, nor drinking wine*—But living on locusts, and honey, and water, in the wilderness; *and ye say, He hath a devil*—He acts like a wild, distracted demoniac, whom an evil spirit drives from the society of men. Such, it seems, was the pride and malice of the Pharisees, that, when they found their own ostentatious and hypocritical mortifications utterly eclipsed by the real austerities of this holy man's life, they impudently affirmed that his living in deserts, his shunning the company of men, the coarseness of his clothing, the abstemiousness of his diet, with other severities which he practised,

34 The Son of man is come eating ^{A. M. 4035.} and drinking; and ye say, Behold ^{A. D. 31.} a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 ^a But Wisdom is justified of all her children.

36 ¶ ^r And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

^a Matthew xi. 19.—^r Matthew xxvi. 6; Mark xiv. 3; John xi. 2.

were all the effects of madness, or religious melancholy. *The Son of man came eating and drinking*—The severity of John's ministry proving unsuccessful, with respect to the conversion of the scribes and Pharisees, God sent his own Son to address and conduct himself toward them in a more free and familiar manner: but neither was this method successful in bringing them to repentance and newness of life. They said, *Behold a gluttonous man, &c.*—Ungratefully injuring his character for that humanity and condescension, which they should rather have applauded. *But Wisdom is justified in all her children*—The children of wisdom are those who are truly wise, *wise unto salvation*, and who prove themselves to be so by a sincere and ardent love of truth and goodness, of wisdom, piety, and virtue; and the wisdom of God in all these dispensations, these various ways of calling sinners to repentance, and in all the methods of his divine providence, however offensive they may be to wicked men, are readily owned and heartily approved of by all these, See on Matt. xi. 19.

Verses 36-38. *And one of the Pharisees, &c.*—When Jesus had finished the preceding observations on the ministry of John, the obstinacy of the scribes and Pharisees, and the conduct of all the true lovers of wisdom, a Pharisee named Simon, who, it seems, was a man of a better disposition than the generality of his sect, invited him to dinner. *And he went into the Pharisee's house*—He accepted the invitation, and went with him; *and sat down to meat*—Without taking any notice of the omission of some usual ceremonies of respect, which so great a guest might well have expected. *And behold a woman which was a sinner*—This character given of her renders it probable that she had formerly been a harlot. But her conduct on this occasion proves that she was now awakened to a sense of her sin and folly. She is said to have lived *in the city*, namely, Capernaum, which is often described in that general way. It may be necessary to observe here, that the following is a very different story from that of Mary of Bethany anointing Christ's head a little before his death. See Matt. xxvi. 6, &c. Neither was this

A. M. 4035. 38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bid- den him, saw it, he spake within himself, say- ing, 'This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman

* Chap. xv. 2.

woman, as many have supposed, the person who, in the gospel, is called Mary Magdalene, an opinion for which there appears to be no reason, excepting that Mary Magdalene is mentioned by Luke in the next chapter, as our Lord's attendant, and one out of whom he had cast seven devils. See note on chap. viii. 2. *When she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house*—Probably she was acquainted at his house, for, it appears, she got easy access even into the room where the company was sitting; *brought an alabaster box of ointment*—With a de- sign to testify her respect and reverence for Jesus, who had shown himself to be her compassionate Saviour. *And stood at his feet behind weeping*—Being come into the room, she placed herself behind Jesus, and from a deep conviction of her many sins, and of the obligations she lay under to him for bringing her to a sense of them, she shed tears in such abundance, that they trickled down on his feet, which were then bare. It must be observed, that neither the Jews nor Romans wore stockings, and as for their shoes or sandals, they always put them off when they took meat: for they did not sit on chairs at meals as we do, but lay on couches covered with stuffs, the quality whereof was suitable to the circumstances of the entertainer. On these couches they placed themselves on their sides, and supported their heads with one arm bent at the elbow, and resting on the couch; with the other they took their food, and were supported at the back by cushions. Their feet of course were accessible to one who came behind the couch. *And began to wash (βαπτειν, to water) his feet with tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head*—We are not to imagine that she came with a purpose thus to wash and wipe the feet of Christ; but probably hearing that the Pharisee, who invited Jesus to din- ner, had neglected the usual civility of anointing the head of his divine guest, she was willing to sup- ply the defect, bringing for that purpose the alabas- ter box of ointment; and as she stood near Jesus she was so melted with his discourse, that she shed such a flood of tears as wetted his feet; and observing this, she wiped them with her hair, which she now wore flowing loose about her shoulders, as mourn- ers commonly did; and then, not thinking herself worthy to anoint his head, poured out the liquid perfume on his feet, and thereby showed at once, both great love and great humility. In this view, all appears natural and unaffected. It is well known

this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

40 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he

* Matt. xv.ii. 28.

that long hair was esteemed a great ornament in the female dress, and women of loose character used to nourish and plait it, and to set it out with garlands and flowers.

Verse 39. *Now when the Pharisee saw it*—When Simon observed what was done, that Jesus permitted such a notorious sinner to approach, nay, and to touch him; *he spake within himself*—He thought in his heart; *This man, if he were a prophet*—As he pretends to be; *would have known what manner of woman*—What a vile, abominable creature; *this is that toucheth him*—Thus familiarly; and instead of allowing her to do so, would im- mediately have driven her away with just disdain, as the tradition of the elders directs; for it was a max- im with the Pharisees, that the very touch of the wicked caused pollution. "But though Simon did not declare his sentiments, they were not hidden from Christ, who, to show him that he was a pro- phet, and that he knew not only the characters of men, but the inward and invisible state of their minds, conversed with him immediately upon the subject of his thoughts. The scope indeed of what he said was, to convince Simon how absurdly he reasoned. Nevertheless, Jesus did not expose him before the company, by making what he said within himself public, but, with great delicacy, pointed out the unreasonableness of his thoughts to Simon alone, without letting the guests at table know any thing of the matter."

Verses 40-43. *Jesus answering*—What Simon spake within himself; *said, Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee*—Though he was kindly entertained at his table, yet even there he judged it proper to reprove him for what he saw amiss in him, and not to suffer sin upon him. This he does, however, in a most tender and courteous manner. *And he saith, Master, διδασκαλε, teacher, say on*—Though Simon would not believe him to be a prophet, because he suffered so great a sinner to touch him, yet he could compliment him with the title of *teacher*, like those that say to him, *Lord, Lord*, but do not the things which he enjoins. Then Jesus immediately de- livered the following parable as a just, yet mild reproof of his host. *A certain creditor had two debtors*—That were both insolvent; *the one owed five hundred pence*—Greek, *δηνάρια*, Roman pence, in value about seven pence halfpenny sterling, so that five hundred of them were nearly equivalent to fifteen guineas sterling, and fifty to one guinea and a

A. M. 4035. frankly forgave them both. Tell me
A. D. 31. therefore, which of them will love
him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that
he to whom he forgave most. And he said
unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said
unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered
into thy house, thou gavest me no water for
my feet: but she hath washed my feet with
tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her
head.

[†] Psa. xxiii. 5.—[†] 1 Tim. i. 14.

half. There is no reason to believe that there was any mystery intended in Christ's fixing on these sums, rather than any others that had as great a difference between them. And *when they had nothing to pay*—Could neither of them discharge any part of this debt; *he frankly forgave them both*—The whole of what they respectively owed: *Tell me, therefore*—Since it may be reasonably expected that both would have some sense of, and gratitude for his goodness; *which of them would love him most*—In return for this his great kindness and generosity? Observe, reader, neither of them would love him at all before he had forgiven him. An insolvent debtor, till he is forgiven, does not love, but shun his creditor. *Simon answered, He to whom he forgave most*—He surely was under the greatest obligations, and must reasonably be supposed to feel the greatest affection for his merciful and generous creditor: *And he said, Thou hast rightly judged*—And the reflection is evidently suited to the case that we have before us.

Verses 44–48. *And he turned to the woman*—That had been a scandalous, notorious sinner, and was the greater, the five hundred pence debtor. The Pharisee, however, though the less, the fifty pence debtor, yet was a debtor too; which was more than he thought himself to be, judging rather that God was his debtor, chap. xviii. 10, 11. *Seest thou this woman*—Afflicted and distressed as she is? and canst thou avoid taking notice of the extraordinary tenderness and affectionate regard to me that she has now manifested? *I entered into thy house*—As a guest, on thine own express invitation; *thou gavest me no water for my feet*—Though that be so customary and necessary a refreshment on these occasions. *But she hath washed my feet with her tears*—Tears of affection for me, tears of affliction for sin; and *wiped them with the hairs of her head*—In token of her great love to me. *Thou gavest me no kiss*—When I first came under thy roof. So little was thy love to me. It was customary with the Jews to show respect and kindness to their welcome guests, by saluting them with a kiss, by washing their feet, and anointing their heads with oil, or some fine ointment. It is possible Simon might omit some of these civilities, lest his brethren, who

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but
this woman, since the time I came
in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 [†] My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 [‡] Wherefore, I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, [‡] Thy sins are forgiven.

[‡] Matt. ix. 2; Mark ii. 5.

sat at the table with him, should think he paid Jesus too much respect; and, if there was any such slight intended, it might be an additional reason for our Lord's taking such particular notice of the neglect. *But this woman, since the time I came in*—Or rather, as many copies read it, *εισηλθεις, she came in, hath not ceased to kiss even my feet*—With the greatest humility and affection. *My head with oil thou didst not anoint*—Though few entertainments fail of being attended with that circumstance; (see Deut. xxviii. 40; Mic. vi. 15; Psa. xxiii. 5; and civ. 15; and cxli. 5;) but she, as thou seest, *hath anointed my feet with precious and fragrant ointment; wherefore I say unto thee*—I declare it openly, both for her vindication and for thy admonition; *her sins, which are many*—And exceedingly heinous, as I well know; *are forgiven*—Freely and graciously; *for*—Rather, *therefore*, as *οτι* undoubtedly ought here to be translated, *she loved much*—As I have been the means of bringing her to repentance, and to enjoy pardon and peace, she has thus testified the great love and high regard she has for me, as being persuaded that she never can sufficiently express her sense of the obligation. *But to whom little is forgiven*—Or who thinks his debt was but small; *the same loveth little*—Is not much affected with the kindness of the creditor that forgives him; and feels but little gratitude and love to him on that account. The substance, therefore, of our Lord's answer to the Pharisee is, "It is true, this woman has been a great sinner; but she is a *pardoned sinner*, which supposes her to be a *penitent sinner*: what she has done to me, is an expression of her great love to me, her Saviour, by whom her sins are forgiven: and as she is pardoned, who was so great a sinner, it may reasonably be expected that she will love her Saviour more than others, and give greater proofs of it; and if this be the fruit of her love, flowing from a sense of the pardon of her sins, it becomes me to accept of it, and ill becomes any to be offended at it." It must be carefully observed here, that her love is mentioned as the *effect* and *evidence*, not the *cause* of her pardon. She knew that much had been forgiven her, and therefore she loved much. It is true, Jesus had not yet given her any express intimation in word of the pardon of her sins; yet, having, by

A. M. 4035. 49 And they that sat at meat
A. D. 31. with him, began to say within them-
selves, ¶ Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

¶ Matt. ix. 3; Mark ii. 7.—* Matt. ix. 22;

his sermons and his grace attending her hearing them, brought her to true repentance, without doubt she was assured of her pardon by the general doctrine of the gospel, which she had heard; by the promise of *rest*, which Jesus had lately made to all weary and heavy-laden sinners; and especially by the *Spirit of adoption*, which he had sent into her heart, sealing forgiveness upon her conscience, begetting her again to immortal hopes, and filling her with joy and peace, through believing that God was pacified toward her after all she had done.

As a further proof of the justness of this interpretation, it may not be improper to produce here the following testimony of Dr. Whitby: "Christ saith not her sins are forgiven *because she loved much*, but this ought to be a token, that her sins, which rendered her unworthy to touch me, have been forgiven; this great love to me being an indication of her deep sense of God's mercy to her in pardoning her many sins; and this do I, the prophet and the *Son of God*, declare unto her. To this sense lead both the parable of the great debtor, to whom his lord frankly had forgiven all, *for he loved much* because much had been forgiven, and the conclusion of it, in these words, *he that hath little forgiven, loveth little*. Whence it appears, that *ori* here cannot be causal, or intimate that she was forgiven much because she loved much; the cause assigned of her forgiveness being, not her love, but faith, verse 50; but only consequential, denoting the effect, or indication of the forgiveness of her many sins. So, Hos. ix. 15, all their iniquity was in Gilgal, *ori, therefore there I hated them*; for they did not sin in Gilgal because he hated them there; but he hated them there because there they offended." Thus also Dr. Campbell, who translates the words, *Therefore her love is great*, observing, "The whole context shows that the particle *ori* is illative, and not causal, in this place. The parable of the debtors clearly represents the gratuitous forgiveness as the cause of the love, not the love as the cause of the forgiveness. And this, on the other hand, is, verse 50th, ascribed to her faith." Observe, reader, 1st, The Pharisee doubted whether Jesus was a prophet or not, nay, he, in effect, denied it; but Christ here shows that he was *more than a prophet*, that he was one who had power on earth to forgive sins, and to whom the affections and thankful acknowledgments of penitent sinners were due; in other words, that he was the Messiah, the Son of God, whose sole prerogative and right it was, in conjunction with the Father, to forgive men's sins. 2d, In testifying that this pardoned sinner *loved much*, because she had had much forgiven, and in signifying that *to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little*; he intimated to the

50 And he said to the woman, A. M. 4035.
A. D. 31. ¶ Thy faith hath saved thee; go in
peace.

Mark v. 34; x. 52; Chap. viii. 48; xviii. 42.

Pharisee, that his love to Christ was so little, that he had reason to question whether he loved him at all in sincerity; and consequently, whether indeed his sins, though comparatively little, were forgiven him. From this we learn that, instead of grudging great sinners the mercy they find with Christ upon their repentance, we ought to be excited by their example to examine ourselves, whether we be indeed forgiven, and do at all love Christ. "Our Lord did not make the application of this parable more directly, but left Simon to do it, because he could not but see that if love invites love, and merits a return, Jesus would have been ungenerous had he treated this woman with rudeness and contempt. Having expressed greater love to him, she deserved higher returns of gratitude from him than even Simon himself; for which reason he was not to blame when he allowed her to wash his feet with her tears, wipe them with the hairs of her head, kiss them, and anoint them with fragrant ointment." And he said unto her, *Thy sins are forgiven*—Having vindicated her, he spake kindly to her, and assured her, in express terms, that her sins, of which he knew she had truly repented, were actually forgiven.

Verses 49, 50. And they that sat at meat began to say—Not indeed openly, but *within themselves, Who is this, &c.*—"They were exceedingly offended at the power which he claimed. But Jesus, contemning all their malicious murmurings, repeated his assurance by telling the woman that her faith had saved her from the punishment of her sins, and bidding her depart in peace, that is, impressed with a strong sense of the love of God, and filled with the satisfaction which naturally arises from that attainment."—Macknight. Upon the whole of this story, let us learn from the candour with which Christ accepted this invitation, and the gentleness and prudence with which he behaved at this insnaring entertainment, to mingle the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence and sweetness of the dove; and neither absolutely to refuse all favours, nor severely to resent all neglects, from those whose friendship might at best be very dubious, and their intimacy by no means safe. Above all, let us be careful to avoid that very ill temper which the Pharisees showed, in upbraiding this poor, humble penitent with the scandals of her former life. Where we have reason to believe that sin has been lamented and forsaken, and consequently that God has forgiven it, let us cheerfully receive those whom our holy Master has not rejected; and if the remembrance of former irregularities cannot be entirely lost, let it only engage us to magnify the riches of divine grace toward such persons, and to rejoice with them in the display of it. See Doddridge.

CHAPTER VIII.

This chapter contains a repetition of divers particulars of Christ's preaching and miracles, which we had before in Matthew and Mark. Here is, (1.) A general account of Christ's preaching; and how he and his disciples were supported by the charitable contributions of good people, 1-3. (2.) His parable of the sower, and four sorts of ground on which the seed fell; with the explication and application of it, 4-15. (3.) His parable of the lighted candle, 16-18. (4.) His preferring his obedient disciples to his nearest natural relations, 19-21. (5.) His stilling a storm at sea with speaking a word, 22-25. (6.) His casting a legion of devils out of a man that was possessed by them, and permitting them to enter into the swine of the Gadarenes, 26-39. (7.) His healing a woman that had a bloody issue, and raising Jairus's daughter to life, 40-56

A. M. 4035. A. D. 31. **AND** it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.

2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

4 ¶ And when much people were gathered

together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: A. M. 4035. A. D. 31.

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way-side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit a hundred-fold. And when

* Matt. xxvii. 55, 56.—→ Mark xvi. 9.—* Sexagesima Sunday,

gospel, verse 4 to verse 16.—c Matt. xiii. 2; Mark iv. 1.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. *And it came to pass afterward*—Probably the day after he had dined with Simon; or, as the expression, *εν τω καθεξης*, may be understood to imply, *in the order of his work*; for he went through it regularly, and the end of one good work was with him the beginning of another; *he went throughout every city and village*—Namely, in those parts, *preaching and showing*, &c.—*κηρυσσω και ευαγγελιζομενος*, *proclaiming, and evangelizing, or publishing; the glad tidings of the kingdom of God*—The kingdom which he was now about to erect among mankind: or, the glad tidings of his reconcileableness to men, of the necessity of reformation, and of the acceptableness of repentance, even in the chief of sinners. *And the twelve were with him*—As he thought it proper they should be for some time, that they might be further instructed for their important work, and that their having been thus publicly seen in his train might promote their reception, when they afterward came to any of these places by themselves.

Verses 2, 3. *And certain women*—There were also some women with him; the monuments of his power and mercy, for they had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Some of them had been troubled in mind, and in a state of melancholy, through the influence of evil spirits, and others of them afflicted in body in different respects, and he had healed them all, and thereby had shown himself to be the physician of both soul and body. *Mary, called Magdalene*—Doubtless from *Μαγδαλα*, the place of her residence, which was a town in Galilee beyond Jordan.

Matt. xv. 39. She seems to have been a woman of high station and opulent fortune; being mentioned by Luke here even before Joanna, the wife of so great a man as Herod's steward. Besides, the other evangelists, when they have occasion to speak of our Lord's female friends; commonly assign the first place to Mary Magdalene. Susanna also seems to have been a person of some considerable rank and circumstances in life, as were probably most of the others here referred to. These pious women, deeply sensible of the obligations which they were under to Jesus, for the deliverances he had wrought out for them, and the great blessings which they had received through his heavenly doctrine and holy example, were concerned to render unto him, in some measure, according to the goodness which he had shown them; and therefore ministered to his necessities. Mark, it must be observed, agrees with Luke in the circumstance of our Lord's being supported by the charity of his friends. For, speaking of the women who were present at Christ's crucifixion, he says, chap. xv. 41, that when Jesus was in Galilee, they followed him, and ministered unto him of their substance. The evangelists nowhere else tell us in what way our Lord and his apostles were supported.

Verses 4-15. *And when much people were gathered together*—To be instructed by his discourse, as well as to see, or be healed by, his miracles; *and were come to him*—In crowds; *out of every city*—In that part of the country; *he spake by a parable*—Having first, for greater conveniency of being better heard and less incommoded by them, entered into a ship,

A. M. 4035. he had said these things, he cried, He
A. D. 31. that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 ¶ ^d And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; * that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 ¶ ^f Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12 Those by the way-side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

13 They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these

^d Matt. xiii. 10; Mark iv. 10.—^e Isa. vi. 9; Mark iv. 12.
^f Matt. xiii. 18; Mark iv. 14.

where he sat, and from thence taught them. *A sower went out to sow, &c.*—See this parable explained at large in the notes on Matt. xiii. 3-23; and Mark iv. 3-20.

Verses 16-18. *No man, when he hath lighted a candle, &c.*—See on Matt. v. 15; and Mark iv. 21. *Nothing is secret, &c.*—See on Matt. x. 26. *Take heed, therefore, how ye hear.* In Mark, chap. iv. 24, it is, *Take heed what you hear.* As it is the indispensable duty of all ministers of the Word to take heed that they preach, 1st, That their doctrine be true, that they may not deceive their hearers. 2d, That it be important, that they may not trifle with them; and, 3d, That it be suitable to their state and character; that they rightly divide the word of truth, and give to every description of hearers their portion of meat in due season; so it concerns all hearers to take heed what they hear. They must not take it for granted that what they hear is true, important, and suited to their state and character: but must bring it to the test of the Holy Scriptures, and examine it thereby; and for that purpose, must endeavour to make themselves well acquainted with the Scriptures: and if they find that, according to the divine oracles, the doctrine which they hear answers the above description, they must so take heed what they hear, as to attend to, and consider it well, that they may thoroughly understand and lay it to heart, and that it may have its designed effect upon their spirit and conduct.

But, according to Luke here, our Lord's caution, inferred from the preceding parable, implied another thing equally important, *Take heed how ye hear*—1st, That you do not hear so inattentively, and in such a prayerless state of mind, as not to understand, nor afterward meditate on what you hear, and so receive the seed as by the way-side. See on Matt. xiii. 19. 2d, That having heard, and understood in a measure what you heard, and being affected thereby, you do

have no root, which for a while believe, A. M. 4035
and in time of temptation fall away. A. D. 31.

14 :And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 ¶ ^e No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 ^b For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hid,

^e Matt. v. 15; Mark iv. 21; Chap. xi. 33.—^b Matt. x. 26;
Chap. xii. 2.

not rest in any ineffectual and transient impressions made on your mind, and therefore be *offended* and *fall away* in time of trial and temptation; but that the truth may take deep root in your mind, and that you may *have root in yourself*. See on Matt. xiii. 20, 21. Take heed, 3d, That you guard against the *cares of the world*, the love of deceitful riches, the vain pleasures of life, and desires after other things; those pernicious weeds, which in so many choke the springing blade, or forming ear, so that no fruit is brought forth to perfection. See on Matt. xiii. 22. But hear, 1st, In *simplicity* of intention, with a single eye to the glory of God and your own salvation, present and eternal. 2d, In *sincerity* of heart, truly and earnestly desiring to discover and put away every error and every sin, and to know and do the whole will of God. 3d, In *humility*, conscious that you are unworthy to know the great and important things revealed in the gospel, the will of God, and the way of salvation from such great misery to such great happiness, unworthy that God should speak to you by his Son, and his inspired prophets, apostles, and evangelists. 4th, With *reverence*, remembering it is God's word, and you are in God's presence and under God's eye. 5th, With *seriousness*, persuaded the truth you hear is no light matter, but for your life, your better and everlasting life. Would you not hear with seriousness the advice of a skilful physician respecting your health, or of a lawyer concerning your property? And will you not hear with equal, nay, with greater seriousness what concerns you infinitely more? 6th, With deep *attention*: let no sentence, or even word, that is uttered escape you, and fail not afterward seriously to consider what you have heard, and to examine yourself thereby. 7th, With *prayer*, while hearing, and before and after you hear, for the *spirit of wisdom and revelation*, Eph. i. 17: persuaded *the things of God knoweth no man*

A. M. 4035. that shall not be known, and come
A. D. 31. abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: ¹ for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he ¹ seemeth to have.

19 ¶ ¹ Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

¹ Matthew xiii. 12; xxv. 29; Chapter xix. 26.—¹ Or, *thinketh that he hath.*

but by the Spirit of God, 2 Cor. ii. 11, 14. 8th, Hear with *faith*, firmly believing the certainty and importance of what is taught you from the oracles of God, always remembering the *word preached* does not profit those who hear it, in whom it *is not mixed with faith*, Heb. iv. 2. 9th, In love to the truth, though searching and cutting, though disagreeable to your mind, like a bitter medicine to your taste, or giving pain, like a lance which opens an imposthume. 10th, With meekness, with a calm, unruffled, peaceful mind, that what you hear may prove an *ingrafted word able to save your soul*, James i. 21. Above all, 11th, Hear with a fixed resolution, formed in the strength of grace, to be a *doer of the word, and not a hearer only*, to practise all you hear as far as you see it to be agreeable to the word and will of God. *For whosoever hath, to him shall be given.* See note on Matthew xiii. 12; and Mark iv. 25.

Verses 19–21. *Then came to him his mother, &c.*—See the notes on Matt. xii. 46–50; and on Mark iii. 31. *My mother and my brethren are they which hear the word of God and do it*—In these words we have an important branch of the character and the great dignity and happiness of the true disciples of Christ. As they make conscience of embracing all proper opportunities of hearing the word of God, so they take heed *what and how they hear*, as directed in verse 18; and endeavour to hear it in the manner and spirit explained and inculcated in the last note. And their great honour and dignity is, 1st, That they are regarded and esteemed by the Lord Jesus as his nearest and dearest relations; they are not only his subjects and his servants, but his brethren, his spouse, his members. They bear his name and image, and share his nature. The consequence of which is, that the relation in which they stand to him shall subsist, when all the relations of flesh and blood shall have ceased for ever. 2d, They are unspeakably dear to him; he loves them above all other men, and it should seem above all angels. He has their welfare infinitely at heart; in all respects acts the part of a kinsman, in caring and providing for them: he sympathizes with them in their infirmities and afflictions, and takes a share in their joys and sorrows. 3d, He admits them into his presence,—to his table, and the rich provisions of his house,—allows them the nearest access to, and greatest intimacy and familiarity with himself. He

20 And it was told him *by certain*, A. M. 4035. which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. A. D. 31.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 ¶ ¹ Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto

* Matthew xii. 46; Mark iii. 31.—¹ Matthew viii. 23; Mark iv. 35.

converses and corresponds freely with them, and even dwells among them. 4th, He is not ashamed of them, although poor and mean. When he died, he left them rich legacies; and does not forget them now he is in his kingdom; but defends, supports, directs, and comforts them many ways; sends them many rich presents and donations; will confess them as his friends and relations before all the principalities and powers of the universe, and will have them all, at last, to live eternally with him. Now from this near relation, in which those that *hear the word of God, and do it*, stand to the Lord Jesus, and from the great regard he has for them, it is easy to infer that all such should consider themselves as being nearly related to each other, and therefore should be very dear to one another. Being the *sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty*, 2 Cor. vi. 18; and the brethren and sisters of his blessed Son, they are of course brethren and sisters to each other; not only bearing the same common name of *Christian*, but partaking of the same heavenly nature, and manifesting the same divine likeness, as the children of the same family generally resemble each other. And as their relation to each other, like that in which they stand to the Lord Jesus, shall subsist and be a firm bond of union among them, when all the relations merely human, and all the ties of nature, civil society, and worldly interest shall have ceased for ever; surely a consideration of this ought to make them esteem and love each other with *pure hearts fervently*, notwithstanding any little difference of opinion, or mode of worship, or such like circumstance which may have place among them. And they should show how dear they are to each other every way in their power; and in particular by their delighting in each other's company, and being free and familiar with each other, and by cultivating a spirit of sympathy and fellow-feeling with and toward one another; never being ashamed of each other, however poor or despised by the world, but acknowledging, supporting, and comforting one another, as children of the same family, and members of the same body; and, above all, always endeavouring to keep the *unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*.

Verses 22–25. *It came to pass on a certain day*—According to Mark, *the same day, when the evening was come; he went into a ship with his disciples*—With a view to cross the lake. *And they*

A. M. 4035. the other side of the lake. And they
A. D. 31. launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 ¶ And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and

fell down before him, and with a A. M. 4035.
loud voice said, What have I to do A. D. 31.
with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out ^² into the deep.

32 And there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

^¹ Matt. viii. 28; Mark v. 1.

^² Rev. xx. 3.

launched forth—Attended by a number of other little boats, which were full of people, Mark iv. 36. *But as they sailed, he fell asleep*—In the stern of the vessel, fatigued with the work of the day. *And there came down a storm, &c.*—The weather suddenly changed, and a storm came on, which threatened to sink them to the bottom. The tempest increased the horrors of the night; the sky lowered; the wind roared, the sea and clouds were driven with the fury of the storm. Now they were tossed up to the top of the billows, then sunk down to the bottom of the deep, buried among the waves. The disciples exerted their utmost skill in managing their vessel, but to no purpose; the waves, breaking in, filled her so that she began to sink. Being now on the very brink of perishing, and ready to give themselves up for lost, they ran to Jesus, crying out, *Master, master, we perish.* Then he arose and rebuked the wind—Which instantly became silent; and the raging of the water—The huge waves of which sunk down on every side in a moment. *And there was a calm*—The sea was perfectly still around them, and not a breath of wind moved, nor was the least sound heard, except from the oars and sails of the boats which composed this little fleet. *And he said unto them, Where is your faith?*—In Mark it is, *How is it that ye have no faith?* As if he had said, After having seen me perform so many miracles, it is extremely culpable in you to be thus overcome with fear. Did you doubt my power to protect you? When they first awoke him, and before he had stilled the storm, he said, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* but

their confusion and dismay, it seems, prevented their deriving any benefit from the rebuke: he therefore now repeats it, when the storm was over, and they had leisure to attend to it: and doubtless it contributed to make them more sensible of the evil of their fear. *And they being afraid, wondered, &c.*—When by the continuance of the calm they found what a great miracle was wrought, they were inexpressibly amazed, and their amazement was mixed with fear, because he had rebuked them so sharply. See this miracle more fully elucidated, on Matt. viii. 23–27; and Mark iv. 35–41.

Verses 26–30. See the contents of these verses explained at large, on Matt. viii. 28–34; and Mark v. 1–17. *I beseech thee, torment me not*—Let me continue where I am, and do not, before my time, cast me into the place of torments. *For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man*—Being moved with pity at the sight of such a miserable spectacle; *for oftentimes it had caught him*—Therefore our compassionate Lord had made the more haste to cast it out. *That he would not command them to go into the deep*—This expression, *the deep*, in English, is invariably, *the sea*. In this sense it occurs often in Scripture. We find it in this gospel, chap. v. 4, where the Greek word, so rendered, is, *το βαθος*. That the sea is not meant here, is evident; for to the sea the demons went of themselves, when permitted, at their own request, to enter into the swine. The word *αβυσσος*, here used, evidently signifies the place where the wicked spirits are punished, as it does likewise Rev. xx. 3, where it is translated, *the bottomless pit*. Indeed, it pro-

A. M. 4035. 34 When they that fed *them* saw
A. D. 31. what was done, they fled, and went
and told *it* in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was
done; and came to Jesus, and found the man
out of whom the devils were departed, sitting
at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right
mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw *it*, told them by
what means he that was possessed of the devils
was healed.

37 ° Then the whole multitude of the coun-
try of the Gadarenes round about, ° besought
him to depart from them; for they were taken
with great fear. And he went up into the ship,
and returned back again.

38 Now, ° the man out of whom the devils
were departed, besought him that he might
be with him. But Jesus sent him away,
saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and show how
great things God hath done unto thee. And
he went his way, and published throughout
the whole city, how great things Jesus had
done unto him.

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus
was returned, the people *gladly* received him:
for they were all waiting for him.

41 ¶ And behold, there came a man named
Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue:
and he fell down at Jesus's feet, and besought
him that he would come into his house:

42 For he had one only daughter, about
twelve years of age, and she lay a dying.
But as he went, the people thronged him.

43 ¶ And a woman having an issue of
blood twelve years, which had spent all her
living upon physicians, neither could be heal-
ed of any,

44 Came behind *him* and touched the bor-

° Matt. viii. 34.—° Acts xvi. 39.—° Mark v. 18.—° Matt.
ix. 18; Mark v. 22.—° Matt. ix. 20.—° Mark v. 30; Ch. vi. 19.

perly denotes a place without a bottom, or so deep
that it cannot be fathomed. The Greeks describe
their Tartarus in this manner: and the Jews, when
they wrote in Greek, did not scruple to adopt their ex-
pressions, because they were universally understood.
There was a herd of many swine feeding—Within
their view, though at a distance. *They besought
him to suffer them to enter into them*—Not that they
could have any more ease in the swine than out of
them: for had that been the case, they would not so
soon have dislodged themselves, destroying the herd.

der of his garment: and immediately A. M. 4035.
her issue of blood stanch'd. A. D. 31.

45 And Jesus said, Who touched me?
When all denied, Peter, and they that were
with him, said, Master, the multitude throng
thee, and press thee, and sayest thou, Who
touched me?

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched
me: for I perceive that 'virtue is gone out of me.

47 And when the woman saw that she was
not hid, she came trembling, and falling down
before him, she declared unto him before all the
people for what cause she had touched him,
and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of
good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole;
go in peace.

49 ¶ While he yet spake, there cometh one
from the ruler of the synagogue's house, say-
ing to him, Thy daughter is dead: trouble not
the Master.

50 But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered
him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she
shall be made whole.

51 And when he came into the house, he suf-
fered no man to go in, save Peter, and James,
and John, and the father and the mother of the
maiden.

52 And all wept and bewailed her: but he
said, Weep not: she is not dead, ° but sleepeth.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing
that she was dead.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by
the hand, and called, saying, Maid, ° arise.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose
straightway: and he commanded to give her
meat.

56 And her parents were astonished: but
° he charged them that they should tell no man
what was done.

° Mark v. 35.—° John xi. 11, 13.—° Chap. vii. 14; John
xi. 43.—° Matt. viii. 4; ix. 30; Mark v. 43.

Verses 40-56. *When Jesus returned, the people
gladly received him*—At landing, he met with a
better reception than among the Gadarenes, for the
multitude gathered round him to hear him preach,
many having waited there in expectation of his re-
turn. To these, therefore, he preached the doctrines
of salvation, for Mark represents him as tarrying
with the people some time before he went into
Capernaum. *Behold there came a man named Jai-
rus, &c.*—See the notes on Matt. ix. 18-26; and
Mark v. 22-43.

CHAPTER IX.

In this chapter we have, (1,) The commission which Christ gave his twelve apostles to go out for some time to preach the gospel, and confirm it by miracles, 1-6. (2,) The terror of Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, at the growing greatness of Christ, 7-9. (3,) The retirement of Christ into a place of solitude with his disciples, now returned; a great resort of people to him, and his feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, 10-17. (4,) His discourse with his disciples concerning himself, and his sufferings for them and theirs for him, 18-27. (5,) His transfiguration before Peter, James, and John, and converse with Moses and Elias, 28-36. (6,) His casting a devil out of a lunatic child, when his disciples could not, 37-42. (7,) The repeated notices he gave his disciples of his approaching sufferings, 43-45. (8,) His check to the ambition of his disciples, and to their desire of monopolizing miraculous powers to themselves, 46-50. (9,) His rebuke of their too great resentment of an affront given him by some Samaritans; assuring them that he came to save, not to destroy, 51-56. (10,) The answer which he gave to several that were inclined to follow him, but without due consideration, or the zeal and resolution necessary, 57-62.

A. M. 4035. **THEN** ^a he called his twelve disciples
A. D. 31. together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

2 ^b And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 ^c And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

4 ^d And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 ^e And whosoever will not receive you, when

ye go out of that city, ^f shake off the
A. M. 4035. very dust from your feet for a tes-
A. D. 31. timony against them.

6 ^g And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.

7 ^h Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

^a Matt. x. 1; Mark iii. 13; vi. 7.—^b Matt. x. 7, 8; Mark vi. 12; Chap. x. 1, 9.—^c Matt. x. 9; Mark vi. 8; Chap. x. 4;

xxii. 35.—^d Matthew x. 11; Mark vi. 10.—^e Matthew x. 14. ^f Acts xiii. 51.—^g Mark vi. 12.—^h Matt. xiv. 1; Mark vi. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verses 1-6. *Then he called his twelve disciples*—See notes on Matt. x. 1; and Mark vi. 7-12. *There abide and thence depart*—That is, Stay in that house till ye leave the city. See note on Matt. x. 11.

Verses 7-9. *Now Herod heard of all that was done by him*—The twelve apostles preaching in the towns of Galilee, and confirming their doctrine by many mighty miracles, raised the attention and expectation of all men more than ever. For they could not but think it a most extraordinary and marvellous thing, that Christ could not only work miracles himself, but impart the power of working them to others, even to whomsoever he pleased; a thing never heard of in the world before, and which evidently rendered him far superior to all the prophets, and certainly was an amazing and most convincing proof of his being the Messiah. This circumstance, it seems, aggrandized him more than any other thing, and spread his fame so far, that it reached the court of Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, and occasioned many speculations there. *And he (Herod) was perplexed*—Greek, *διηπορει*, much perplexed, as the same word is rendered Luke xxiv. 4; and by the Vulgate *consternatum esse*, to be in a consternation; and elsewhere, *stupere*, to be amazed, or dismayed. The word, says Grotius, signifies wonder and astonishment; or, according to Doddridge, “such a mixture of doubt and fear, as necessarily throws the mind into a very uneasy situation.” The sense here seems to be, that the fame of our Lord’s miracles, and the diversity

of opinions concerning him, so astonished Herod that he knew not what to think or believe concerning him. *Because it was said of some*—And soon after by Herod himself; *that John was risen from the dead*—He thought he had got clear of John, and should never be more troubled with him; but he now begins to fear he was mistaken, and that either John was come to life again, or that another had arisen in his power and spirit. *And of some (it was said) that Elias had appeared*—They say appeared, because, as he did not die, he could not rise again: *and of others, that one of the old prophets*—Who had been persecuted and slain long since; *was risen again*—To be recompensed for his sufferings by this honour put upon him. It is probable that this conversation at the court of Galilee, concerning Jesus, and Herod’s perplexity thereupon, happened soon after the Baptist’s death. The murder of him, it seems, was recent. Hence the stings of conscience which that crime occasioned to Herod were bitter; and the rather, that he had committed it in an unguarded hour, contrary to the dictates of his own mind. Hence, in the confusion of his thoughts, he followed the multitude, though a Sadducee, in fancying that John was risen from the dead, and dreaded the punishment of his crime. It may seem strange that any person should have ascribed Christ’s miracles to John risen from the dead, who during his life-time performed no miracle, John v. 41. Perhaps they imagined the power of working miracles was conferred on the Baptist to prove both his resurrection

A. M. 4036. 9 And Herod said, John have I be-
A. D. 32.

headed; but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

10 ¶ And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 ¶ And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 (For they were about five thousand men.) And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

¹ Ch. xxiii. 8.—² Mark vi. 30.—³ Matt. xiv. 13.—⁴ Matt. xiv. 15; Mark vi. 35; John vi. 1, 5.—⁵ Matt. xvi. 13; Mark viii. 27.—⁶ Matt. xiv. 2; Verses 7, 8.

and his innocence; to clothe him with greater authority than formerly; and to render his person inviolable for the future. *Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this?*—Is he carrying on John's work, or is he come to avenge John's death? John baptized, but he does not; John wrought no miracle, but he works many; and therefore appears more formidable than John. Observe, reader, those who oppose God will find themselves more and more embarrassed. *And he desired to see him*—Whether he resembled John or not; and if he found it was John, perhaps expecting to effect a reconciliation with him. "He might soon have got his doubts resolved, if he would have informed himself, as he easily might, of what thousands knew, that Jesus preached and wrought miracles a great while before John was beheaded, and therefore could not be John risen from the dead. *He desired to see him*—And why did he not go and see him, or send for him? Probably because he thought it below him to do either the one or the other. He had had enough of John, and cared not for having to do with any more such reprovers of sin. *He desired to see him*; but we do not find that he ever did till he saw him at his bar, and then he and his men of war set him at naught, chap. xxiii. 11. Had he prosecuted his convictions now, and gone to see him, who knows but a happy

16 Then he took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to hea-
A. M. 4036.
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ven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

18 ¶ And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him; and he asked them, saying, Who say the people that I am?

19 They answering, said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answering, said, The Christ of God.

21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23 ¶ And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life, shall

^p Matt. xvi. 16; John vi. 69.—^q Matt. xvi. 20.—^r Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 22.—^s Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24; Mark viii. 34; Chap. xiv. 27.

change might have been wrought in him; but delaying it now, his heart was hardened; and when he did see him, he was as much prejudiced against him as any other."—Henry.

Verses 10–17. *And the apostles being returned, told him all that they had done*—See notes on Matt. xiv. 13–21; and Mark vi. 30–44, where this whole paragraph is largely explained.

Verses 18–22. *As he was alone praying*—Or rather apart from the multitude, for the word *καταμονας*, here rendered *alone*, excludes not his disciples, but the multitude, now sent away when they were filled, as appears from Mark iv. 10, where the same word is used; and where we read, *when he was alone*, (*καταμονας*, apart from the multitude,) *they that were about him, with the twelve, asked him of the parable*. Or the expression here, *καταμονας προσευχομενος*, may be rendered, *as he was praying alone*, or *by himself*; his prayer being ended, his disciples came to him. *He asked them*—When he had done praying, during which they probably stayed at a distance, *Who say the people that I am, &c.*—See this paragraph explained on Matt. xvi. 13–23; and Mark viii. 27–33. *He commanded them to tell no man, saying, The Son of man must suffer, &c.*—As if he had said, *Ye must prepare for a scene far different from this.*

Verses 23–27. *And he said to them all, &c.*—Not

A. M. 4036. lose it: but whosoever will lose his
A. D. 32. life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 * For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

26 * For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 * But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God.

28 ¶ And it came to pass, about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud,

¹ Matt. xvi. 26; Mark viii. 36.—² Matt. x. 33; Mark viii. 38; 2 Tim. ii. 12.—³ Matt. xvi. 28; Mark ix. 1.—⁴ Matt. xvii. 1; Mark ix. 2.—⁵ Or, things.

only to his disciples, as mentioned by Matthew, but to the people also, whom, Mark observes, he called unto him, as well as his disciples, to hear the very important doctrine which he was about to deliver, contained in this paragraph, of which see the notes on Matt. xvi. 24-27; and Mark viii. 34-38. Let him deny himself and take up his cross—The necessity of this duty has been shown in many places; the extent of it is specified here, daily—Therefore, that day is lost wherein no cross is taken up.

Verses 28-36. It came to pass about eight days after—Including the day on which the discourse, recorded in the preceding chapter, was delivered, and that on which the fact, here mentioned, took place:

and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 ¶ And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

38 And behold a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee look upon my son: for he is mine only child.

39 And lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not.

41 And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

43 ¶ And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it

¹ Dan. viii. 18; x. 9.—² Matt. iii. 17.—³ Acts iii. 22.
⁴ Matt. xvii. 9.—⁵ Matt. xvii. 14; Mark ix. 14, 17.—⁶ Matt. xvii. 22.—⁷ Mark ix. 32; Chap. ii. 50; xviii. 34.

otherwise, exclusively of these two days, it was six days after, as Matthew has it. See the following account of our Lord's transfiguration, explained at large in the notes on Matt. xvii. 1-8, with some additional observations on Mark ix. 2-10. Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory—Like Christ, with whom they talked. They saw his glory—The very same expression in which it is described by John, chap. i. 14; and by Peter, 2 Epist. i. 16, 17.

Verses 37-45. For a full elucidation of these verses, see notes on Matt. xvii. 14-23; and Mark ix. 14-29. Let these sayings sink down into your ears—That is, consider them deeply; in joy remember the cross. So wisely does our Lord balance praise with sufferings.

A. M. 4036. not : and they feared to ask him of
A. D. 32. that saying.

46 ¶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

47 And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

48 And said unto them, ^h Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me ; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me : ⁱ for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

49 ¶ ^k And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name ; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not :

^h Matt. xviii. 1 ; Mark ix. 34.—^b Matt. x. 40 ; xviii. 5 ; Mark ix. 37 ; John xii. 44 ; xiii. 20.—ⁱ Mark xxiii. 11, 12.—^k Mark ix. 38 ; Num. xi. 28.

Verses 46-48. *And there arose a reasoning among them*—According to our version here, this reasoning, or dispute, happened at the time when Jesus rebuked his disciples for it. But, Mark ix. 33, we are expressly told, that it happened as they went into Capernaum. The evangelists, however, may be reconciled by translating Luke's words, εισηλθε δε διαλογισμος εν αυτοις, *Now there had arisen a reasoning among them*—Namely, as they travelled to Capernaum. This kind of reasoning, it may be observed, always arose at the most improper times that could be imagined ; *which of them should be greatest*—Thus they clearly manifested their ambitious views, and their carnal, worldly spirit ; and how entirely they misunderstood the nature of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world ; *and Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart*—For he perfectly knew all that passed within them ; *took a child and said unto them*—If you would be truly great, humble yourselves to the meanest offices : he that is least in his own eyes shall be great indeed. For a full explanation of this occurrence, and of our Lord's improvement of it, and lessons taught his disciples on the occasion, see the notes on Matt. xviii. 1-6 ; and Mark ix. 33-40, where the two next verses also are explained.

Verses 51-53. *When the time was come, &c.*—*Εν τω συμπληρωσθαι*, when the time was fulfilled—That is, according to the Hebrew idiom, *drew on, that he should be received up*—The Greek word αναληψις, in this passage, signifies Christ's being taken up into heaven ; for we find αναλαμβανομαι, from whence it is derived, applied expressly to his ascension, Mark xvi. 19 ; Acts i. 2, 11, 22 ; 1 Tim. iii. 16. He had now continued on earth very near the whole period determined, and was soon to be taken up to heaven, from whence he had come down ; he therefore resolved from this time forth to appear as openly as possible, and to embrace every opportunity of fulfilling the duties of his ministry. *He steadfastly*

for ^l he that is not against us, is for A. M. 4039.
us. A. D. 32.

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come that ^m he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,*

52 And sent messengers before his face : and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And ⁿ they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as ^o Elias did ?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and

^l Matthew xii. 30 ; Ch. xi. 23.—^m Mark xvi. 19 ; Acts i. 2.
* Fifth November, verse 51 to verse 57.—ⁿ John iv. 4, 9.
^o 2 Kings i. 10, 12.

set his face—Without fear of his enemies, or shame of the cross ; *to go to Jerusalem*—He did not travel thither privately, as he had often done before, but he declared his intention, and entered on the journey with great courage. *And sent messengers before his face, &c.*—The road to Jerusalem from Galilee lay through Samaria ; wherefore, as the inhabitants of this country bare the greatest ill-will to all who worshipped in Jerusalem, Jesus thought it necessary to send messengers before him, with orders to find out quarters for him in one of the villages ; but *they did not receive him*—The inhabitants of the village refused him entertainment, because his intention, in this journey, was publicly known. The Samaritans could not refuse lodging to all travellers that went to Jerusalem, for the high-road lay through their country ; such travellers only as went thither professedly to worship, were the objects of their indignation ; hence the expression, *because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem*—It plainly appeared that he was going to worship at the temple, and thereby, in effect, to condemn the Samaritan worship at mount Gerizim.

Verses 54-56. *When his disciples, James and John*—Who attended him ; *saw this*—When the messengers returned with the account of what had passed in the village, whither they had been sent, these two disciples, being exceedingly incensed at this rude treatment ; *said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven*—To destroy these inhospitable wretches immediately ; *even as Elias did*—After the example of the Prophet Elijah, who at, or near, this very place, thus destroyed the men who had evil-treated him. Perhaps the place might put it into the minds of these apostles to make this motion now, rather than at any other time, or place, where Christ had received the like affront. "That these disciples, so remarkably distinguished by their Lord's favour, should have some distinguished zeal and faith, may seem less wonder-

A. M. 4036. said, Ye know not what manner of
A. D. 32. spirit ye are of.

56 For [¶] the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

57 ¶ [¶] And it came to pass, that as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

¶ John iii. 17; xii. 47.—¶ Matt. viii. 19.

ful, than that a person of so sweet a disposition as John should make so severe a proposal." *But he turned and rebuked them*—Jesus, whose meekness on all occasions was admirable, sharply reprimanded his disciples for entertaining so unbecoming a resentment of this offence; and said, *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of*—Ye do not know the sinfulness of the disposition which ye have just now expressed, neither do ye sufficiently know your own hearts; which if you were more diligently to examine, you would soon find that there is a great deal of personal resentment and ostentation mingled with that zeal for me, which you so warmly express on this occasion. Add to this, you do not consider the genius of the gospel, so much more gentle than that of the law; nor the difference of times, persons, and circumstances. The severity which Elijah exercised on the men who came from Ahaziah to apprehend him, was a reproof of an idolatrous king, court, and nation, very proper for the times, and very agreeable to the characters both of the prophet who gave it, and of the offenders to whom it was given; at the same time it was not unsuitable to the nature of the dispensation they were under. But the gospel breathes a very different spirit from the law, (whose punishments were chiefly of a temporal kind,) and therefore it does not admit of this sort of rigour and severity. He told them, further, that to destroy men's lives was utterly inconsistent with the design of his coming into the world, which was to *save them*—Alluding to his miracles, by which he restored health to the diseased bodies of men, as well as to his doctrine and death, by which he gives life to their souls. Having said these things, he went with them to another village, the inhabitants of which were men of better dispositions. This was a noble instance of patience under a real and unprovoked injury; an instance of patience which expressed infinite sweetness of disposition, and which, for that reason, should be imitated by all who call themselves Christ's disciples.

Verses 57–62. *And it came to pass as they went in the way*—This and the following seem to be the same occurrences with those mentioned by Matthew, which took place as Christ was in the neighbourhood of Capernaum, going from that town to the shore,

59 [¶] And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me
A. M. 4036. first to go and bury my father. A. D. 32.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61 And another also said, Lord, [¶] I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

¶ Matt. viii. 21.—¶ 1 Kings xix. 20.

where he proposed to embark, in order to cross the lake, and not on his way to Jerusalem through the country of the Samaritans. See notes on Matt. viii. 19–22. *And Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes, &c.*—Jesus, knowing that the man proposed to himself riches and honours in the expected kingdom of the Messiah, thought fit to make him sensible of his mistake. As if he had said, Understand the terms: consider on what conditions thou art to follow me. *He said to another, Follow me*—About the same time, our Lord meeting with one who had often attended him, and thereby showed an inclination to become his disciple, he ordered him to disengage himself altogether from worldly affairs and follow him; *but he said, Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father*—The man excused himself on pretence that he was bound in duty to wait on an aged father, till he should pay him the last office in his burial. *Jesus said, Let the dead bury their dead*—Let those who are dead in sin, or who are so immersed in worldly affairs that they are dead to God and divine things, employ themselves in committing to the dust their deceased friends and relatives. *But go thou and preach the kingdom of God*—It is justly observed by Dr. Doddridge, that, "as our Lord called him now to follow him, we must conclude that this commission which he gives him to preach was not directly to be put in execution. The circumstance was plainly extraordinary, and might turn on reasons unknown to us. Christ might, for instance, foresee some particular obstruction that would have arisen from the interview with his friends at his father's funeral, which would have prevented his devoting himself to the ministry; to which he might refer in saying, *Let the dead bury their dead.*" *And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee*—Unto a third, who of his own accord offered to follow him, if he would allow him to go home and take leave of his family, Jesus gave such an answer as teaches us that no domestic affair should hinder the care of our salvation; that the calls of religion are so very pressing, that they admit of no delay or excuse whatsoever; and that all who set themselves to seek the welfare of their souls should pursue the work assiduously, without looking carelessly around them, as if they neglected what they were doing. *He said*

unto him, *No man having put his hand to the plough, &c., is fit for the kingdom of God*—Either to receive and become a subject of it, or to preach it. “Hesiod has given it as the character of a good ploughman, that, ‘he keeps his mind intent on his work,’ that he may make ‘a straight furrow,’ and does not allow himself ‘to gaze about on his companions.’ Our Lord, on the like obvious principles, may use the

phrase of one that looks behind him while his hand is on the plough, as a kind of proverbial expression for a careless, irresolute person, who must be peculiarly unfit for the Christian ministry. How happy had it been for Christ’s church had this lively admonition been regarded, without which it is impossible, *αρθοτομειν τον λογον της αληθειας, to divide*, or rather *direct the word of truth aright*,” 2 Tim. ii. 15.

CHAPTER X.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The ample commission which Christ gave to seventy of his disciples to preach the gospel and confirm it by miracles; and the full instructions he gave them how to conduct themselves in the execution of their commissions, and great encouragement therein, 1–16. (2.) The account which the seventy disciples gave to their Master of the success of their ministry, and his discourse thereupon, 17–24. (3.) His discourse with a lawyer concerning the way to heaven, and the instructions Christ gave him by a parable to look upon every one as his neighbour, whom he had occasion to show kindness to, or receive kindness from, 25–37. (4.) Christ’s entertainment at the house of Lazarus; the reproof he gave Martha for her anxious care about worldly things, and his commendation of Mary for her care about the salvation of her soul, 38–42.

A. M. 4036. AFTER * these things, the Lord
A. D. 32. appointed other seventy also, and
* sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, ^b The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: ^c pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he

would send forth labourers into his harvest. A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32.

3 Go your ways: ^d behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 ^e Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and ^f salute no man by the way.

5 ^g And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

* St. Luke’s Day, gospel, verse 1, ending verse 7.—^a Matt. x. 1; Mark vi. 7.—^b Matt. ix. 37, 38; John iv. 35.

^c 2 Thess. iii. 1.—^d Matt. x. 16.—^e Matt. x. 9, 10; Mark vi. 8; Chap. ix. 3.—^f 2 Kings iv. 29.—^g Matt. x. 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verse 1. *The Lord appointed other seventy also*—Or rather, *seventy others*, as *ετερης εβδομηκοντα* should certainly be translated; for the expression, *other seventy*, implies that seventy had been sent before, which certainly was not the fact, (those sent before being no more than twelve,) nor is it implied in the Greek. So inconsiderable a difference in the words makes a great alteration in the sense. “The scene of Christ’s ministry being, from this time forth, to lie in Judea, and the country beyond Jordan, it was expedient that his way should be prepared in every city and village of those countries whither he was to come. He therefore sent out seventy of his disciples on this work, mentioning the particular places which he intended to visit, and in which they were to preach; whereas, the twelve had been allowed to go where they pleased, provided they confined their ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Luke is the only evangelist who has given us this account of Christ’s sending out the seventy; and it is the less to be wondered at, that he should do it so particularly, if the ancient tradition be true, which

Origen and Epiphanius have mentioned, that he was himself one of the number. It is remarkable that our Lord assigns the same reason for the mission of the seventy which he had assigned for the mission of the twelve disciples. *The harvest was plenteous* in Judea and Perea, as well as in Galilee, and *the labourers* there also were few. Hence his exhortation, *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth* (Greek, *εκβαλλη, thrust out*) *labourers*. For God alone can do this: he alone can qualify and commission men for this work, and incline them to undertake it.

Verses 3, 4. *I send you forth as lambs, &c.*—As so many defenceless lambs, in the midst of ravenous and cruel wolves. *Carry neither purse nor scrip, &c.*—See notes on Matt. x. 9, 10, 16. *Salute no man by the way*—Let not matters of mere compliment detain you, but make all the haste you possibly can. The salutations usual among the Jews took up much time. But these had so much work to do in so short a space, that they had not a moment to spare.

Verses 5, 6. *Into whatsoever house ye enter, &c.*

A. M. 4036. 6 And if the son of peace be there,
A. D. 32. your peace shall rest upon it: if not,
it shall turn to you again.

7 ^h And in the same house remain, ⁱ eating
and drinking such things as they give: for
^k the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not
from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they
receive you, eat such things as are set before you.

9 ^l And heal the sick that are therein, and

^h Matt. x. 11.—ⁱ 1 Cor. x. 27.—^k Matt. x. 10; 1 Cor. ix. 4, &c.; 1 Tim. v. 18.—^l Chap. ix. 2.

—They are supposed to enter into private houses; for, not being admitted into the synagogues, they were forced to preach where they could have liberty. *First say, Peace be to this house*—To all under this roof, to this family, and all that belong to it. As if he had said, In all the stages of your journey, carry along with you those benevolent affections which are so well suited to the design of your mission. *Peace be to you*, was the common form of salutation among the Jews. They must not use it in formality, and according to custom, to those they meet on the way; but they must use it with solemnity and seriousness to those into whose houses they entered. *And if the son of peace*—Or any truly pious man who is worthy of such a blessing; *be there*—In the house; *your peace shall rest upon it*—Your prayer for the peace and prosperity of the family shall be heard and answered. Or, the blessing which you gave at your entrance, shall, by my power, be made effectual to that house, and shall remain with it. *If not, it shall turn, &c.*—You will meet with some that are not disposed to hear or regard your message; even whole houses that have not one son of peace in them. Now it is certain your peace shall not come upon them; they shall have no part nor lot in the matter: the blessing that shall rest upon the sons of peace shall never come upon the sons of Belial; nor can any expect the privileges of the covenant of grace that will not come under the bonds of it; but *it shall turn to you again*—You shall have the comfort of having discharged your trust, and done your duty to God.

Verses 7-9. *And in the same house remain*—As long as you stay in the town or village: *eating and drinking*—Cheerfully and contentedly; *such things as they give*—Neither suspect your being welcome, nor be afraid of being troublesome; *for the labourer*—In the work of the ministry, if he be indeed a labourer; *is worthy of his hire*—It is not an act of charity, but of justice, in them who are taught in the Word, to communicate to them that teach: and whatever kindness they show you, it is but a small return for the kindness you do them in bringing them the glad tidings of peace. *Go not from house to house*—Be content with whatever fare you meet with; and never create any unnecessary trouble in the family where you are, nor quit your lodgings to

say unto them, ^m The kingdom of A. M. 4036
God is come nigh unto you. A. D. 32.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 ⁿ Even the very dust of your city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, That ^o it shall be

^m Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17; x. 7; Verse 11.—ⁿ Matt. x. 14; Ch. ix. 5; Acts xiii. 51; xviii. 6.—^o Matt. x. 15; Mark vi. 11.

seek others, in hope of better accommodations during the short stay you make in a place. *And heal the sick that are therein*—Which, as I direct, so I shall empower you to do; *And say unto them, The kingdom of God, &c.*—Publish the approach of the kingdom of God; its approach to them; and that they stand fair for an admission into it, if they will but obey the call of God, and turn to him without delay. Say, Now is the day of your visitation; see that you understand and improve it. Observe, reader! It is well to be made sensible of our advantages and opportunities, that we may lay hold on and embrace them. When the kingdom of God comes nigh to us, it concerns us to go forth to meet it.

Verses 10-12. *Into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not*—Show no willingness to hear your doctrine, and no inclination to give you entertainment, or the necessaries of life; *go your way out into the streets, &c.*—Declare in the most public manner, how greatly they have sinned in rejecting you and your message; and that your declaration may make the greater impression upon them, let it be accompanied with the symbolical action of publicly wiping the dust of their city from off your feet, as a testimony that you will have no communication with such a faithless and disobedient people. Say, Since you reject so gracious and important a message, we cannot but consider you as rejected by God, and devoted to certain and inevitable destruction, and therefore we separate ourselves from all that belongs to you, even from the dust of your city. This was agreeable to the manner of the eastern people, who taught their disciples by symbolical actions, as well as by discourse; see on Matt. x. 14. Jesus added, When you have so done, say, *Notwithstanding, be ye sure of this*—And remember it in the midst of all the calamities which are to befall you; *that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you*—That mercy and salvation, present and eternal, the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory, have been offered you, though you will not receive them. *But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable, &c.*—To make the seventy the more earnest in preaching the gospel, that so, if possible, the people might be prevailed upon to believe and obey it, he proceeds to declare the terrible punishment about to come upon those who should reject it. See on Matt. x. 15.

A. M. 4036. more tolerable in that day for Sodom
A. D. 32. than for that city.

13 ¶ Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! ^a for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 ^r And thou, Capernaum, which art ^e exalted to heaven, ^t shalt be thrust down to hell.

^p Matt. xi. 21.—^q Ezek. iii. 6.—^r Matt. xi. 23.—^s Gen. xi. 4; Deut. i. 28; Isa. xiv. 13; Jer. li. 53.—^t Ezek. xxvi. 20; xxxii. 18.

Verse 13. *Wo unto thee, Chorazin, &c.*—"Having mentioned the punishment of those cities which should reject his ministers, it naturally brought to his mind the sad state and punishment of the cities where he himself had preached most frequently, namely, Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. For, notwithstanding he had often resided in those cities, and performed many miracles before the inhabitants of them, they had continued impenitent. Wherefore, because he was never to preach to them any more, and because he knew how great their punishment would be, in the overflowing tenderness of his soul he affectionately lamented their obstinacy, which he foresaw would draw down on them the heaviest judgments. The same declaration Christ had made some time before. By repeating it now he warns the seventy not to lose time by going to those cities. At the same time, this part of his discourse was well calculated to comfort these disciples, now sent out, under the ill usage they might meet with; the preaching of Christ himself had often been unacceptable and unsuccessful, with respect to many of his hearers, and therefore it was not much to be wondered at if theirs should prove so likewise." Considering the affectionate temper of our Lord, it is no wonder that he should renew his lamentation over those unhappy places where he had so intimately conversed; and that he should do it in such words as these, so well calculated to alarm and impress all that should hear or read them. O! that they might now have their due weight with those who might pass them over too slightly, when they occurred before in Matt. xi. 20-24. O! that every impenitent creature who reads them might know that the sentence of his own condemnation is now before his eyes! See Macknight and Doddridge, and the notes on Matt. xi. 20-24.

Verse 16. *He that heareth you*—Here our Lord declares the general rule which he would observe, with regard to those to whom he sent, or should send his ministers; that he would reckon himself treated as they treated his servants. Indeed, what is done to the ambassador is generally considered as done to the prince that sends him. 1st, *He that heareth you*, and regards what you say, *heareth me*, and therein doth me honour: but, 2d, *He that despiseth*

16 ^u He that heareth you, heareth ^v me; and ^w he that despiseth you, despiseth me; ^x and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.

17 ¶ And ^y the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, ^z I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

19 Behold, ^{aa} I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the

^u Matt. x. 40; Mark ix. 37; John xiii. 20.—^v 1 Thess. iv. 8.—^w John v. 23.—^x Verse 1.—^y John xii. 31; xvi. 11; Rev. ix. 1; xii. 8, 9.—^z Mark xvi. 18; Acts xxviii. 5.

you, doth, in effect, despise me, and shall be reckoned with as having put an affront upon me: nay, he *despiseth him that sent me*. Observe, reader, those that contemn the Christian religion, do, in effect, put a slight upon natural religion, of which it is perfective. And they who despise the faithful ministers of Christ, they who, though they do not hate and persecute them, yet think meanly of them, look on them with scorn, and neglect to attend their ministry, will be reckoned with as despisers of God and of Christ.

Verses 17-20. *And the seventy returned*—The seventy disciples, having gone through the several parts of the country appointed them, returned and told their Master with great joy what they had done, *saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name*—We have not only cured diseases, according to the power thou wast pleased to give us, but, though thy commission did not directly express so much, yet even the devils themselves have been compelled to obey us, when in *thy name* we commanded them to go out of the persons whom they had possessed. From the manner in which they speak of this latter exertion of their power, it would appear to have been what they did not expect when they set out. For though Jesus had given them power to heal diseases, he had said nothing of their casting out devils. *And he said, I beheld Satan as lightning*—"I myself saw Satan, the great prince of the demons, *falling like lightning from heaven*, on his first transgression, and well remember how immediate and dreadful his ruin was: and I foresee, in spirit, that renewed, swift, and irresistible victory, of which this present success of yours is an earnest, and which the preaching of the gospel shall shortly gain over all these rebel powers, that, even in their highest strength and glory, were so incapable of opposing the arm of God." Thus Doddridge, who adds, "I think this answer to the seventy loses much of its beauty and propriety, unless we suppose Satan to have been the prince of the demons they spoke of, and also allow a reference to the first fall of that rebellious spirit." To be exalted unto heaven, signifies to be raised unto great power and privileges, and particularly to sovereign dominion. *To fall from heaven*, therefore, may signify to lose

A. M. 4036. power of the enemy: and nothing
A. D. 32. shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

21 ¶^d In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 * All¹ things are delivered to me of my

^c Exod. xxxii. 32; Psa. lxi. 28; Isa. iv. 3; Dan. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 3; Heb. xii. 23; Rev. xiii. 8; xx. 12; xxi. 27.—^d Matt. xi. 25.—* Matt. xxviii. 18; John iii. 35; v. 27; xvii. 2.

one's dominion and pre-eminency. The devils, by the idolatry of the Gentiles and wickedness of the Jews, had been exalted into heaven, and had ruled mankind in opposition to the dominion of God; by the preaching of the gospel their power was to be destroyed in every country. As Christ foreknew this, so he here foretels it. *Behold, I give unto you power, &c.*—To prove that he had thrown down Satan from his exaltation, and that his power should, in the end, be totally destroyed; and to increase their joy, and render them more fit for their work, he here enlarges their powers. To *tread on serpents*, is a proverbial expression, which signifies victory over enemies; accordingly, it is added, *and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you*.—See note on Mark xvi. 18; and Acts xxviii. 5; and Psa. xci. 13. *Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not*—Rejoice not so much in this, *that the spirits*, namely, evil spirits, *are subject unto you*, and that you are enabled miraculously to control and cast them out of those possessed by them, and that you can perform other miracles, because this is but a temporary endowment and pre-eminence, sometimes granted to wicked men, whom it in no wise qualifies for heaven; but rather rejoice that *your names are written in heaven*—That you stand enrolled among the heirs of future glory and felicity, as the peculiar objects of the divine favour and love. This and similar passages seem to be allusions to the enrolment of citizens' names in registers, by which their right to the privileges of citizenship was acknowledged by the community. See notes on Exod. xxxii. 32; Dan. xii. 1; and compare Phil. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 5.

Verses 21–24. *In that hour Jesus rejoiced*—On this occasion Jesus, meditating on the unspeakable wisdom and goodness of the divine dispensations to mankind, felt extraordinary emotions of joy. *And said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth*—In both of which thy kingdom stands, and that of Satan is to be destroyed; *that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent*—Hast suffered them to be hid from those that are wise and prudent in their own eyes, or who really are so with respect to the things of this world; *and hast reveal-*

Father: and 'no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

23 ¶ And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see.**

24 For I tell you, ^b that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

¹ Many ancient copies add these words, *and turning to his disciples, he said.*—^b Jn. i. 18; vi. 44, 46.—* Mat. xiii. 16.—* Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 23 to verse 38.—^c 1 Pet. i. 10.

ed them unto babes—To persons illiterate, and of comparatively weak understanding, but are wise as to the things of God. He rejoiced not in the state of ignorance and darkness, in which the wise and prudent were left, as a punishment of their self-confidence and pride, and in their consequent destruction, but in the display of the riches of God's grace to others, in such a manner as reserves to him the entire glory of our salvation, and hides pride from man. *All things are delivered to me of my Father*—He repeats the declaration of his own extensive authority, which he had testified before. See notes on Matt. xi. 25–27. *And no man knoweth who the Son is*—Essentially one with the Father; *but the Father*—Who sent him, and who only knows his dignity and the mystery of his person. *And who the Father is*—How great, how wise, how good; *but the Son*—His essential wisdom and word. *And he to whom the Son will reveal him*—In pursuance of one very important design of his coming, which was to declare the Father, and communicate the saving knowledge of him to all truly willing and desirous to receive it. *And he turned to his disciples, and said privately, &c.*—It appears, that when the seventy disciples returned, Jesus was surrounded with a great multitude of people; therefore after he had spoken publicly as above related, to the seventy, he turned himself to all his disciples, and uttered what follows privately, so as not to be heard by the people in general. *Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see, &c.*—The happiness here praised was enjoyed by the seventy, as well as by the twelve, and consequently it was as fit that they should be made sensible of its greatness, as that the twelve should understand it. Besides, this declaration, as well as what was spoken more publicly, was designed to moderate the joy which the seventy had conceived, on finding the devils subject to them. The subjection of the devils to their command was not so great a happiness as their being allowed to hear Christ's sermons, and to see his miracles. These things show, that what our Lord said privately to his disciples, was said to the seventy as well as to the twelve.

A. M. 4036. 25 ¶ And behold, a certain lawyer
A. D. 32.

stood up, and tempted him, saying,

Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

¹ Matthew xix. 16; xxii. 35.—² Deuteronomy vi. 5.
³ Lev. xix. 18.

Verses 25-28. *And behold, a certain lawyer*—A doctor of the law; *stood up and tempted him*—Greek, *εκπειραζων αυτον, trying him*. It seems this lawyer was one of the multitude which attended Jesus when the seventy returned, and having listened to what he said to his disciples in private, concerning their enjoying a happiness which many prophets and kings had desired in vain to obtain, namely, the happiness of seeing his miracles, and of hearing his sermons, thought he would make trial of that great wisdom which some said he possessed, by proposing to him one of the most important questions which it is possible for the human mind to examine, namely, *What a man must do to inherit eternal life*. For, that this learned doctor asked the question, not from a sincere desire to know his own duty, but merely to try our Lord's knowledge, is evident from the text, which informs us, that he did it *tempting, or trying him*, expecting, perhaps, that, on this head he would teach differently from Moses. *He said unto him, What is written in the law?*—Jesus, alluding to his profession, made answer by inquiring of him what the law taught on that point. *And he, answering out of Deut. vi. 5, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.*—That is, Thou shalt unite all the faculties of thy soul to render him the most intelligent and sincere, the most affectionate and resolute service. We may safely rest in this general sense of these important words, if we are not able to fix the particular meaning of every single word. If we desire to do this, perhaps *the heart*, which is a general expression, may be explained by the three following; *With all thy soul*—With the warmest affection; *with all thy strength*—The most vigorous efforts of thy will; and *with all thy mind*—Or understanding, in the most wise and reasonable manner thou canst, thy understanding guiding thy will and affections. *And thy neighbour as thyself*—See on Mark xii. 30, 31. *And he said, Thou hast answered right*—Jesus approved of his answer, and allowed, that to love God as the law enjoined is the means of obtaining eternal life, because it never fails to produce obedience to all the divine revelations and commands, consequently even to the gospel, which he was then preaching. Observe well, therefore, reader, our Lord's words are not spoken ironically, but seriously; and con-

28 And he said unto him, Thou A. M. 4036.
hast answered right: this do, and A. D. 32.
^a thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

^a Lev. xviii. 5; Neh. ix. 29; Ezek. xx. 11, 13, 21; Rom. x. 5.
^b Chap. xvi. 15.

tain a deep and weighty truth. He, and he alone, shall live for ever, who thus loves God and his neighbour in the present life.

Verses 29-32. *But he, willing to justify himself*—That is, to show he had done this, and was blameless, even with respect to the duties which are least liable to be counterfeited, namely, the social and relative duties, asked him what was the meaning and extent of the word *neighbour* in the law? It seems, being strongly tinctured with the prejudices of his nation, he reckoned none *brethren* but Israelites; or *neighbours*, but proselytes; and expected that Jesus would confirm his opinion, by approving of it. For, according to this interpretation, he thought himself innocent, although enemies and heathen had no share of his love, since the precept enjoined the love of neighbours only. *And Jesus answering said, A certain man, &c.*—Our Lord, who well knew how to convince and persuade, answered him in such a manner as to make the feelings of his heart overcome the prejudices of his understanding. He convinced him of his mistake by a parable, an ancient, agreeable, and inoffensive method of conveying instruction, very fit to be used in teaching persons who are greatly prejudiced against the truth. For, "as to the scope of the passage, every body perceives, that it is the intention of it to confound those malignant Jewish prejudices, which made them confine their charity to those of their own nation and religion. Nor could any thing be better adapted for the purpose than this story, which, as it is universally understood, exhibits a Samaritan overlooking all national and religious differences, and doing offices of kindness and humanity to a Jew in distress. By this means the narrow-minded Pharisee, who put the question, is surprised into a conviction that there is something amiable, and even divine, in surmounting all partial considerations, and listening to the voice of nature, which is the voice of God, in giving relief to the unhappy."—Campbell. *Went down from Jerusalem to Jericho*—Jericho was situated in a valley: hence the phrase of *going down* to it: and as the road to it from Jerusalem (about eighteen miles) lay through desert and rocky places, so many robberies and murders were committed therein, that it was called, according to Jerome, *the bloody way*. This circumstance of the parable, therefore, is finely

A. M. 4036. 31 And by chance there came
A. D. 32 down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, ° he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain ^p Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his

wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. A. M. 4036. A. D. 32.

35 And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two ^q pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

° Psa. xxxviii. 11.

^p John iv. 9.—^q Matt. xx. 2.

chosen. And fell among thieves—This Jew, in travelling this road, was assaulted by robbers, who, not satisfied with taking all the money he had, stripped him of his raiment, beat him unmercifully, and left him for dead. While he was lying in this miserable condition, utterly incapable of helping himself, a certain priest, happening to come that way, saw him in great distress, but took no pity on him. In like manner a Levite, espying him, would not come near him, having no mind to be at any trouble or expense with him. The priest and Levite are here introduced coming that way very naturally, there being, according to a considerable Jewish writer, quoted by Dr. Lightfoot, no fewer than twelve thousand priests and Levites, who dwelt at Jericho, and all occasionally attending the service of the temple at Jerusalem, frequently travelled this road. The expression, *κατα συκχυραν*, here, is very improperly rendered, *by chance*, in our translation. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing in the universe as either *chance* or *fortune*. The phrase merely means, *as it happened*, or, *it came to pass*. Both the priest and the Levite are represented as passing by without so much as speaking to the poor distressed and dying man, notwithstanding that their sacred characters, and eminent knowledge in the law, obliged them to be remarkable for compassion, and all the tender offices of charity; especially when it was the distress of a brother, which called for their help. In other cases, indeed, these hypocrites might have invented reasons to palliate their inhumanity: but here it was not in their power to do it. For they could not excuse themselves by saying, This was a Samaritan, or a heathen, who deserved no pity; they could not even excuse themselves by saying, they did not know who he was; for though they took care to keep at a distance, they had looked on their brother lying, stripped, wounded, and half dead, without being in the least moved with his distress. No doubt, however, they would try to excuse themselves to their own consciences for thus neglecting him, and, perhaps, might gravely thank God for their own deliverances, while they left their brother bleeding to death. Is not this an emblem of many living characters, perhaps of some who bear the sacred office? O house of Levi, and of Aaron, is

not the day coming when the virtues of heathen and Samaritans will rise up in judgment against you?

Verses 33-37. *But a certain Samaritan, &c.*—Soon after this, a Samaritan happened to come that way, and seeing a fellow-creature lying on the road naked and wounded, went up to him; and though he found it was one of a different nation, who professed a religion opposed to his own, the violent hatred of all such persons, that had been instilled into his mind from his earliest years, and all other objections, were immediately silenced by the feelings of pity awakened at the sight of the man's distress; his bowels yearned toward the Jew, and he hastened, with great tenderness, to give him assistance. It was admirably well judged, to represent the distress on the side of the Jew, and the mercy on that of the Samaritan. For the case being thus proposed, self-interest would make the very scribe sensible how amiable such a conduct was, and would lay him open to our Lord's inference. Had it been put the other way, prejudice might more easily have interposed, before the heart could have been affected. *And went to him and bound up his wounds, &c.*—It seems this humane traveller, according to the custom of those times, carried his provisions along with him; for he was able, though in the fields, to give the wounded man some wine to recruit his spirits. Moreover, he carefully bound up his wounds, *pouring in oil and wine*, which, when well beaten together, are said to be one of the best balsams that can be applied to a fresh wound; then, *setting him on his own beast*, he walked by him on foot and supported him. In this manner did the good Samaritan carry the Jew, his enemy, to the first inn he could find, where he carefully attended him all that night; and on the morrow, when he was going away, he delivered him over to the care of the host, with a particular recommendation to be very kind to him. And, that nothing necessary for his recovery might be wanting, he gave the host what money he could spare, a sum about equal to fifteen pence with us, desiring him, at the same time, to lay out more, if more were needful, and promising to pay the whole at his return. It seems he was afraid the mercenary temper of the host might have hindered him from furnishing what was neces-

A. M. 4036. 37 And he said, He that showed
A. D. 32. mercy on him. Then said Jesus
unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went,
that he entered into a certain village: and a
certain woman, named ^r Martha, received him
into her house.

^r John xi. 1; xii. 2, 3.

ary, if he had no prospect of being repaid. Thus we see, "All the circumstances of this beautiful parable are formed with the finest skill imaginable, to work the conviction designed; so that had the lawyer been ever so much disposed to reckon none his neighbours but men of his own religion, it was not in his power to do it on this occasion. And, although favours from a Samaritan had always been represented to him as an abomination, more detestable than the eating of swine's flesh, he was obliged to acknowledge, that not the priest or the Levite, but this Samaritan, by discharging a great office of humanity toward the Jew in distress, was truly his neighbour, and deserved his love more than some of his own nation, who sustained the most venerable characters; that the like humanity was due from any Israelite to a Samaritan who stood in need of it; and that all men are neighbours to all men, how much soever they may be distinguished from one another in respect of country, or kindred, or language, or religion. Mankind are intimately knit together by their common wants and weaknesses, being so formed that they cannot live without the assistance of each other, and therefore the relation that subsists between them is as extensive as their natures; and the obligations under which they lie, to aid one another by mutual good offices, are as strong and urgent as every man's own manifold necessities. By this admirable parable, therefore, our Lord has powerfully recommended that universal benevolence, which is so familiar in the mouths, but foreign to the hearts of many ignorant pretenders to religion and morality. It would appear that the presumption of the Jews in matters of religion exceeded all bounds; for though the Supreme Being pays little regard to mere outward worship, and is much more delighted with the inward homage of a holy and benevolent mind, yet because they prayed daily in his temple, and offered sacrifices there, and carried about his precepts written on their phylacteries, and had God and the law always in their mouths, they made no doubt but they worshipped God acceptably, notwithstanding they were so enormously wicked, that they would not put themselves to the smallest expense or trouble, though they could have saved life by it; and therefore had no real love to God or their neighbour. This monstrous presumption being entirely subversive of true religion, our Lord thought fit to condemn it in the severest manner, and to brand it with the blackest and most lasting note of infamy in the above charming parable."—Macknight. Jesus, having finished

39 And she had a sister called Mary, A. M. 4036.
* which also ^r sat at Jesus's feet, and A. D. 32.
heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much
serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost
thou not care that my sister hath left me to
serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

* 1 Cor. vii. 32, &c.—^r Luke viii. 35; Acts xxii. 3.

the parable, said to the lawyer, *Which now of these three was neighbour, &c.*—Which acted the part of a neighbour? *And he said, He that showed mercy on him*—This reply the lawyer made without hesitation, being greatly struck with the truth and evidence of the case. Indeed he could not for shame say otherwise. In speaking thus, however, he condemned himself, and overthrew his own false notion of the neighbour to whom his love was due. *Go, and do thou likewise*—Show mercy and kindness to every one that stands in need of thy assistance, whether he be an Israelite, a heathen, or a Samaritan; and when works of charity are to be performed, reckon every man thy neighbour, not inquiring what he believes, but what he suffers. Reader, let us attend to, and diligently put in practice, our Lord's advice to this lawyer: let us *go and do likewise*, regarding every man as our neighbour who needs our assistance. Let us renounce that bigotry and party zeal which would contract our hearts into an insensibility for all the human race, but a small number, whose sentiments and practices are so much our own, that our love to them is but self-love reflected. With an honest openness of mind let us always remember the kindred between man and man, and cultivate that happy instinct whereby, in the original constitution of our nature, God has strongly bound us to each other.

Verses 38–42. *It came to pass as they went*—As they journeyed to Jerusalem, whither it seems he was going to celebrate the feast of dedication: *he entered into a certain village*—Namely, Bethany, nigh to Jerusalem; *and a certain woman named Martha received him*—Martha was probably the elder sister, and, Grotius thinks, a widow, with whom her brother and sister lived. At least, she was now the housekeeper, and acted as the mistress of the family. *And she had a sister called Mary*—Who, with her brother Lazarus, doubtless made Jesus as welcome as Martha did. *Who also sat at Jesus's feet*—On this occasion, Martha expressed her regard for her divine guest, by the care she took to provide the best entertainment in her power for him and his disciples; but Mary sat quietly at his feet, attending to his doctrine, for he embraced every opportunity of imparting the knowledge of divine things to such as were willing to receive it. *But Martha was cumbered with much serving*—The word *περιεστρατο*, here rendered *cumbered*, properly signifies *to be drawn different ways* at the same time, and admirably expresses the situation of a mind surrounded (as Martha's then was) with so many objects

A. M. 4036. 41 And Jesus answered, and said
A. D. 32. unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art
careful and troubled about many things :

† Psa. xxvii. 4.

of care, that it hardly knows which to attend to first. *And said, Lord, dost thou not care, &c.*—The burden of the service lying upon Martha, and she being encumbered with it, blamed Jesus for allowing her sister to sit idly by him, while she was so much hurried. *And Jesus said unto her, Martha, Martha*—There is a peculiar spirit and tenderness in this repetition of the word ; *Thou art careful, μεριμνας, anxiously careful, and troubled, ρυπαση, disturbed, or hurried, about many things.* The word is nowhere else used in the New Testament. It seems to express the restless situation of a person in a tumultuous crowd, where so many are pressing upon him that he can hardly stand his ground ;—or of water in great agitation. *But one thing is needful*—Not *one dish* to eat of, as Theophylact, Basil, and many of the fathers explain the expression ; but *the care of the soul*, or that spiritual wisdom and grace which Mary made it her chief care to seek and labour after. *And Mary*—Who now employs herself in hearing my doctrine, rather than in providing an entertainment for me, hath chosen a part which I approve of, and which I will not take from her. As if he had said, “There is one thing absolutely necessary, and of infinitely greater importance than any of these domestic and secular affairs: even to be instructed in the saving knowledge of the way that leads to eternal life, and to secure a title to, and meetness for it. And Mary is wisely attending to this; therefore, instead of reproving her, I must rather declare, that she has chosen what may eminently be called the *good part*, which as it shall not—Finally; *be taken away from her*—I would not now hinder her from pursuing it; but rather invite thee to join with her in her attention to it, though the circumstances of our intended meal should not be so exactly adjusted as thy fond friendship could desire.”

Observe, reader, Martha's care, if it had been moderate, and her work, were good, in their proper

42 But 'one thing is needful; and A. M. 4036.
A. D. 32. Mary hath chosen that good part,
which shall not be taken away from her.

place and season: but now something more important chiefly demanded her attention, and should have been done first, and most regarded. She expected Christ to have censured Mary for not doing as she did; but he, on the contrary, blamed her for not doing as Mary did; and we are sure that the judgment of Christ is according to truth, and that the day will come when Martha will wish she had sat with Mary at his feet! Mary said nothing in her own defence; but since Martha appealed to the Master, to him she was willing to refer the matter, and to abide by his award. And he justified her against her sister's clamours. However we may be censured and condemned by men for our piety and zeal, our Lord Jesus will take our part; and, sooner or later, Mary's choice will be justified, and all who make that choice and abide by it. Happy, therefore, “the man or woman, who, in a pressing variety of secular business, is not so encumbered and careful as to forget that *one thing*, which is absolutely needful, but resolutely chooses this better part, and retains it as the only secure and everlasting treasure! O that this comprehensive, important sentence, were ever before our eyes! O that it were inscribed deep upon our hearts! *One thing is needful*: And what is this one thing but present and eternal salvation? What but an humble attention to the voice of the gospel of Christ? Yet, as if this were of all things the most unnecessary, for what poor trifling cares is it not commonly forgot? Yea, to what worthless vanity is it not daily sacrificed? Let the ministers of Christ, let the friends of souls, in every station, exert themselves, that all about them may be awakened duly to regard this great interest, accounting it their meat and drink to promote it. Let them be always solicitous, that neither they, nor others, may neglect it, for the hurries of too busy a life, or even for the services of an over-officious friendship.”—Doddridge.

CHAPTER XI.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ, being requested by his disciples to teach them to pray, repeats, with some additions, the instructions and encouragements relating to that duty, which he had formerly given in his sermon on the mount, 1-13. (2.) He cures a dumb demoniac; and answers the blasphemous imputation of some who charged him with casting out devils by virtue of a compact with the prince of devils, and shows the absurdity and wickedness of such a charge, 14-26. (3.) He shows, that to be truly obedient to God, is a greater honour and happiness than to possess the highest external privilege, 27, 28. (4.) He upbraids the Jews for their obstinate infidelity, persisted in notwithstanding all the means of conviction afforded them, 29-36. (5.) He severely reproves the Pharisees and lawyers for their hypocrisy, pride, oppression of men's consciences, and persecution of those who opposed these their vices 37-54.

A. M. 4037. **AND** it came to pass, that as he was
A. D. 33. praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, *Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

* Matt. vi. 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verses 1-4. *As he was praying in a certain place*—Our Lord's whole time was occupied, either in instructing his numerous followers, or in confirming his doctrine by miracles of mercy, wrought for the relief of the afflicted, or in the exercises of devotion. This evangelist has mentioned Christ's praying much more frequently than any of the other evangelists. He tells us, chap. iii. 21, when he was baptized he was praying; chap. v. 16, that he withdrew into the wilderness and prayed; chap. vi. 12, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer; chap. ix. 18, that he was alone, praying; and soon after, that he went up into a mountain, and as he prayed was transfigured, chap. ix. 28, 29; and here, that he was praying in a certain place. Whether he was now praying alone, and the disciples only knew that he was so, or whether he prayed with them, is uncertain; it is most probable they were joining with him. *One of his disciples said, Lord, teach us to pray*—Inform us what we ought especially to desire and pray for, and in what words we ought to express our desires and petitions. It seems this disciple had not been present when our Lord, in the beginning of his ministry, gave his hearers directions concerning their devotions; or, if he was present, he had forgotten what had then been said. *As John also taught his disciples*—The Jewish masters used to give their followers some short form of prayer, as a peculiar badge of their relation to them. This, it is probable, John the Baptist had done. And in this sense it seems to be, that the disciples now asked Jesus, to *teach them to pray*. Accordingly he here repeats that form which he had before given them in his sermon on the Mount, and likewise enlarges on the same head, though still speaking the same things in substance. And this prayer, uttered from the heart, and in its true and full meaning, is indeed the badge of a real Christian: for is not he such whose first and most ardent desire is the glory of God, and the happiness of man, by the coming of his kingdom? who asks for no more of this world than his daily bread, longing meantime for the bread that cometh down from heaven? and whose only desires for himself are forgiveness of sins (as he heartily forgives others) and sanctification? *When ye pray, say*—And what he said to them is undoubtedly said to us also. We are therefore here directed not only to imitate this in all our prayers,

3 Give us ¹day by day our daily bread. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves:

¹ Or, for the day.

but frequently, at least, to use this very form of prayer. For an explanation of this prayer, see the notes on Matt. vi. 9-13. There are some differences between the form in Matthew and this recorded here; by which it appears it was not the design of Christ that we should be always confined to the very words of either form; for then there would have been no difference between them. One difference, indeed, which the reader will probably notice, is in the translation only, which ought not to have been, where there is none in the original; and that is in the third petition, *as in heaven, so in earth*; whereas the words are the very same, and in the same order, as in Matthew; but there is a difference in the fourth petition: in Matthew we pray, Give us daily bread this day; here, give it us [*καθ' ημεραν*] *day by day*: that is, Give us *each day* the bread which our bodies require, as they call for it; not, Give us this day bread for many days to come; but, as the Israelites had manna, let us have bread, to-day for to-day, and to-morrow for to-morrow; that thus we may be kept in a state of continual dependence upon God, as children upon their parents, and may have our mercies fresh from his hand daily; and may find ourselves under fresh obligations to do the work of every day in the day, according as the duty of the day requires, because we have from God the supplies of every day in the day, according as the necessity of the day requires. Here is, likewise, some difference in the fifth petition. In Matthew it is, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive*; here it is, *Forgive us our sins*, (which proves that our sins are our debts,) *for we forgive*; not that our forgiving those that have offended us can merit pardon from God, or be an inducement to him to forgive us; he forgives for his own name's sake, and his Son's sake: but this is a very necessary qualification for forgiveness: and if God have wrought it in us, we may plead the work of his grace, for the enforcing of our petitions for the pardon of our sins; Lord, forgive us, for thou hast thyself inclined us to forgive others. There is another addition here; we plead not only in general, we forgive our debtors, but in particular we profess to forgive *every one* that is indebted to us, without exception. We so forgive our debtors, as not to bear malice or ill-will to any, but true love to all, without any exception whatsoever. Here also the doxology in the close is wholly omitted, and the *Amen*; for Christ would leave his disciples at liberty to use that, or any other

A. M. 4037. 6 For a friend of mine ² in his
A. D. 33. journey is come to me, and I have
nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, ^b though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

^a Or, out of his way.—^b Chapter xviii. 1, &c.

doxology, fetched out of David's Psalms; or rather, he left a space here to be filled up by a doxology more peculiar to the Christian institutes, ascribing glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Verses 5-8. *And he said, &c.*—“Having, by a short form, taught his disciples that they were not in prayer to use a multiplicity of words, with vain repetitions; he proceeded to caution them, on the other hand, against coldness, indifference, and slackness in their supplications. The evil of this, and the necessity of asking affectionately, with importunity and perseverance, he taught them by a parable; in which he showed them, that *importunity*, that is, earnestness and frequency in asking, are the proper, natural expressions of strong desires, and, by consequence, that God very properly requires these things in men, before he bestows on them such favours as they stand in need of, just as he requires them to be earnestly desirous of these favours before he blesses them therewith.”—Macknight. *Which of you shall have a friend, &c.*—As if he had said, Who is there of you that has not observed the efficacy of importunate requests? If, for instance, he shall have a friend, and *shall go to him at midnight*—The most unreasonable time imaginable for asking a favour; and *say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves*—Do me this favour on account of our mutual friendship; for a friend of mine—One to whom I am particularly indebted; *in his journey is come to me*—Having travelled so late and long, my friend is both weary and hungry; and *I have nothing to set before him*—A case certainly very urgent. *And he from within*—Being of a churlish disposition; *shall answer and say, Trouble me not*—Do not disturb me thus at so late an hour; what you ask will put me to a great deal of trouble: *the door is now shut*—And must have its locks and bolts opened, and *my children are with me in bed*—Or as τα παιδιά με μετ' εμῶς εἰς τὴν κοίτην εἰσὶν, may be rendered, *my servants, together with me, are in bed*. My servants are in bed as well as myself, and probably they are fast asleep, so that there is nobody at hand to give you what you want. *I cannot rise and give thee*—You cannot expect that I will rise and give you the loaves. *I say unto you, Though he will not rise, &c.*—This man, though he would not yield to the calls and influence of friendship, yet will he be prevailed upon

9 ^c And I say unto you, Ask, and ^{A. M. 4037.}
^{A. D. 33.} it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

11 ^d If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

^c Matt. vii. 7; John xv. 7; Jam. i. 6; 1 John iii. 22.—^d Matt. vii. 9.

by the force of importunity; because it shows both the greatness of the supplicant's distress, and the earnestness of his desire.

Verses 9-10. *I say unto you, Ask, &c.*—Pray frequently, and be most earnest and importunate in your prayers, because thus you shall obtain whatsoever you ask agreeably to the will of God. For if importunity would prevail thus with a man that was displeased at it, much more will it prevail with God, who is infinitely more kind and ready to do good to us than we are one to another; and is not displeased at our importunity, but accepts it, especially when the object of it is spiritual mercies. If he do not answer our prayers, and grant our requests presently, yet he will answer them in due time, if we continue to pray and exercise faith in his power, love, and faithfulness. Ask, therefore, what God in his word authorizes you to ask, and what you are persuaded it would be for God's glory that you should receive, and *it shall be given you*—Either the thing itself which you ask, or that which is equivalent; either the removal of the thorn in the flesh, or grace sufficient to enable you to bear it. Of this we have an assurance from Christ's own mouth, who knows his Father's mind, and in whom all the promises of God are *yea and amen*. But we must not only *ask*, we must also *seek*, in the use of means; must second our prayers with our endeavours; and in asking and seeking, we must continue urgent, still knocking at the same door, and we shall at length prevail. *For every one that asketh receiveth*—Even the meanest saint shall have his petition granted, that asks earnestly, importunately, and in faith. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, Psa. xxxiv. 6.* When we ask of God those things which Christ, in the above prayer, has directed us to *ask*, namely, that his name may be sanctified; that his kingdom may come, and his will be done;—in these requests we must be importunate, and must never hold our peace day or night. See on Matt. vii. 7, 8; where the same passage occurs.

Verses 11, 12. *If a son shall ask bread of any of you*—Further to assist your faith on these occasions, reflect upon the workings of your own hearts toward your offspring. Let any of you, that is a father, and knows the heart of a father, a father's affection to, and care for, a child, say, *if his son ask bread to*

A. M. 4037. 12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will
A. D. 33. he ^s offer him a scorpion ?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children : how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?

14 ¶ ^{**} And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake ; and the people wondered.

15 But some of them said, ' He casteth out devils through ' Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.

16 And others tempting *him*, ^s sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 ^h But ⁱ he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation ; and

^a Gr. *give*.—^{*} Third Sunday in Lent, gospel, verse 14 to verse 29.—^h Matt. ix. 32 ; xii. 22.—ⁱ Matt. ix. 34 ; xii. 24.
^a Gr. *Beelzebub* ; and so verses 18, 19.

satisfy his hunger, *will he give him a stone*—In the shape of a loaf ? or, *If he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent*—Which has some resemblance of a fish ; or *if he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion*—Which, instead of nourishing him, might sting him to death ? Naturalists tell us, that the body of a scorpion is very like an egg, especially if the scorpion be of the white kind, which is the first species mentioned by Ælian, Avicenna, and others. Bochart has produced testimonies to prove that the scorpions in Judea were about the bigness of an egg ; and therefore there, a white scorpion being very like an egg, might to children, who were not capable of distinguishing the one from the other, be offered in place thereof, if the person so doing meant that it should sting and destroy them. These different instances are mentioned by Jesus, in order that the doctrine which he is here inculcating might make the stronger impression upon his hearers. See on Matt. vii. 9–11.

Verse 13. *If ye then, being evil*—*If ye*, who are, at least, comparatively *evil*, and perhaps inclined to a penurious and morose temper, yet *know how to give good gifts to your children*—And find your hearts disposed to relieve their returning necessities, by a variety of daily provisions ;—if earthly parents, though *evil*, be yet so kind ; if they, though weak, be yet so knowing, that they give with discretion, *give what is best, in the best manner and time ; much more shall your heavenly Father*—Who has wrought these dispositions in you, and who infinitely excels the fathers of our flesh, as in power, so also in wisdom and goodness, be ready to bestow every necessary good, and even to give the best and most excellent gift of all, *his Holy Spirit, to them that sincerely and earnestly ask him* ; a gift, inclusive of, or followed by, all the good things we ought to pray for ;

a house *divided* against a house, A. M. 4037.
falleth. A. D. 33.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand ? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out ? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I ^k with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 ^l When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace :

22 But ^m when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 ⁿ He that is not with me is against me :

^a Matt. xii. 38 ; xvi. 1.—^h Matt. xii. 25 ; Mark iii. 24.
ⁱ John ii. 25.—^h Exod. viii. 19.—^l Matt. xii. 29 ; Mark iii. 27.—^m Isa. liii. 12 ; Col. ii. 15.—ⁿ Matt. xii. 30.

more than which, with its effects and consequences, we do not need, to make us wise, holy, happy, and useful ; the Holy Spirit being the source of spiritual life to and in us here, and the earnest of eternal life hereafter ; a gift which, therefore, it concerns us all earnestly, constantly, and perseveringly to pray for. Observe well, then, reader, both that it is our indispensable duty to ask this gift, and that we have all possible encouragement to believe that, if we ask aright, we shall not ask in vain. For as certainly as God's power enables him, so certainly does his goodness incline him, and his promise bind him, to give it, and that to all those that ask as they are here directed.

Verses 14–23. *And he was casting out a devil*—See on Matt. ix. 32–34 ; and xii. 22, 23. *Some said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub*—These he answers, verse 17. Others, to try whether it were so or not, *sought a sign from heaven*—These he reproves, in the 29th and following verses. Beelzebub signifies *the lord of flies*, a title which the heathen gave to Jupiter, whom they accounted the chief of their gods, and yet supposed him to be employed in driving away flies from their temples and sacrifices. The Philistines worshipped a deity under this name as the god of Ekron : from hence the Jews took the name, and applied it to the chief of the devils. *He, knowing their thoughts, &c.*—See this whole paragraph explained, on Matt. xii. 25–30. *A house divided against a house*—That is, one part of a family divided against, and contending with, another part, *falleth*, cometh to inevitable ruin. *If I cast out devils by the finger of God*—That is, by a power manifestly divine. Perhaps the expression intimates further that it was done without any labour : no doubt *the kingdom of God is come upon you*—Unawares, unexpectedly ; so the expression, εφθασει

A. M. 4037. and he that gathereth not with me
A. D. 33. scattereth.

24 ° When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest: and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and ° the last state of that man is worse than the first.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, ° Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

28 But he said, Yea, † rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

29 ¶ † And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as † Jonas was a sign unto the Nine-

° Matt. xii. 43.—† John v. 14; Heb. vi. 4; x. 26; 2 Pet. ii. 20.—‡ Chap. i. 28, 48.—§ Matt. vii. 21; Chap. viii. 21; James i. 25.

εφ' υμας, implies. When a strong man armed—Alluding to Satan, strong in himself, and armed with the pride, obstinacy, and security of him in whom he dwells.

Verses 24-26. When the unclean spirit—See notes on Matt. xii. 43-45.

Verses 27, 28. As he spake these things, a certain woman, &c.—While Jesus thus reasoned, in confutation of the Pharisees, a woman of the company, ravished with his wisdom, and perhaps believing him to be their long-expected Messiah, expressed her admiration of his character in an exclamation upon the happiness of the woman who had the honour of giving him birth; a thought very natural for a woman. But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it—As if he had said, The blessedness which you prize so much, and which could be enjoyed by one woman only, however great, is far inferior to a blessedness which is in every one's power, namely, that which arises from the knowledge and practice of the will of God. If even she that bare me had not attended to this, she would have forfeited all her blessedness.

Verses 29-32. When the people were gathered thick together.—It seems, on this occasion, the multitude gathered round him in a great crowd, and pressed upon him, in expectation that he was going to show them the sign from heaven which some of

vites, so shall also the Son of man A. M. 4037.
be to this generation. A. D. 33.

31 ° The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for † they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

33 † No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a ° bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

34 † The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

36 If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be

° Matt. xii. 38, 39.—† Jonah i. 17; ii. 10.—‡ 1 Kings x. 1.—§ Jonah iii. 5.—¶ Matt. v. 15; Mark iv. 21; Chap. viii. 16.—‡ Matt. v. 15.—‡ Matt. vi. 22.

them had required from him. But he repulsed them, by telling them that they were an evil race of men, who discovered a very perverse disposition, in seeking signs after so many miracles had been wrought by him; for which reason no greater sign should be given them than those they were daily beholding, except the sign of the Prophet Jonas. See notes on Matt. xii. 38-42. They repented at the preaching of Jonas—But it was only for a season. Afterward they relapsed into wickedness, till (after about forty years) they were destroyed. It is remarkable, that in this also the comparison held. God reprieved the Jews for about forty years: but they still advanced in wickedness, till, having filled up their measure, they were destroyed with an utter destruction.

Verses 33-36. No man, when he hath lighted a candle—The meaning is, God gives you this gospel light, that ye may repent. Let your eye be singly fixed on him, aim only at pleasing God; and while ye do this, your whole soul will be full of wisdom, holiness, and happiness. But when thine eye is evil—When thou aimest at any thing else, thou wilt be full of folly, sin, and misery. On the contrary If thy whole body be full of light—If thou art filled with holy wisdom, having no part dark, giving way to no sin or folly, then that heavenly principle will, like the clear flame of a lamp in a room that was dark before, shed its light into all thy powers

A. M. 4037. full of light; as when ⁶the bright
A. D. 33. shining of a candle doth give thee
light.

37 ¶ And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in and sat down to meat.

38 And ^awhen the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 ^bAnd the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but ^cyour inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 *Ye fools, did not he that made that which*

⁶Or, a candle by its bright shining.—^aMark vii. 3.—^bMatt. xxiii. 25.—^cTitus i. 15.—^dIsaiah lviii. 7; Daniel iv. 27;

and faculties. For a fuller explanation of these verses, see notes on Matt. v. 15; vi. 22, 23; Mark iv. 21, 22.

Verse 37. *And as he spake, a Pharisee besought him to dine with him*—Our Lord having proved the truth of his mission, against the malicious cavils of his enemies, in the manner above stated, when he had made an end of speaking, one of the Pharisees present invited him to dine with him. It is not said whether he gave him the invitation as a mark of respect for him, or with an insidious design. The severity with which Jesus reprov'd the superstition of the Pharisees, while he sat at meat with them, and the malice which they discovered, in urging him to say things offensive to the magistrate or to the people, make it probable that the latter rather was the case. Nevertheless, he accepted the invitation, and went along with the Pharisee, and sat down at table without washing, as, it seems, all the other guests had done. *And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled, &c.*—Expressed great surprise at our Lord's showing such an open contempt of their traditions. *And the Lord said, Now ye Pharisees*—Probably many of them were present at the Pharisee's house; *make clean the outside of the cup, &c.*—Ye are at great pains to keep every thing clean that touches your food, lest your bodies should be defiled in eating; but ye are at no pains to keep your minds clean from pollutions that are incomparably worse,—the pollutions of rapine, covetousness, and wickedness. *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, &c.*—Did not he, who made the body, make the soul also? Wherefore ye are grossly stupid and foolish, not to see, that, if God requires purity of body, because it is his own workmanship, he will much more insist on purity of mind, which is the nobler part of human nature. And therefore, instead of that scrupulousness with respect to meats and washings, which engrosses so much of your attention, you ought to apply yourselves to the duties of justice, mercy, and charity, as an evidence that your hearts are right with God, that you love him better than the world, and prefer the pleasing of him to amassing wealth, or at-

is without, make that which is within
also? A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

41 ^dBut rather give alms ⁷of such things as ye have; and behold, all things are clean unto you.

42 ^eBut wo unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 ^fWo unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

Chap. xii. 33.—⁷Or, as you are able.—⁸Matt. xxiii. 23. ⁹Matt. xxiii. 6; Mark xii. 38, 39.

taining any temporal good. It is justly observed here, by Dr. Macknight, that "we are not to imagine alms-giving was particularly mentioned by Christ, in his exhortation to the Pharisees, because it is of greater value and necessity than the other virtues. He recommended it to that sect, because they were generally remarkable for their covetousness and extortion, vices which must be repented of, by making restitution to those who have been injured by them. And when these cannot be known or found, the compensation must be made to the poor, as having the next right; because what is given to them is lent to God; but the Pharisees were of an incorrigibly stubborn disposition, which no instruction, however mild or persuasive, could influence; wherefore our Lord, on this occasion, wisely treated them with a kind and wholesome severity, denouncing most dreadful woes against them for being so zealous in the ceremonial institutions of religion, while they utterly neglected the precepts of morality." *Wo unto you*—That is, miserable are you. In the same manner is the phrase to be understood throughout the chapter; *for ye tithe, &c.*—Ye pay tithes of these things, *and pass over judgment and the love of God*—Ye show such care and exactness in performing ceremonial precepts, that ye do not neglect even the least of them; but the great duties of godliness and righteousness, of the love of God and all mankind, and the duties of truth, justice, mercy, and charity, flowing therefrom, ye utterly neglect, as things of no importance in comparison. Nevertheless, *these ought ye to have done*—The duties of piety and morality ought to have been the principal objects of your care, while, at the same time, the other should not have been left undone. See on Matt. xxiii. 23–26.

Verses 43, 44. *Wo unto you, for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, &c.*—Here he denounces the judgment of God against them for their pride, which was so excessive, that it appeared in their carriage in the streets, and at all public meetings. See on Matt. xxiii. 6, 7. *Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees*—In this wo he joins the scribes with the Pharisees, and condemns the hypocrisy of both.

A. M. 4037. 44 ^ε Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ^h for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.
A. D. 33.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Wo unto you also, *ye* lawyers! ⁱ for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

^ε Matt. xxiii. 27.—^h Psa. v. 9.—ⁱ Matt. xxiii. 4.

For ye are as graves, &c.—Under a show of humility and contempt of the world, you are proud, voluptuous, and rapacious, and so resemble concealed graves, which are apt to pollute those who walk over them. Or, as graves appear not when overgrown with grass, so that men are not aware till they stumble upon them, and either hurt themselves, or, at least, are defiled by touching them, so your deceit, hypocrisy, and wickedness are not discovered, being hid under the appearance of strict sanctity which you put on; but, nevertheless, these your vices defile and injure many. On another occasion Christ compared them to *whited sepulchres*, fair without, but foul within. See on Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.

Verse 45. *Then answered one of the lawyers, &c.*—A doctor, or interpreter of the law. The Jewish lawyers (as our translation not very properly terms them) were the most considerable species of scribes, who applied themselves peculiarly to study and explain the law. Probably many of them were Pharisees, but it was no ways essential to their office that they should be so. What touched the person here speaking was, that our Lord, in his last wo, verse 44, had joined the scribes with the Pharisees. *Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us*—The rebuke which thou hast given the scribes and Pharisees in so general a way, affects us lawyers also. *And he said, Wo unto you also, ye lawyers*—The lawyers, even of the Pharisean denomination, had done unspeakable mischief by their erroneous interpretation of Scripture, which they perverted to favour the tradition of the elders as much as possible, and so bound heavy burdens on men's shoulders, which they themselves would not touch with one of their fingers. Jesus, therefore, spake his mind freely concerning them also, laid open their character, and denounced further woes against them. *Wo unto you, for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets*—He blames them for building the sepulchres of the prophets, because they did it from no regard to the murdered prophets, though in words they pretended to venerate their memory, but in order to make an ostentation of their piety. *Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers*—By all your conduct you show that inwardly, in your minds, you approve of the deeds of your fathers, who persecuted the prophets; *for they killed them, and ye*

47 ^k Wo unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

48 Truly ye bear witness, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, ^l I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world,

^k Matt. xxiii. 29.—^l Matt. xxiii. 34.

build their sepulchres—You are men of precisely the same character and disposition with them; hypocrites, who covered the grossest acts of wickedness with the specious appearance of piety. For like them you pretend great reverence for the ancient prophets, while ye destroy those whom God sends to yourselves. Ye therefore bear witness, by this deep hypocrisy, that you are of the very same spirit with them. Or, more at large, thus: "From your known disposition, as well as from your open practice, which is to trample upon the laws of God, as often as they stand in the way of your wicked purposes, and particularly from your persecuting the messengers of God, one is obliged to think that you build the sepulchres of the prophets whom your fathers killed, not from any pious regard for God, whose messengers they were, nor to do honour to the prophets themselves, but to do honour to their murderers, as approving of their deeds, and intending to perpetuate the memory of them to posterity with applause. The great men among the Jews always possessed the true spirit of politicians. In the time of the prophets they made no scruple to kill persons, whom they knew to be the messengers of God, because, forsooth, the good of the state required it. In our Saviour's time, Caiaphas, the high-priest, openly avowed this principle in a full meeting of the grandees. For when some were opposing the resolution of the major part of the council, who had determined to kill Jesus, and urged the unlawfulness of the action, he told them plainly that they were a parcel of ignorant bigots, who knew nothing at all either of the principles or ends of government, which render it necessary oft-times to sacrifice the most innocent for the safety of the community. *Therefore also said the wisdom of God*—Agreeably to this the wisdom of God hath said, in many places of Scripture, though not in these very words, *I will send them prophets, &c.*—Because you imitate the ways of your fathers, by persecuting the messengers of God; because you carry your wickedness to as great a pitch as your fathers did; for these reasons God hath declared his last resolutions concerning you: he hath said, I will send them prophets and apostles, yea, and my beloved Son, notwithstanding I know they will persecute and slay them: *That the blood of all the prophets, &c.*—

A. M. 4037. may be required of this generation;
A. D. 33.

51 ^m From the blood of Abel unto ⁿ the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

52 ^o Wo unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter

^m Gen. iv. 8.—ⁿ 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

That by this last and greatest act of rebellion, the iniquity of the nation being completed, God may at length testify how much he was displeased with this people from the beginning, for persecuting and murdering his prophets, and that by sending upon the generation which completed the iniquity of the nation, such signal judgments as should evidently appear to be the punishment of that great and accumulated wickedness, committed by them in their several successive generations. *Verily I say, It shall be required of this generation*—And so it was within forty years, in a most astonishing manner, by the dreadful destruction of the temple, the city, and the nation. The justice of such a procedure every thinking person will acknowledge, who considers that sins committed by men, as constituting a body politic, can only be punished in the present life; the proper punishment of national sins being national judgments, even such judgments as dissolve the transgressing state. And these the providence of God thinks necessary for its own vindication, always inflicting them upon nations, when the measure fixed upon by God for punishment is filled up, that the

not in yourselves, and them that were ^a hindered.
A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things;

54 Laying wait for him, and ^p seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

^o Matt. xxiii. 13.—^o Or, *forbade*.—^p Mark xii. 13.

wrath of God being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, the nations of the world may be awed and kept in subjection to the government of God. See on Matt. xxiii. 29–33.

Verse 52. *Wo unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge*—Ye have obscured and destroyed the true knowledge of the Messiah, which is the key both of the present and the future kingdom of heaven. Or, by your wrong interpretations of Scripture, you have filled the people with strong prejudices against the gospel, so that you not only reject it yourselves, but hinder others from receiving it. See on Matt. xxiii. 13.

Verses 53, 54. *As he said these things, the scribes and Pharisees began to urge him*—The freedom which Jesus now took with the Pharisee and his guests, provoked them exceedingly, for they were guilty of the crimes which he laid to their charge; and to be revenged, they urged him to speak upon a variety of topics relative to religion and government, hoping that he might let something drop which would render him either obnoxious to the magistrate or to the people.

CHAPTER XII.

In this chapter, (1.) Christ cautions his disciples against hypocrisy, and animates them against the fear of men, by the promise of extraordinary assistance from his Spirit in their greatest trials, 1–12. (2.) Being desired to interpose in a dispute between two brethren about property, he declines the decision of the case; and takes occasion to advance a caution against covetousness, which he enforces by the parable of the rich fool, 13–21. (3.) He repeats the cautions and exhortations against an anxious and covetous temper, which he had formerly given in his sermon on the mount, 22–34. (4.) He exhorts his disciples to watchfulness and fidelity in expectation of his coming, and of the final account to be given for all their advantages, 35–48. (5.) He observes the evils which would be occasioned by his coming, yet declares his desire to complete his work, and warns the Jews of the great danger of neglecting the short remainder of their time of trial, 49–59.

A. M. 4037. **I**N ^athe mean time, when there
A. D. 33. were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, ^bBeware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 ^cFor there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in

^a Matt. xvi. 6; Mark viii. 15.—^b Matt. xvi. 12.—^c Matt. x. 26; Mark iv. 22; Chap. viii. 17.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. *When there were gathered together an innumerable multitude*—Επισημασθεισων των μυριαδων, literally, *myriads* (that is, tens of thousands, how many is not said) *being gathered together*. By this it appears, that though the scribes and Pharisees thought to accuse him, and bring him into disrepute, the people that were not under the influence of their prejudices and jealousies still admired him, attended on him, and did him honour. Nay, it seems the more these learned hypocrites strove to drive them from Christ, the more they flocked to him; which, doubtless, vexed them no little. It is not improbable, however, that this vast assemblage of people might be partly owing to an apprehension, either that Christ might meet with some ill usage among so many of his enemies, or that he would say or do something peculiarly remarkable on the occasion. Be this as it may, it is evident that the people could bear reproof better than the Pharisees; for though, in the morning, when they were gathered thick together, (chap. xi. 29,) he had severely reprov'd them, as *an evil generation that sought a sign*, yet in the afternoon they renewed their attendance on him. It is pleasing to see people thus forward to hear the word of God, and venture upon inconvenience and danger, rather than miss an opportunity of being instructed in divine things. *He began to say unto his disciples, Beware of the leaven, &c.*—The caution given in this and the two following verses, and the subsequent exhortations contained in this paragraph, are to the same purpose with others that we have had in Matthew and Mark, upon other the like occasions. See on Matt. xvi. 6; x. 26-32; Mark viii. 15. For it is reasonable to suppose, that our blessed Lord preached the same doctrines, and pressed the same duties, at several times; and that some of his evangelists have recorded them as he delivered them at one time, and others as he taught them at another. It is here said, that he addressed his disciples *first of all*; for they were his peculiar charge, his family, his school, and therefore he particularly warned them as his beloved sons. They made a greater profession of religion than others, and hypocrisy therein was the sin of which they were most in danger. And as they were to preach to others, if

darkness, shall be heard in the light; A. M. 4037. and that which ye have spoken in ^athe ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.

4 ^dAnd I say unto you, ^emy friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

^d Matthew x. 28; Isaiah li. 7, 8, 12, 13; Jer. i. 8.—^e John xv. 14, 15.

they should prevaricate, corrupt the word of God, and deal deceitfully with it, and with the souls of men, their hypocrisy would be more criminal than that of others. Christ's disciples, Judas excepted, were, we have reason to believe, the best men in the world, and yet we see they needed to be cautioned against hypocrisy. What need, then, have we to be jealous of ourselves lest we should fall into this sin! Christ gave this caution to his disciples in the hearing of this great multitude of people, rather than privately, to add the greater weight to it, and to let the world know that he would not countenance any sin, and especially hypocrisy, even in those he loved best.

Verses 2-5. *For there is nothing covered, &c.*—All your actions shall be brought to light, either in this world or in the next. Wherefore take great care never to do any thing which cannot bear the light, but let the whole of your behaviour be fair, honest, and good. This argument against hypocrisy he proceeded to improve as a reason for their acquiring another quality, which would serve all the ends they could propose by their hypocrisy, and to much better purpose; an undaunted resolution in the performance of their duty, founded on faith in God, who now governs the world by a particular providence, and in the end will reward or punish every man according to his deeds. *I say unto you, my friends*—With all possible seriousness, and tender concern for your everlasting welfare; *Be not afraid of them that kill the body*—Let not the fear of man make you act the hypocrite, or conceal any thing which I have commissioned you to publish: *and after that have no more that they can do*—The immortal soul being entirely out of their reach. *But I will forewarn you*—Greek, *προειπω υμιν, I will show you; whom you shall fear*—Whose displeasure you shall be afraid to incur; *fear him, which after he hath killed the body, hath power to cast into hell*—Is able to torment the soul eternally, and whose displeasure, therefore, is infinitely to be dreaded. *Yea, I say unto you, Fear him*—And rather choose to venture on the greatest dangers, and to sacrifice your lives, than to do any thing which may offend his Divine Majesty. See on Matt. x. 28. It is remarkable that Christ gives this direction even to his peculiar friends: therefore the

A. M. 4037. 6 Are not five sparrows sold for two
A. D. 33. ^f farthings, and not one of them is
forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are
all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of
more value than many sparrows.

8 ^e Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall
confess me before men, him shall the Son
of man also confess before the angels of
God.

^f Matt. x. 29.—^e Matt. x. 32; Mark viii. 38; 2 Tim. ii.
12; 1 John ii. 23.

fearing of God, as having power to cast into hell,
is to be pressed even upon true believers.

Verses 6, 7. *Are not five sparrows sold for two
farthings*—*ἄσφαριον δύο, two pence*, as Dr. Camp-
bell translates it, or “three half-pence sterling;”
and not one of them is forgotten before God—As if
he had said, But trust in as well as fear him, for re-
member, he is an infinitely more kind, as well as
more powerful friend than man, and all things
are in his hand and keeping. His providence ex-
tends itself to the meanest of his works: he num-
bers the very hairs of your head, and therefore
your enemies cannot hurt even your bodies with-
out his knowledge and permission. *Fear not
therefore*—For as men, and much more as my ser-
vants and friends, *ye are of more value than many
sparrows*—And are more peculiarly under God’s
care than they.

Verses 8, 9. *Also I say unto you*—It will be nec-
essary, however, in order that you may keep your
minds unshaken, that you should often look forward
unto the final judgment, at which I will own you as
my servants, if, by your constant and cheerful obe-
dience to my commands, you now acknowledge me
as your Master. *For whosoever shall confess me
before men*—Shall freely and openly acknowledge
himself to be my disciple, and shall conduct himself
as such, to whatever dangers and persecutions he
may thereby expose himself; *him shall the Son of
man also confess*—Shall declare to belong to him;
before the angels of God—When they come to at-
tend on his final triumph. *But he that*—To avoid
reproach and suffering; *denieth me before men*—
And is ashamed or afraid of maintaining so good a
cause; shall be denied and disowned by me *before
the angels of God*—When they appear in radiant
forms around me, and wait in solemn silence the
important event of that awful day. Nothing can be
more majestic than the view which Christ here
gives of himself, and of the issue of the final judg-
ment. To be renounced by him is spoken of as a cir-
cumstance which will expose a man to the contempt
of the whole angelic world, and leave him no re-
maining shelter or hope.

Verse 10. *And whosoever, &c.*—Nothing, there-
fore, can be more dangerous and fatal than to oppose
my cause: and yet the denying me in some degree,

9 But he that denieth me before men, A.M.4037.
shall be denied before the angels of God. A. D. 33.

10 And ^b whosoever shall speak a word
against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven
him: but unto him that blasphemeth against
the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

11 ⁱ And when they bring you unto the syna-
gogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take
ye no thought how or what thing ye shall an-
swer, or what ye shall say:

^b Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 28; 1 John v. 16.—ⁱ Matt.
x. 19; Mark xiii. 11; Chap. xxi. 14.

may, upon true repentance, be forgiven: *for whoso-
ever shall speak a word*—Expressive of unbelief
and disregard, or even of opposition and enmity;
against the Son of man—In this his present state of
humiliation and suffering, he may possibly hereafter
repent, and on his repentance his sins may be for-
given him. *But unto him that blasphemeth against
the Holy Ghost*—If a man’s denying of me rise so
high that he blasphemeth and reviles the Holy Spirit,
and ascribes the miracles wrought by him, in con-
firmation of the gospel, to the agency of Satan, this
sin shall never be forgiven, neither is there place for
repentance. And especially he that, after my resur-
rection and ascension, blasphemeth the Holy Ghost,
when that Divine Spirit shall have displayed his most
glorious agency as my great advocate and witness;
he who then opposes that last and most convincing
and powerful method of God’s recovering grace, shall,
as utterly incorrigible, be abandoned to final destruc-
tion. See on Matt. xii. 31, 32.

Verses 11, 12. *When they bring you unto the syna-
gogues*—Let me add, however others may be affect-
ed by this testimony of the Spirit, one happy effect
of its operation shall be to furnish you, my apostles,
for a proper and honourable discharge of your office
in its most difficult parts: and therefore when, in
the opposition you shall meet with from your per-
secutors, *they shall bring you into the synagogues*,
to be tried in the judicial courts assembled there;
And unto magistrates and powers—Before greater
magistrates and supreme powers, whether Jewish or
heathen; *Take ye no thought how ye shall answer*
—Be not solicitous about the *matter or manner*
of your defence, nor how to express yourselves.
Though they may have not only your liberty but
your lives in their hands, yet be not anxious what
apology you shall make for yourselves, or what you
shall advance in defence of the gospel you preach.
For the Holy Ghost shall teach you—For in these
seasons of the greatest difficulty and extremity, the
Spirit of God shall suggest to your minds the answers
you ought to give to the most captious inquiries,
and most invidious charges of your enemies. Proper
thoughts and expressions shall flow in upon you as
fast as you can utter them, so that with undaunted
courage you shall be able to vindicate the honour of
the gospel, and to confound the most artful or most

A. M. 4037. 12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach
A. D. 33. you in the same hour what ye ought
to say.

13 ¶ And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 And he said unto him, ¹ Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, ² Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

¹ John xviii. 36.—² 1 Tim. vi. 7, &c.

potent of your adversaries. See on Matt. x. 19, 20; Mark xiii. 11.

Verses 13-15. *One said, Master, speak to my brother, &c.*—While Jesus was discoursing, as above related, to his disciples, one of the crowd, that was then collected about Jesus, requested that he would speak to his brother, and persuade him to divide their paternal inheritance, and give him his share. But, because judging in civil matters was the province of the magistrates, and foreign to the end of our Lord's coming, he refused to meddle in their quarrel. It is not said which of these brothers was in the wrong; only, because the disposition which they discovered afforded a fit opportunity for religious advice, our Lord embraced it, and cautioned his hearers in the most solemn manner against covetousness, declaring that neither the length nor the happiness of a man's life depends upon the greatness of his possessions. *He said, Take heed and beware*—Greek, *ορατε και φυλασσετε απο της πλεονεξιας*, see to it, and be on your guard, against covetousness. The phrase is lively and full of force. Some old versions and good copies read, *from all covetousness*, in which extent, doubtless, our Lord intended his caution to be understood, whether he did or did not so particularly express it. "Properly speaking, covetousness is an immoderate love of money. Now of this passion there are two kinds: one which, in the pursuit of its purpose, does not scruple at fraud, falsehood, and oppression, and which is commonly accompanied with want of kindness and charity. This is the most odious and criminal species of covetousness. The other form of the vice consists in a high esteem of riches as the chief good, in seeking one's happiness from the enjoyments which they procure, and in substituting them in the place of the providence and grace of God. This love of riches is, in Scripture, emphatically termed *a trusting in them*, and is a sort of covetousness that is abundantly compatible with a regard to justice, being often found in persons no way remarkable for the want of that virtue." Thus Dr. Macknight; to which we may add, with Dr. Whitby, that the desire of having more than we really need, and that, not to supply the necessities of others, or to promote God's glory, but that we may keep and

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, ¹ Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

¹ Eccles. xi. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 32; James v. 5.

treasure it up and enjoy it ourselves, is one species of covetousness; for these words are certainly produced as dissuasive from that sin, which they could not be, were not the desire of having more one species or symptom of it. And from the words following we learn, that to be more solicitous concerning temporal than spiritual things, and to be anxious about them, when we are not yet *rich toward God*, is another sign of covetousness. This may be concluded from the concern of this person for the dividing of his inheritance, rather than that our Lord should instruct him in the way of life, it being this which gave occasion to Christ's admonition, *to beware of covetousness*; and it more clearly follows still from the example of the rich fool, mentioned in the following verses, who was so much concerned to hoard up his goods, but not at all concerned to be *rich toward God*; that is, to have his treasure with God in the heavens, and to esteem it his chief riches to be an heir of the kingdom of God, verse 32, and to employ his property in a way that would be acceptable to God, and tend to his own future felicity; for this is a plain indication of a heart that values these temporal concerns more than God's favour, or celestial riches, which, in St. Paul's judgment, renders the covetous person guilty of idolatry. *For a man's life*—That is, the comfort and happiness of it; *consisteth not in the abundance that he possesseth*—Nor can the continuance of his life, even for the shortest period of time, be secured by that abundance.

Verses 16-20. To illustrate his admonition, and give it the greater weight, our Lord here delivers an important parable. *The ground of a rich man brought forth plentifully*—This man, it appears, became rich, not by unjust gains, but by the produce of his own land, the most innocent method possible of making or increasing an estate. Nor did his covetousness consist in heaping up wealth without end, even by a method so innocent as that of agriculture: no; the extraordinary fruitfulness of one year's crop contented him, for it was so great that he had no further care, but to contrive how to *bestow his fruits*. And the result of his deliberation was, to *pull down his barns and build greater*. Nor did his covetousness consist in hoarding up the fruits

A. M. 4037. A. D. 33. 20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night ¹thy^m soul shall be required of thee: ²then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, ^oand is not rich toward God.

22 ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, ^pTake no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

¹ Or, do they require thy soul.—^m Job xx. 22; xxvii. 8; Psa. liii. 7; Jam. iv. 14.—² Psa. xxxix. 6; Jer. xvii. 11.—^o Matt.

of that one bountiful year; for he laid them up with no other intention, but to take the full use of them in every sensual enjoyment which they could afford; saying to his soul, that is, to himself, with complacency and confidence, *Thou hast much goods laid up for many future years, take thine ease*—Cease from the fatigue of business, and even from the labour of thought. Enjoy thyself; eat and drink without any fear of exhausting thy stores, and be as merry as corn, and wine, and oil, shared with thy most jovial companions, can make thee. This man's covetousness, therefore, consisted in the satisfaction which he took in his goods and fruits, in his putting a high value on the pleasures of luxury which they afforded, and in proposing to derive his happiness from them alone, without taking God and religion into his scheme at all. *But God said unto him*—God, who in this man's scheme of happiness was overlooked, thought fit to show him the folly he was guilty of in contemning his Maker, on whom he depended for every thing, and by whose providence alone he lived to enjoy any blessing: God, with just displeasure, said to him, by the awful dispensation of his providence, amidst all his gayety of heart, and in the variety of his schemes and hopes, *Thou fool*—Who dost thus stupidly forget both the dignity and the mortality of thy nature, and thy continual dependance upon thy supreme Lord! Know, to thy terror, that *this very night*—While thou art talking of a long succession of pleasurable years; *thy soul shall be required of thee*—And hurried away to its own place; that soul, which thou just now saidst had much goods laid up for many years, and which thou badest take its ease and be merry. Greek, την ψυχήν απαιτῶσιν ἀπο σε, *They shall demand thy soul of thee*; that is, "Either thy soul shall be required of thee by God that gave it, and whose deposit it is, as the Jews speak, or else it shall be required by evil angels, according to that other opinion of the Jews, that the souls of the just, when they die, are carried into the garden of Eden by the ministry of holy angels, and the souls of the wicked to the place appointed them, by evil spirits."—Whitby. *Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided*—Will they be thine any longer? When thou appearest at my bar to answer for thy

24 Consider the ravens: for they ^{A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.} neither sow nor reap: which neither have storehouse nor barn; and ^qGod feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you,

vi. 20; Verse 33; 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19; Jam. ii. 5.—^p Matt. vi. 25.—^q Job xxxviii. 41; Psa. cxlvii. 9.

actions, will they buy thee off from punishment? And when thou goest to thy own place, will they procure thee one moment's respite from thy torment, or any comfort under it?

Verse 21. *So*—Such a fool, is he, in the divine account; *that layeth up treasure for himself*—Here on earth: *and is not rich toward God*—In acts of piety and charity, which would secure a fund of celestial treasures, lodged in his almighty hand, and therefore inviolably safe from such calamitous accidents as these. In other words, the covetous sensualist, who, in pursuing riches, has nothing but the gratification of his senses and appetites in view, no regard to the glory of God, who has commanded men to impart to others a portion of the good things which they enjoy, by almsgiving and other acts of beneficence; the man who thus lives only for himself, is as great a fool, and as far from real happiness, as the rich glutton in the parable, who proposes no other end to himself, from his riches, but eating, drinking, and making merry, little suspecting that he was but a few hours from death. Wherefore in this parable we have a perfect picture of the men whose affections are engrossed by the things of this present life. They forget that riches, honour, and power, are bestowed on them in trust. They do not consider that God has put these things into their hands for the good of others, and in order to their own improvement in religion and virtue, by the opportunities thus afforded them of exercising holy and benevolent dispositions. They rather look upon these advantages as mere instruments of self-indulgence and luxury, and use them accordingly. But at the very time when they are inwardly applauding themselves, in having such an abundance of the means of pleasure, and are laying schemes for futurity, as if they were never to die, and are thinking of nothing but happy days, God suddenly strips them of all their joys, overturns the treasures of the ant-hillock, which they had been idly busy in gathering together, and sends the foot of death to tread down, and spurn all abroad, the tottering piles which, like children in their play, they had foolishly, though laboriously, employed themselves in erecting.

Verses 22–31. *And he said unto his disciples*—Having delivered the preceding instructive and

A. M. 4037. that Solomon in all his glory was
A. D. 33. not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, ² neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the

² Or, *live not in careful suspense.*—Matt. vi. 33.—Matt. xi. 25, 26.

awakening parable, whereby he intended to caution the contending brothers and the multitude against covetousness, sensuality, and the love of pleasure, he now proceeds to address his disciples, and caution them against those anxious cares and earthly affections which are also very inimical to religious dispositions, and obstructive to all progress in the divine life. This part of his discourse he grounds on, and enforces by, the consideration of God's superintending providence, and on the caution and parable which he had just delivered. As if he had said, Since a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth; since plenty of goods and fruits is not capable of prolonging it one moment beyond the term fixed for it by God; ye, my disciples, more especially ought, for that reason, to take *no thought*, or rather, as *μεριμνατε* means, *not be solicitous* for the prolongation of your lives, by anxiously laying up a store of provisions and clothes, &c., as if these could preserve life; no, you should consider that *the life is more than meat*, &c. See the contents of these verses explained at large in the notes on Matt. vi. 25-34. For Luke has here, as in other places, recapitulated several precepts given by our Lord to his followers, according to St. Matthew, at a very different time. Some commentators, indeed, have laboured to show that both evangelists refer to the same period, but certainly they have not been able to prove that point: and to attempt it was perfectly unnecessary, it being surely proper that our Lord should repeat to his hearers in Judea, who had hitherto not been favoured with his public ministry, the doctrines which he had before delivered to such as attended his discourses in Galilee. *Neither be ye of a doubtful mind*—*μη μετεωρίζεσθε*. Be not (like meteors in the air, tossed about by every wind) of a fluctuating, unstable mind or judgment, agitated with a variety of restless, uneasy thoughts. Any speculations and musings in which the mind is suspended in an uneasy hesitation, might well be expressed by the word. The thing forbidden, says Theophylact, is *περισπασμος και τυ λογη αστατος περιφορα*, a distracting and unstable fluctuation of the mind, or reason, about provision for the body, which Christ would here remove from the children of God, assuring them that his wisdom knows what is needful for them, (verse 30), and that

world seek after: and your Father A. M. 4037.
knoweth that ye have need of these A. D. 33.
things.

31 ¹ But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for ² it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 ¶ ¹ Sell that ye have, and give alms: ² provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a

¹ Matt. xix. 21, Acts ii. 45; iv. 34.—² Matt. vi. 20; Chap. xvi. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 19.

his fatherly care will certainly provide for them what is so.

Verses 32-34. *Fear not, little flock*—You, my dear property and charge, however feeble you may seem; fear not, I say, that you shall be left destitute of those common blessings of providence, *for it is your Father's good pleasure, &c.*—*Ευδοκῆσεν*, he takes delight, or joyfully acquiesces, in giving you the kingdom, even the kingdom of eternal glory; and can you possibly imagine, that while he intends to bestow that upon you, and even takes pleasure in the thought of making you so rich, great, and happy there, he will refuse you those earthly supplies, such as food and raiment, which he liberally imparts even to strangers and enemies? And since ye have such an inheritance, regard not your earthly possessions. *Sell that ye have and give alms*—That is, be ready, when God calls you, and the exigencies of Christ's members require it, so to do; and be so far from the sordidness of the rich man, who would not give of his superfluities to the needy, as in these cases to relieve them out of the principal, or main stock; as knowing this heavenly kingdom is to be obtained, not by hoarding up treasures here on earth, but in consequence of an interest in Christ, and union with him through faith, by distributing them to his poor and destitute members. This was a precept peculiarly calculated for those times, in which the profession of the gospel exposed men to the loss of all their goods. And it is probable it was as a fruitful seed in the minds of some who heard it; and the liberal sale of estates, a few months after, by which so many poor Christians were supported, might be, in a great measure, the harvest which sprang up from it, under the cultivation of the blessed Spirit. Nothing is more probable, than that some of the many myriads now attending our Lord, (verse 1,) might be in the number of the thousands then converted. See on Acts ii. 41-48. *Provide yourselves bags which wax not old*—Nor wear out: an allusion this to the danger of losing money through a hole, worn in an old purse. Such is frequently the gain of this world, and so are its treasures hoarded up, and put into a bag with holes, Haggai i. 6. The rich men in Judea, so soon ravaged and destroyed by the Romans, particularly found it so. *A treasure in the heavens*

A. M. 4037. treasure in the heavens that faileth
A. D. 33.

not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 ¶ * Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 * Blessed are those servants, whom the

* Eph. vi. 14; 1 Pet. i. 13.—† Matt. xxv. 1, &c.
* Matt. xxiv. 46.

—That region of security and immortality; that *faileth not*—But remains for ever, and continually increases; *where no thief approacheth*—To plunder the riches of its inhabitants; *neither moth corrupteth*—Corrodes and spoils the robes of glory in which they appear. By bestowing your wealth in charity, you will send it before you into heaven, where it will lie secure from all accidents, and be a source of eternal joys to you. *And where your treasure is, &c.*—If your treasure be thus laid up in heaven, your heart will be there also; your thoughts and affections will naturally ascend thither, and consequently your dispositions and actions, your desires and hopes, will be all heavenly.

Verses 35, 36. *Let your loins, &c.*—Our Lord, having recommended to his disciples disengagement of affection from the things of this world, and a due moderation as to their esteem for, and cares about, earthly possessions, proceeds now to exhort them to be in constant readiness for the proper discharge of their duty, for their final remove from earth, and for the awful solemnities of death, judgment, and eternity. That this is the purport of this paragraph, seems evident from every part of it. In the expression here, *Let your loins be girded about*, he alludes to the circumstance of the eastern people wearing long garments; in consequence of which it was necessary, when they had any thing to do which required them to exert their strength or agility, that they should tuck them up, and gird them close: a practice to which there are frequent references both in the Old and New Testaments. The entertainments in the East are also here alluded to, which were anciently made in the evening, so that night was commonly far spent before the guests were dismissed. On such occasions servants showed their faithfulness by watching, and keeping their lamps burning, that they might be ready to open the door to their master on the first knock; for to suffer them to be extinguished, as it would have been an inconvenient circumstance to the master, so it would also have been a demonstration of the servant's idleness. The expressions, taken together, may intimate the care we should take to inform ourselves in our duty, and the resolution with which we should apply to

lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 * And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

* Matt. xxiv. 43; 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15.

the performance of it. *And be ye like unto men*—Unto good servants, attending to the work appointed them; *that wait for their lord*—That are continually prepared to receive him; *when he will return from the wedding*—That is, from a marriage-feast, or any other late entertainment; *that they may open to him immediately*—And not be surprised in any disorder. It does not appear that there is any particular mystery in the circumstance of a *wedding*, or marriage-feast, being here mentioned. Our Lord might probably instance in this entertainment, because marriage-feasts were generally the most splendid, and so prolonged to the latest hours.

Verse 37. *Blessed are those servants, &c.*—And blessed also will you be, if this shall be your case: *verily, he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat*—The master of such servants, pleased with their care, would perhaps order them a refreshment, after having watched and fasted so long; and if he were of a very humane disposition, might even bring it them himself, and give it them out of his own hand. It may not be improper to observe here, that it was usual for servants to sit at table, and for their masters to wait upon them, among the Romans in their *Saturnalia*, among the Cretans in their *Hermæ*, and among the Babylonians at their feast called *Saccas*: but whether our Lord here alludes to these, or any of these, it is difficult to judge. The words certainly are very intelligible without supposing any such reference. What our Lord chiefly meant by the similitude evidently was, to intimate to his disciples how acceptable their zeal in discharging the duties of their function would be to him, and how highly he would reward them for it.

Verses 38–40. *And if he shall come in the second or third watch, &c.*—This included all the time from nine in the evening to three in the morning; and was as if he had said, whether he come early or late. Here our Lord enforces “this constant watchfulness and habitual preparation for his coming, from the consideration of the uncertainty of the time of it; telling them, that as there is no master of a family but would make some preparation against a thief, if he knew of his coming, so it would be no great

A. M. 4037. 40 ^b Be ye therefore ready also: for
A. D. 23. the Son of man cometh at an hour
when ye think not.

41 ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speak-
est thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, ° Who then is that
faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall
make ruler over his household, to give *them*
their portion of meat in due season?

^b Matt. xxiv. 44; xxv. 13; Mark xiii. 33; Chap. xxi. 34, 36;
1 Thess. v. 6; 2 Pet. iii. 12.

matter if they should make some preparation, on receiving certain information of his approach: for which reason, their zeal could only show itself by keeping them in constant readiness, as they did not know what hour he would come. *Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of man cometh, &c.*—"The coming of the Son of man often signifies his providential interposition for the destruction of Jerusalem; but it cannot be taken in such a sense here, because our Lord speaks of an *immediate* reward to be bestowed on all faithful servants; and an immediate punishment to be executed on all that were unfaithful; and expressly declares this to be a matter of universal concern: all which particulars have very little sense or propriety, when applied to the destruction of Jerusalem. It must, therefore, be understood of his coming to remove them from the capacities of service here, to give up their account. And, if we suppose it to relate to death, as well as judgment, (which by a consequence at least it undoubtedly does,) it strongly intimates his having such a dominion over the invisible world, that every soul removed into it might be said to be fetched away by him."—Doddridge.

Verses 41–44. *Then Peter said, Lord, speakest thou this parable to us*—Who are thy constant followers, to us who are ministers; or even to all—That come to be taught by thee, to all the hearers, and, in them, to all Christians? Peter, it appears, had been giving close attention to the whole of Christ's discourse, and saw it to be very important; out was at a loss to know whether the latter part of it, namely, the parable of the watching servants, was spoken to the multitude in general, and therefore to all that should hereafter become Christ's followers, or to the apostles in particular. He therefore begged his master to satisfy him as to that point. He knew indeed that the parable was addressed to all the disciples, but it contained instructions which Peter thought might be peculiarly designed for the twelve. *And the Lord said, Who, &c.*—Our Lord, in his answer to Peter's inquiry, shows that, though his exhortations were directed to all, they more especially concerned those who were, or hereafter should be, intrusted with the care of the souls of others, *Who then is that faithful and wise steward, &c.*—The sense of the word is, "What do you think ought to be the character and conduct of a steward to whom his lord commits the

43 Blessed is that servant, whom his A. M. 4037.
lord when he cometh shall find so doing. A. D. 33.

44 ^d Of a truth I say unto you, That he will
make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 ° But and if that servant say in his heart,
My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin
to beat the men-servants, and maidens, and to
eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a

^c Matt. xxiv. 45; xxv. 21; 1 Cor. iv. 2.—^d Matt. xxiv. 47.
^e Matt. xxiv. 48.

care of his family in his absence, as I do the care of my church to you? Why, certainly, he should be both *wise*, to know in what manner to govern the family, and *faithful* in executing whatever his wisdom and prudence direct as fit to be done; for thus only all the members of the family under his care will have due provision made for them." *Blessed, μακαριος, happy, is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing*—To complete the character of such a steward, he must never remit his care and diligence, that so, at whatever time his Lord returns, he may find him employed in the prudent and faithful discharge of the duties of his office. If this be the case, such a servant shall be happy, not only in the consciousness of doing his duty well, but in the rewards and honours which his lord will bestow upon him. Here we see the unspeakable importance of a *patient continuance in well-doing*. The servant spoken of is supposed to be now *wise, faithful, and happy*; yet our Lord's words imply that he might become the reverse of all this, and perish for ever. *I say unto you, That he will make him ruler, &c.*—He will commit the management of his whole estate to him; a trust which such a servant merits by the prudence, faithfulness, and diligence which he showed as steward of the household.

Verses 45, 46. *But and if that servant, &c.*—On the other hand, consider attentively the character and punishment of a bad servant, that you may avoid both. If any steward, who has the care of his lord's family committed to him, yielding to the evil of his own disposition, shall take occasion from his lord's long absence to behave unfaithfully in his duty; *and shall begin to beat the men-servants, &c.*—Shall behave tyrannically toward his fellow-servants, and give himself up to gluttony and drunkenness, wasting their provisions in living riotously with his companions. *The lord of that servant will come when he looketh not for him*—Such a course of rioting will stupify that servant, so that he will not foresee his lord's coming, nor know of it till he is in the house, and shall have exemplary punishment inflicted upon him, proportionable to the greatness of his offences: *and will cut him in sunder, &c.*—See on Matt. xxiv. 51; *and appoint him his portion*—His everlasting portion; *with the unbelievers*—His wickedness having proceeded from his not believing the rewards and punishments of a future state, he shall have his portion in that state with

A. M. 4037. day when he looketh not for *him*,
A. D. 33. and at an hour when he is not aware,
and will * cut him in sunder, and will appoint
him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And † that servant which knew his lord's
will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did ac-
cording to his will, shall be beaten with many
stripes.

* Or, cut him off; Mat. xxiv. 51.—† Psalm xxvii. 9; xciv. 14.
† Numbers xv. 30; Deuteronomy xxv. 2; John ix. 41; xv. 22;

such as were of those Sadducean principles. The
Greek, *μετα των απιστων*, may be properly rendered,
with the unfaithful: as faithful as he once was,
Christ himself being judge, he becomes unfaithful,
and has his eternal portion with the unfaithful. This
circumstance, it must be observed, is added according
to the *meaning*, rather than the *form* of the parable,
and is explanatory of that meaning.

Verses 47, 48. *And that servant which knew his
lord's will, &c.*—Lest the consideration of the strict-
ness of the account, and the greatness of the pun-
ishment, described in the parable, might terrify men
of honest dispositions, who are liable to err merely
through weakness, Jesus showed them, that as of-
fences differ greatly in their circumstances and ag-
gravations, so shall they differ in their punishments
also. To understand this part of our Lord's dis-
course, we must suppose that the steward here spoken
of had received full instruction from his lord, either
before his departure, or afterward by letters, how he
was to employ himself and the servants under his
care. Wherefore, if he neglected his duty, he was
more to blame than the inferior servants, who had
no knowledge of their lord's will but from the
steward, who might conceal it from them, if he had
a mind to serve any by-end of his own. In this re-
spect, how fitly does the parable describe the aggra-
vations of the sin of the ministers and teachers of
religion, who have such singular advantages for
knowing Christ's will. In this light, it shows the
justice of the more severe punishments here de-
nounced as to be inflicted on them for such wilful
neglects and miscarriages, as they are found to be
guilty of in the discharge of their office. The ex-
pressions, *and prepared not himself, neither did
according to his lord's will*, deserve particular at-
tention; for here the sense rises above that of the
foregoing verse. It is as if our Lord had said, Think
not that I merely intend to forbid such gross immo-
ralities as drunkenness, riot, oppression, &c.; but be
assured that sins of omission, where there have been
fair opportunities of learning your duty, will expose
you to the divine correction: *shall be beaten with
many stripes*—Shall have the sorest punishment
inflicted on him. Scourging was a usual punishment
for negligent servants. *But he that knew not, &c.*—
The opposition between this and the preceding verse
is, between a servant who receives an express mes-
sage from his master, which he contradicts, and
another who, though he received no such express

48 * But he that knew not, and did A. M. 4037.
commit things worthy of stripes, shall A. D. 33.
be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whom-
soever much is given, of him shall be much
required; and to whom men have † committed
much, of him they will ask the more.

49 ¶ † I am come to send fire on the earth;
and what will I, if it be already kindled?

Acts xvii. 30; James iv. 17.—* Leviticus v. 17; John xv. 22;
1 Timothy i. 13.—† 1 Timothy vi. 29.—‡ Verse 51.

message, yet falls into such instances of misbehaviour
as he cannot but know to be inconsistent with his
duty and office in general; by which he exposes
himself justly to some punishment, though, other
things being equal, he is less criminal than the for-
mer. *And did commit things worthy of stripes*—
Here our Lord's words strongly intimate, that igno-
rance will not entirely excuse any who have ne-
glected God's service, since they might, in general,
have known at least the main branches of their duty,
as every servant may know, in the main, what kind
of conduct his master will approve; though some
may be much more fully instructed than others as to
his particular pleasure. It may be further observed,
that as rational creatures, it is as much our duty
to cultivate our reason, and to inquire into, and know
our duty, as it is to act agreeably to the knowledge
we have. *Unto whomsoever much is given, &c.*—
In the divine administration, the rule of judgment
shall be observed which men themselves think just,
and put in practice in their commerce one with
another. The more advantages any one enjoys, the
greater improvement will be expected of him, and
the more severely will he be punished if he come
short.

Verses 49–53. *I am come to send fire on earth*—
Our Lord concludes his charge to his disciples with
foretelling the divisions that should be occasioned
by his gospel. See on Matt. x. 34. As if he had
said, After all that I have done and spoken to promote
peace and love, so opposite is my doctrine to the
prejudices and the lusts of men, and such are the
violent contentions that my gospel will occasion,
through the wickedness of those among whom it is
preached, that it will seem as though I came to
kindle a fire on earth, that should produce destruct-
ive and wide-spreading desolation. *And what will
I, if it be already kindled*—Τι θελω, ει ηδη ανηρηθη,
which Dr. Campbell renders, *What would I, but that
it were kindled?* which is, according to the Vulgate,
quid volo, nisi ut accendatur? It is justly observed
by Dr. Whitby, that *ei*, here rendered *if*, sometimes
signifies *that*; as Acts xxvi. 23, where *ei παθητος
Χριστος*, is properly rendered, *that Christ should suf-
fer and that he should rise*; and it is also a particule,
of *wishing*: so Num. xxii. 18, *ει ειχον μαχαιραν, I
wish I had a sword*; Isa. xlvi. 18, *ει ηκουσας, O that
thou hadst hearkened*; Psa. lxxx. 13, *ει ο λαος μη
ηκουσε, O that my people had hearkened, &c.*; Luke
xix. 42, *ει εγνωσ, O that thou hadst known!* The

A. M. 4037. 50 But ⁱ I have a baptism to be bap-
A. D. 33. tized with; and how am I ^o strait-
ened till it be accomplished!

51 ^k Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; ^l but rather division:

52 ^m For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter

ⁱ Matt. xx. 22; Mark x. 38.—^o Or, *pained*.—^k Matt. x. 34; Verse 49.

sense, therefore, of this passage is, "I come to deliver to the world a doctrine which will incense the world against me and my followers, and subject us to great sufferings, signified in Scripture by fire, and will baptize me in my own blood; but yet I am so far from being moved from prosecuting my Father's pleasure, by the prospect of them, that I wish the time of my suffering were at hand, and my gospel were preached to the world." Of the baptism here spoken of, see on Matt. xx. 23. *And how am I straitened*—Πως σπνεχουμαι, *how am I pressed in spirit*; (see Acts xviii. 5;) *till it be accomplished*. He longed for the time when he should suffer and die, having an eye to the glorious issue of his sufferings. The words allude to a woman in travail, that is pained to be delivered, and welcomes her pains, because they hasten the birth of the child, and wishes them sharp and strong, that the work may be cut short. Christ's sufferings were the travail of his soul, which he cheerfully underwent, in hope that he should by them *see his seed*. Isa. liii. 10, 11. So much was his heart set upon the redemption and salvation of man. *Suppose ye that I am come to send peace on earth*—By subduing all the nations of the world into one great monarchy, under the Jews, and establishing that temporal tranquillity and prosperity which you expect should attend the Messiah's kingdom? *I tell you nay, but rather division*—For notwithstanding that my gospel is the *gospel of peace*, proclaiming peace between God and man, and enjoining all that embrace it to *follow peace with all men*; yet it will be so opposed and perverted, that, instead of peace and unity, discord, strife, and division will be frequently occasioned by it. *For from henceforth*—On account of the introduction of my religion, *there shall be five in one house divided, &c.*—Contentious heats and animosities will frequently arise in families; that part of the family which does not obey the gospel opposing and persecuting the part which obeys it. And this shall be the case even when those families consist of persons who stand in the nearest relations to each other; the father, for instance, differing with the son, and the son with the father. It may be proper

against the mother; the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

54 ¶ And he said also to the people, ⁿ When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of

ⁿ Mic. vii. 6; John vii. 43; ix. 16; x. 19.—^m Matt. x. 35.
^o Matt. xvi. 2

to observe here; so many prophecies of the Old Testament speak of the peaceful state of the Messiah's kingdom (see Psa. lxxii. 7; Isa. ii. 4; xi. 6-9; lxv. 25) "that it is hard to say how Christ could completely answer the character of the Messiah if he should never establish peace, even universal peace, on earth. But the error of the Jews lay in supposing he was immediately to accomplish it; whereas the prophecies of the New Testament, especially those contained in the book of *Revelation*, show, and those of the Old Testament most plainly intimate, that this prosperous state of his kingdom was not only to be preceded by his own sufferings, but by a variety of persecutions, trials, and sufferings, which should in different degrees attend his followers, before the kingdoms of the earth became, by a general conversion, the *kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*."—Doddridge.

Verses 54-56. *And he said to the people*—Namely, to the unbelieving multitude, which on this occasion was gathered together, and stood around him: *When ye see a cloud, &c.*—As if he had said, The perverseness which I have spoken of, as about to take place when my gospel is more fully and universally preached, already shows itself in your overlooking so many proofs of the Messiah's appearance among you, while you discover such sagacity in your observations with respect to other things. *For when you see a cloud rise out of the west*—Or coming from that quarter; *ye say, There cometh a shower*—Ουρος, *a heavy shower, and so it is*: it happens as foretold. The Mediterranean sea lying west from Judea, the clouds and showers usually came from that quarter. See 1 Kings xviii. 44, 45. *And when ye see the south wind blow*—From the deserts of Arabia, and other hot climates; *ye say, There will be heat*—Καυων, *sultry or scorching heat; and it cometh to pass*—Your conjecture is verified. The wind which came from the southward of Judea, blowing over the hot sands of Arabia and Egypt, occasioned, as it still does, a great heat in the air. Those which are called the hot winds in that climate are so hot that they bring on fainting and difficulty of breathing. *Ye hypocrites*—Who pre-

A. M. 4037. the sky, and of the earth; but how
A. D. 33. is it that ye do not discern this
time?

57 ¶ Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 ° When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, ^p as thou art in the way, give

° Prov. xxv. 8; Matt. v. 25.

tend to ask for a further sign, as if you were really desirous to know whether I be or be not a divine teacher; *ye can discern the face of the sky*—So as to foretel the changes in the weather before they come; *but how is it that ye do not discern this time*—This season of the Messiah's coming, distinguishable by so many surer signs. He meant both the time of the Messiah's appearing on earth to accomplish the salvation of mankind, according to the ancient prophecies, and also the time of his coming to destroy the Jewish nation, which he had described under the similitude of one who comes secretly and unexpectedly to rob a house.

Verse 57. *Why even of yourselves*—Without any external sign; *judge ye not what is right?*—Why do ye not discern and acknowledge the intrinsic excellence of my doctrine, and gather from such obvious promises how you ought to receive it, and behave toward me? The prediction of the coming of the Son of man, to punish the Jews for their perfidy and rebellion, was a loud call to a national repentance. Wherefore, as the improvement of that prediction, he exhorted them to a speedy reformation, telling them that common sense, with a very small degree of reflection, would point it out to them as the very best thing they could do for averting the impending judgments of God.

Verses 58, 59. *When thou goest with thine adversary, &c.*—The evils which befall obstinate sinners, he here illustrates by the punishment which, in ordinary cases, is inflicted upon the man who obstinately refuses to make compensation for the in-

diligence that thou mayest be de- A. M. 4037.
livered from him; lest he hale A. D. 33.
thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last ^q mite.

^p Psa. xxxii. 6; Isa. lv. 6.—^q Mark xii. 42.

juries he has done; but, even while his adversary is haling him to the judge, he will not agree the matter with him. He is therefore brought by force to the bar. The judge condemns him. The officer seizes him. He is cast into prison, and lies there till he has paid the very last mite. See on Matt. v. 25, 26. Thus, as if Christ had said, If you persist to be regardless of the proposals of God's mercy while the day of life and grace continues, nothing is to be expected from the tribunal of his justice but a severe sentence, which will end in everlasting confinement and punishment. Reader, may we learn from these warnings of our Lord to be so wise at all times as to discern the evidences, and comply with the purposes, of the gospel; otherwise our knowledge in natural things, should it extend not only to the most common, but to the most curious appearances on the face of the earth or the heavens, will turn to no other account but to shame and condemn us. And if we have any reasons to fear that through our impenitence, the blessed God is still an adversary to us, let us make it our first care, by an humble submission of soul to him, and obedient faith in Christ and his gospel, to seek that reconciliation with him which will prevent that strict scrutiny of his justice, and that sentence of his wrath, which would otherwise plunge us into endless ruin and misery; for when could we pretend to have paid the *last farthing* of this debt of *ten thousand talents* which we have been daily contracting, and which is charged to our account in the book of his remembrance?

CHAPTER XIII.

Here, (1,) Christ, on the mention of some calamities which had befallen others, warns his hearers of the danger they were in, if they did not repent, and illustrates his warning by the parable of the barren fig-tree, 1-9. (2,) He heals a poor infirm woman in the synagogue, and vindicates his doing it on the sabbath day; repeating afterward the parables of the grain of mustard-seed and of the leaven, 10-22. (3,) He warns his hearers of the difficulty and importance of entering into the kingdom of heaven; and is not intimidated by the fear of Herod from pursuing his work, 23-33. (4,) He predicts and laments over the approaching desolations of Jerusalem, 34, 35.

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A. M. 4037. **T**HERE were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in

¹ Or, debtors; Matt. xviii. 24; Chap. xi. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verses 1-3. *There were present at that season*—When Christ spake the foregoing words; *some that told him of the Galileans*—The followers of Judas Gaulonites, whose story Josephus has given us at large, *Antiq.*, xviii. 1. It appears he was the head of a sect who asserted God to be their only sovereign, and were so utterly averse to a submission to the Roman power, that they accounted it unlawful to pay tribute unto Cesar, and would rather endure the greatest torments than give any man the title of *lord*. Perhaps this story of the Galileans might now be mentioned to Christ with a design of leading him into a snare, whether he should justify or condemn the persons that were slain. Be this as it may, the scope and connection of the passage, as well as Christ's answer, show, that the persons who mentioned the case of these Galileans thought God had permitted them to be massacred at their devotions for some extraordinary wickedness; thus insinuating a very wrong idea of divine providence. *And Jesus said, Suppose ye, &c.*—Christ "not only condemned the notion now mentioned, but told them expressly that these Galileans were not to be reckoned greater sinners than others, because they had been overtaken by so severe a calamity, and exhorted them, instead of forming harsh judgments of others from such examples of sufferings, to improve them as inducements unto themselves to repent, assuring them that if they did not they should all *likewise perish*;" or, perish in a similar manner, as the word *οσαυτως* implies. And, as a general and national repentance did not take place, Christ's threatening was most awfully verified. For there was a remarkable resemblance between the fate of these Galileans, and that of the main body of the Jewish nation; the flower of which was slain at Jerusalem by the Roman sword, or by the falling of walls and towers, while they were assembled at one of their great festivals: and many thousands of them perished in the temple itself, and, as their own historian relates, were literally buried under its ruins. Many, who came from far to attend the passover, fell before their sacrifices; and when Titus took the city a multitude of dead bodies lay round the altar.

Verse 4. *Or those eighteen, &c.*—The case here

Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were ¹sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 ¶ He spake also this parable: *A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking

* Isa. v. 2; Matt. xxi. 19.

referred to seems to have occurred lately, and may seem, in some respects, more to the purpose than the former, as there was no human interposition attending the death of these men; so that their destruction appeared to be more immediately from Providence than that of the Galileans, whom Pilate had massacred: *on whom the tower in Siloam fell*—From the fountain of Siloam, which was without the walls of Jerusalem, a little stream flowed into the city, (Isa. viii. 6,) which was received in a kind of basin, thought by some to be the same with the *pool of Bethesda*. Being near the temple, it is no wonder that many frequented it for purification. And the calamity here spoken of, occasioned by the fall of a neighbouring tower, had probably happened at some late feast; and some of Christ's hearers might then have been at Jerusalem.

Verses 6, 7. *And he spake also this parable*—With a view to awaken them more effectually to a deep and serious repentance: *A certain man had a fig-tree in his vineyard*—And because it was planted in good soil, *he came and sought fruit thereon*—Having good reason to expect it. Observe, he did not send, but came himself, which manifested his great desire to find fruit. Thus God came in the person of his Son, to his vineyard, the Jewish Church, Isa. v. 1-7, seeking the fruits of righteousness. Observe, reader, the God of heaven requires and expects fruit from those that have a place in his vineyard, that are favoured with his word and ordinances, and the various means of edification and salvation. The *leaves* of an outward profession will not satisfy him; the crying *Lord, Lord*; nor will the blossoms of beginning well and promising fair suffice: there must be fruit; *fruits meet for repentance*, and proper to manifest that the gospel is not heard, and the ordinances of God administered and attended, in vain. *And found none*—Little or no fruit did the Lord Jesus find produced by the Jewish people when he came to visit them. There was profession, indeed, in abundance, but little fruit. And it is an awful consideration still how many enjoy the privileges of the gospel, and yet bear no fruit to God's glory; neither ceasing to do evil, nor learning to do well, perhaps in almost any one instance; but going on in their old course of sin and vanity, unchanged, unreformed, both in principle and

A. M. 4037. fruit on this fig-tree, and find none :
A. D. 33. cut it down; why cumbereth it the
ground?

8 And he answering, said unto him, Lord, let

practice. *Then said he to the dresser of his vineyard—To the vine-dresser, as Dr. Campbell renders it. We may either understand God the Father by him that had the vineyard, and Christ by him that kept and dressed it; or Christ himself is he that hath it, and his ministers are the keepers and dressers of it. Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree—The length of time it has been barren, while it has been favoured with all advantages for being fruitful, shows that it is good for nothing. Cut it down—Root it out, and throw it away; why cumbereth it the ground?—That is, not only beareth no fruit, but taketh up the ground of another tree that would bear some. This is spoken either by God the Father to Christ as the dresser of the vineyard, to whom all judgment is committed, or by him to the ministers of his gospel, who are in his name to declare this doom. "Many have supposed that the three years here mentioned allude to the time of Christ's personal ministry, which, as most have computed the chronology of the New Testament, had now lasted three years; but it is certain the patience of God bore with them much longer than another year. Grotius, therefore, thinks it more probable it may refer to the nature of a fig-tree, which, if it bear at all, generally begins to do it within three years after it is planted; but might certainly be looked on as barren, if it had disappointed the expectation of the planter three years together, after the time in which it should have yielded fruit."—Doddridge. Or, perhaps, the years in this parable may denote the whole duration of the Jewish dispensation. God came seeking fruit of the Jews in one space of time before the Babylonish captivity; in another, after their restoration; and in another again, in and by the preaching of John the Baptist, and of Christ himself. "But though this parable was originally meant of the Jews, it may be applied to unfruitful professors of religion in every age; for it exhibits a rule observed in the divine administration which should strike terror into all who enjoy spiritual privileges without improving them. Every man is allowed a certain time of trial, during which he enjoys the means and helps necessary to piety. If he continues ignorant of God's visitation, despises the riches of the divine mercy, and goes on obstinately in sin, these advantages are commonly taken away from him, his day of grace ends, the utmost term of God's patience is passed for ever, the Divine Spirit, being grieved, is provoked to depart, and the man is delivered over to a hardened heart, after which his repentance and salvation become impossible."—Macknight.*

Verses 8, 9. *And he said, Let it alone this year also—Here we have the vine-dresser's intercession for the barren fig-tree. Thus Christ the great Inter-*

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it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it :
A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

cessor interceded for the Jewish Church and people, and thus, as he ever liveth, he continues to intercede for all unfruitful professors, and other sinners. And all faithful ministers of the gospel are intercessors for their flocks. They that dress the vineyard intercede for it, and pray for those to whom they preach. Observe, reader, the vine-dresser does not pray that the barren tree might never be cut down, but that it might not be cut down immediately; that a little further space might be granted to try whether it would bear fruit. *Till I shall dig about it, &c.*—Here the vine-dresser promises to improve this reprieve, if it be granted, for our prayers must always be seconded by our endeavours. When we request God's grace, it must be with an humble resolution to do our duty, otherwise we mock God, and show that we do not rightly value the mercy we pray for. He engages *to dig about the tree and dung it:* for unfruitful Christians must be awakened by the terrors of the law, which, as it were, break up the ground, and then encouraged by the promises of the gospel, which may be compared to the application of warming and fattening manure to a tree: both methods must be tried, the one preparing for the other, and both are found by experience to be scarce sufficient. *If it bear fruit, well*—There being evidently an ellipsis in the original here, (for there is nothing answering to the word *well*.) Mr. Wesley and Dr. Campbell render the verse, *Perhaps it will bear fruit; but if not, thou mayest afterward cut it down*—Though God bear long, he will not bear always with unfruitful professors: his patience, if abused, will have an end, and will give way to that wrath which will have no end. And the longer he hath waited, and the more cost, so to speak, he has been at with sinners, the greater will be their destruction when it comes. And those who now intercede for them, and take pains with them, if they persist in their unfruitfulness, will be even content to see them cut down, and will have no more to plead in their behalf. Their best friends will acquiesce in, nay, will approve of, and applaud the righteous judgment of God, in the day of the manifestation of it; Rev. xv. 3, 4. Thus, in this parable, primarily intended, as we have observed, to be applied to the Jews, our Lord represented to that people God's displeasure against them for having neglected to improve, or, to speak more properly, for having abused the many advantages and opportunities vouchsafed to them, as planted in the vineyard of his church; and in an awful manner intimated, that though they had hitherto, at his intercession, been spared, and a further time of trial afforded them; yet, if they continued unfruitful under the additional cultivation they were shortly to receive, on the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the proposal of the gospel, in its full extent and evidence; that is, under the last and best means with which they should yet be

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A. M. 4037. 10 ¶ And he was teaching in one
A. D. 33. of the synagogues on the sabbath.

11 And behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 ^b And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

^b Mark xvi. 18; Acts ix. 17.—^c Exod. xx. 9.—^d Matt. xii. 10; Mark iii. 2; Chap. vi. 7; xiv. 3.

favoured, no more pains would be taken with them, nor had they any thing to expect but speedy, irresistible, and irrecoverable ruin.

Verses 10-13. *He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath*—Our Lord Jesus spent his sabbaths in the synagogues, and we should make conscience of doing so; that is, of attending places of worship, as we have opportunity, and not think that we can spend our sabbaths as well at home, in praying and reading good books; for public worship is a divine institution, to which we must bear our testimony, though the congregation may consist but of two or three. And generally, when Jesus was in the synagogues, *ἢ διδασκων*, he was teaching there, knowing that the people were perishing for lack of instruction. On this occasion, to confirm the doctrine which he preached, and recommend it as important, faithful, and worthy of all acceptance, he wrought a signal miracle of mercy. For, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity—*ἀσθενείας*, of weakness; eighteen years—During which she had been bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself—Or stand straight. The evil spirit, which possessed her, afflicted her in this manner. To many, doubtless, it appeared a natural distemper. Would not a modern physician have termed it a nervous case? That by a spirit of infirmity we are to understand an infirmity produced by an evil spirit, we learn from our Lord's own explanation of the phrase, verse 16, where he says, *Satan had bound this woman eighteen years. When Jesus saw her*—Knowing perfectly all the sad circumstances of her affliction, and the difficulty with which she was now come to attend the solemnity of divine worship there; he called her to him—It does not appear that she had made any application to him, or had any expectation of relief from him; but, though she did not call, he answered. She came to him to be taught, and to receive spiritual benefit, and he gave her deliverance from her bodily infirmity. Thus, those whose first and principal care is for their souls, do best promote the true interests of their bodies likewise; because they seek the kingdom of God, other things are added to them. He said, *Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity*—Thou hast long been labouring under it, but thou art now at

14 And the ruler of the synagogue A. M. 4037.
answered with indignation, because A. D. 33.
that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, ^e There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and ^d not on the sabbath day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite*, ^e doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, ^f being a

^e Chapter xiv. 5; Proverbs xi. 9; Matthew vii. 5; xxiii, 13, 28 Chapter xii. 2.—^f Chapter xix. 9.

length released from it. Let not those despair, therefore, whose disease has been of long continuance, and is inveterate. God can relieve them, and has he not encouraged them to apply to him, and wait for him? Reader, remember, he is a present help, a help at hand in trouble, and hath said, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify me*. So this woman did; immediately upon Christ's laying his hands on her, and healing her, she glorified God—Praised him before the whole assembly, for the signal and unexpected favour, declaring, doubtless, how long her affliction had continued, and how desperate and incurable it had been thought to be.

Verses 14-17. *And the ruler of the synagogue*—Instead of joining in acknowledgments of the divine power and goodness, displayed in this gracious action of our Lord; answered—The woman's praises, with indignation—As if Christ had committed some heinous crime in healing this poor woman! He endeavoured, however, to disguise his wrath under the form of piety and zeal; as if he was angry only because the cure was wrought on the sabbath day; saying unto the people, *There are six days, &c., in them therefore come and be healed*—See how light he makes of the miracles which Christ wrought, as if they were things of course, which might be done by any one any day of the week. One would have thought, that the extraordinary miracle now wrought might have been sufficient to convince him that Jesus was a divinely-commissioned teacher, who spoke and acted by authority from God; and that the circumstance of the miracle's being done on the sabbath day could not have served to enable him to evade the conviction. But what light can shine so clearly or strongly against which a spirit of bigotry and enmity to Christ, and his gospel, will not serve to shut men's eyes? Never was such honour done to the synagogue of which he was ruler, as Christ had now done to it; and yet he had indignation at it! *The Lord then answered him, Thou hypocrite, &c.*—Our Lord gives him this appellation, because the real motive of his speaking was envy, not (as he pretended) pure zeal for the glory of God. *Ought not this woman*—Ought not any human creature, which is far better than an ox or an ass: much more

A. M. 4037. daughter of Abraham, whom Satan
A. D. 33. hath bound, lo, these eighteen years,

be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 ¶ Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden, and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

¶ Matt. xiii. 31; Mark iv. 30.—^b Matt. xiii. 33.—^c Matt. ix. 35; Mark vi. 6.

this daughter of Abraham—Probably in a spiritual as well as a natural sense; *to be loosed?* Thus the Lord soon put this hypocritical ruler to silence, by placing the action with which he found fault in the light of their own avowed practice. They loosed and led their cattle on the sabbath to water, and thought the mercy of the work justified them in so doing. He, by uttering a word only, had loosed a woman, a reasonable creature, and a daughter of Abraham, that had been bound with an incurable distemper, not for a single day, but so long a time as eighteen years. Without doubt the far greater mercy of this and the other godlike works which Jesus did, justified his performing them on the sabbath day, as the ruler might easily have seen, had he not been wholly blinded by his superstition. *When he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed, &c.*—The folly even of the men of learning among the Jews, conspicuous in this and some other instances mentioned in the gospels, shows the malignant nature of superstition. It is capable of extinguishing reason, of banishing compassion, and of eradicating the most essential principles and feelings of the human mind.

Verses 18–21. *Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like?*—After the Lord had thus silenced the ruler of the synagogue, and while he observed the rejoicings of the people, he reflected with pleasure on the reason and truth which so effectually supported his kingdom. For he delivered a second time the parables of the grain of mustard-seed, and of the leaven, to show the efficacious operation of the gospel upon the minds of men, and its speedy propagation through the world in spite of all opposition. See notes on Matt. xiii. 31–33.

Verses 22–24. *And he went through the cities and villages, &c.*—Being on his way to Jordan from the northeast parts of Peræa; *teaching*—Wheresoever he came; *journeying toward Jerusalem*—To which he had now begun to steer his course, intending to be there at the approaching feast of dedication, (John x. 22,) and to spend the little remainder of

20 ¶ And again he said, Where— A. M. 4037.
unto shall I liken the kingdom of God? A. D. 33.

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three ^b measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 ⁱ And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

23 ¶ Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

24 ^k Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for ^l many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

^k Matt. vii. 13.—^l John vii. 34; viii. 21; xiii. 33; Rom. ix. 31.

his time, during his continuance upon earth, in that city, or in the neighbouring parts, no more returning to these northern regions, till he should appear there after his resurrection. *Then said one unto him*—Somewhere on the road, probably soon after he had described the success of the gospel by the parables of the mustard-seed and the leaven: *Lord, are there few that be saved*—That is, shall but few be saved eternally? For the whole context, and especially our Lord's answer, evidently shows, that no temporal preservation, but salvation from the wrath to come, and the enjoyment of eternal life, are intended. It is uncertain what motive induced this person to make this inquiry at this time, or what gave occasion to his making it. Perhaps the strictness of Christ's doctrine made him apprehensive, that, according to it, few would be saved; and as this might be a stumbling-block in his way, therefore he wished for satisfaction on that head, in order to the removal of it. And his motive might be, not mere curiosity, as most commentators have supposed, but a desire to receive that information which might at once solve a difficulty with which he was perplexed, and minister in other respects to his spiritual profit: namely, that if the Lord Jesus (of whom, as a teacher, he seems to have formed a high opinion) should inform him but few would be saved, he might strive to be of those few; or if he should give him reason to think that the generality of his countrymen were in a safe state, and should attain eternal life, he might give himself no further unnecessary alarm, but might content himself with resembling them, and living as they did. From whatever motive the person here spoken of made the inquiry, and whatever gave occasion to his making it, our Lord thought proper, in his answer, to give him that advice upon it which might tend to his own salvation, it being not our concern to know how many will be saved, but how *we* may be saved. Our Lord therefore replied, *Strive, &c.*—As if he had said, By inquiring thus into the condition of others, you seem to be at ease with respect to yourselves. I must therefore advise you, instead of occupying

A. M. 4037. 25 ^a When once the master of the
A. D. 33. house is risen up, and hath shut
to the door, and ye begin to stand without,
and to knock at the door, saying, ° Lord,

^a Psa. xxxii. 6; Isa. lv. 6.—[°] Matt. xxv. 10.

your minds, and spending your time in such inquiries, with relation to others, to attend rather to what more nearly concerns yourselves, and be solicitous to secure your own salvation. For I must assure you, that though, as Jews, you have great advantages, the gate leading to eternal life is still *strait*; and that if you would be saved you must exert yourselves to the utmost.

Though our Lord does not here positively say, whether *few* or *many* would be saved; yet, in terming the gate *strait*, whereby the way leading unto eternal life is entered, he certainly intimates what he had elsewhere plainly declared, (see on Matt. vii. 13, 14,) that but few of the adult Jews, of that generation, would be saved, whatever might be the case with that people in some future age. And is the Christian Church in general in a much better state than the Jewish Church was then in? Can professing Christians enter heaven without being conformed in principle and practice to the doctrine of Christ, any more than the Jews could enter it without a conformity to that of Moses and the prophets? But our Lord's exhortation here implies another thing, namely, that the few that do enter in at this gate, do not enter without much opposition and difficulty. For this reason, also, he terms the gate *strait*, and exhorts us to *strive*, or rather to *agonize*, as the word *αγωνίζεσθε* properly signifies, that is, *to contend and strive as in an agony*, or, *to exert our utmost strength to enter in*, as Doddridge renders it, a sense which the word certainly very fully expresses; importing the act of contending in the most ardent and resolute manner, as with antagonists in games or in war; and may well be considered as intimating that the *strait gate* is beset with a variety of enemies, through which, if we aspire to a crown of eternal glory, we must force our way; a representation equally just and awakening. Compare 1 Cor. ix. 25; Col. i. 29; 1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 7. "Here," says Dr. Whitby, "Christ shows, that the number of them who may be saved is not defined by any decree of God, excluding all others from salvation, or rendering them unable to attain it; for, in that case, Christ must in vain have exhorted them to use their diligence to enter in at this *strait gate*; and yet, by saying, *strive as in an agony* to do it, he shows, that to do this requires great constancy, zeal, diligence, and courage, and a strong conflict with the devil, the world, and the flesh. and therefore, that those only who thus strive will obtain it." *For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able*—Trusting in their privileges as descendants of Abraham, in circumcision, in being favoured with the oracles and ordinances of God, and, in the mean time, living in neglect of faith, love, and obedience, of the mediation of the Messiah,

Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, ° I know you not whence ye are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have

[°] Chap. vi. 46.—[°] Matt. vii. 23; xxv. 12.

of reconciliation with God through him, and the influences of the Divine Spirit; of the justification of their persons, and the renovation of their nature, and all the blessed fruits thereof. But not only many brought up Jews, but many Christians, so called, shall seek to enter in at this *strait gate*, and shall not be able: 1st, Because they seek in a wrong way, a way different from that which God hath prescribed, not bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance; not believing in Christ, and in the truths and promises of the gospel, with a *faith working by love*, and with their *heart unto righteousness*, or not following after holiness, *without which no man shall see the Lord*, or doing this in their own strength, and not in due dependance on the grace of the Divine Spirit. Or, 2d, They barely *seek*, and do not *strive*, or, *agonize*; do not seek with all their hearts, and with all diligence in the use of means. Or, 3d, as is implied in the next verse, they seek when it is too late, using, perhaps, importunate entreaties, (like the foolish virgins in the parable, Matt. xxv.,) after the period of their trial is concluded, and their state is finally and irreversibly determined.

Verses 25-27. *When once the master of the house is risen up*—Christ is the master of the house, that will take cognizance of the character and conduct of all that belong to it, or occasionally have a place in it. It now seems as if he left things at large, and made no distinction between his faithful servants and those who falsely pretend to be such. But the time is coming when he will rise up *and shut to the door*—Namely, a door of distinction and separation between hypocrites and true believers; between formalists, who have only a name to live, and such as are truly alive to God. Now in the temple of the church there are carnal professors, who worship in the outer court, and spiritual worshippers, who worship within the veil; between these the door is now open, and they meet promiscuously in the same external performances; but when the *master of the house is risen up*, the door will be shut between them, and those who are in the outer court shall be kept out, and remain excluded for ever. Alas! how many that were very confident they should be saved, will be rejected in the day of trial! *And ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door*—Then, neither asking, nor seeking, nor knocking, nay, nor agonizing, will avail any thing. Let us now, therefore, strive and agonize, by faith, prayer, holiness, patience. Observe, reader, many are ruined by an ill-grounded hope of heaven, which they never once distrusted or called in question; and they conclude their state as good, because they never doubted the goodness of it. They call Christ, *Lord*, as if they were his servants; nay, in token of their confidence and importunity, they

A. M. 4037. eaten and drunk in thy presence,
A. D. 33. and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 ^q But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; ^r depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 ^s There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

^q Matt. vii. 23; xxv. 41; Verse 25.—^r Psa. vi. 8;
Matt. xxv. 41.

double the expression, *Lord, Lord*; and are now desirous to enter in by that door which they formerly slighted, and would now gladly have a place among those serious Christians whom they formerly despised! *And he shall answer and say, I know you not, &c.—I know my sheep, and am known of mine*; but I know not you; you do not belong to my family; you are neither my servants nor my subjects; I have neither employed nor governed you. Alas! how new, how late, how lasting will be the sense which they will now have of their misery! *Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, &c.*—Over and above the privileges which you have enjoyed by the Mosaic dispensation, you shall plead, on that occasion, the peculiar favour which I showed you in the days of my flesh, by exercising my ministry among you, and by conversing familiarly with you. *But he shall say, &c.*—He will persist in disowning you, whatever acquaintance with him you may pretend to; declaring again, *I know you not whence ye are*.—All the former relations to which you refer, are, as it were, blotted from my remembrance, since your hearts were still insincere, or unchanged, and your lives unsuitable to your fair professions; *depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity*.—For none like you can ever be admitted here. In the character which he here gives them, we have the reason of their doom: they were, and continued to be, *workers of iniquity*, and under a pretence of piety, persisted, though perhaps secretly, in the practice of sin.

Verses 28-30. *There shall be weeping, &c.*—Here he repeats what he had said when he commended the centurion's faith. See on Matt. viii. 11, 12. As if he said, How little soever you may now regard it, the awful word, *Depart from me, &c.*, will wound you to the heart, and throw you into agonies of everlasting despair, attended with the bitterest weeping and gnashing of teeth—For madness and rage; *when you shall see Abraham, &c.*—Your holy ancestors; *and all the prophets*—Of the succeeding ages; *in the kingdom of God*—Actually possessed of God's kingdom of glory; and shall find yourselves thrust out—Rejected and excluded with just contempt and indignation. *And they shall come from the east, &c.*—From the most distant heathen lands; *and shall sit down in the kingdom of God*—

29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 ^u And behold, there are last which shall be first; and there are first which shall be last.

31 ^v ¶ The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye and tell

^u Matt. viii. 12; xiii. 42; xxiv. 51.—^v Matt. viii. 11.
^w Matt. xix. 30; xx. 16; Mark x. 31.

In rejoicing and admiring multitudes, to partake of the heavenly banquet with your pious ancestors, while you are utterly and for ever excluded from it. Here, therefore, as well as in Matthew, our Lord plainly affirms that many others, besides Jews, shall be saved. *And there are last*—There are many who are now last in point of religious advantages, that shall then be first in honour and happiness; *and there are first, &c.*—Many who now appear first in the enjoyment of privileges, which, on account of the abuse thereof, shall be last—Shall appear as the most infamous and miserable of mankind. See on Matt. xix. 30; xx. 16.

Verses 31, 32. *The same day there came certain of the Pharisees*—Who pretended friendship, and a great concern for his safety; *saying, Get thee out and depart hence*—Withdraw from this country into the territories of some other prince; *for Herod*—In whose dominions thou now art; *will kill thee*.—Greek, *θελει σε αποκτειναι*, *intends, or rather, is determined to kill thee*. The term *will*, in our translation of this clause, is a mere sign of the future time, and declares no more than that the event spoken of would take place. But this is not what is declared by the evangelist. His expression denotes that, at that very time, it was Herod's purpose to kill him. It is much to be doubted whether these Pharisees had any ground at all for making this declaration respecting Herod's resolution. From the known disposition of the Pharisees, who were always Christ's enemies, it seems not improbable that their concern for his safety was feigned, and that their real design was to intimidate him, and make him flee into Judea, not doubting that the haughty priests at Jerusalem would fall upon some method of putting him to death. Herod, too, might possibly be in the plot, for it seems he now began to take umbrage at Christ's fame and authority, fearing that they might occasion him some embarrassment, either with his people or with the Romans. But he dreaded to make an attempt on his life, remembering the agonies of mind he had suffered on account of the Baptist's murder. He therefore, probably, sent the Pharisees to him with the message above mentioned. In this view there was a peculiar propriety in our Lord's calling him a fox, rather than a lion, wolf, or bear; to which savage beasts the prophets had sometimes, with a plainness becoming their

A. M. 4037. that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, A. D. 33. and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day * I shall be perfected.

33 Nevertheless, I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent

unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, * your house is left unto you desolate. And verily, I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, * Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

* Heb. ii. 1.—Matt. xxvi. 37.—Lev. xxvi. 31, 32; Psa. lxxix. 25; Isa. i. 7; Dan. ix. 27; Mic. iii. 12.

* Psa. cxviii. 26; Matt. xxi. 9; Mark xi. 10; Chap. xix. 38; John xii. 13.

character, compared wicked princes. And he said, Go ye, and tell that fox, &c.—That crafty, wicked, and murderous prince; behold, I cast out devils and do cures—In thy dominions. With what majesty does he speak to his enemies! With what tenderness to his friends! to-day and to-morrow—And carry on my work a little while longer; and the third day I shall be perfected—For the appointed time will quickly come when I shall have finished my course, and have done all that I intend to do here. It is probable our Lord is not to be understood here as speaking exactly of three days, but of a short period of time: for in many places of the Old Testament similar expressions, such as yesterday, and the third day, signify lately, or a little while ago; and, on this interpretation, the word τελειωμαι, I shall be perfected, may refer to his finishing the work of redemption, and being by death consecrated to his office, as the great High-Priest and Captain of our salvation, as the same word is used Heb. ii. 10; v. 9; vii. 28. It is proper to observe here, with regard to our Lord's terming Herod a fox, that we must carefully distinguish between those things wherein Christ is our pattern, and those which were peculiar to his office. His extraordinary office justified him in using that severity of language, when speaking of wicked princes and corrupt teachers, to which we have no call: and by which we should only bring scandal on religion, and ruin on ourselves, while we irritated, rather than convinced or reformed, those whom we so indecently rebuked.

Verses 33–35. Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, &c.—Notwithstanding all that he can do, I shall, for the short time I have left, do the works of Him that sent me, without being afraid of any man; because my life cannot be taken from me till the time come, which is appointed of God. When that period is arrived, I shall be offered up, yet not here, but in the bloody city. For it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem—That unhappy city, which claims prescription for murdering the messengers of God. Such cruelty and malice cannot be found elsewhere. If a true prophet was put to death, he was prosecuted as a false prophet. Now the supreme court, whose prerogative it was to judge pro-

phets, had its seat at Jerusalem. Inferior courts did not take cognizance of such causes; and therefore, if a prophet was put to death, it must be at Jerusalem. So Dr. Lightfoot here. Our Lord, "in saying a prophet could not perish out of that city, insinuated, that he knew the intentions of the Pharisees too well to pay any regard to their advice respecting departing from Galilee for fear of Herod. Or, in making this observation, his design may have been to display the wickedness of that city, the inhabitants of which had been, in every age, the chief enemies of the messengers of God: and to this agrees what our Lord says of Jerusalem in the pathetic lamentation which he now utters concerning it, on account of its crimes, its obstinacy, and its punishment." O Jerusalem, Jerusalem—Thou guilty and miserable city, which, though thou hast been distinguished by divine favours beyond any place on earth, yet, with the utmost ingratitude and cruelty, killest the prophets, and stonest, as the vilest malefactors, them that are sent unto thee—As the ambassadors of God. How often would I have gathered thy children—Unto myself, with all the tenderness of paternal love; as a hen her brood under her wings—To cherish and defend them. Three solemn visits he had made to Jerusalem, since his baptism, for this very purpose. And ye would not—You were still regardless of the offers of my grace, and would not be persuaded to hearken to my call, and to accept my favour. And now, behold, with awful dread, and mark the prediction and event: your house is left unto you desolate—Is now irrevocably consigned to desolation and destruction. For verily I say unto you—I will quickly cease my labours among you, and withdraw from you in such righteous displeasure, that ye shall not see me until the time come when, taught by your calamities, ye shall be ready and disposed to say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord—Wishing in vain for the succour of him whom you now despise. See on Matt. xxiii. 37–39. This does not imply that they should then or ever see Jesus at all; but only that they would earnestly wish for the Messiah, and, in the extremity of their distress, be ready to entertain any one who might offer himself under that character. Compare Luke xvii. 22, 23.

CHAPTER XIV.

Our Lord, being invited to dine with a Pharisee, (1,) Cures a man who had a dropsy, cautions those present against an affectation of precedence, and urges them to works of charity, 1-14. (2,) He foretels, in the parable of the great supper, the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, 15-24. (3,) He urges upon his disciples the necessity of considering the difficulties of religion before they took up a profession of it, 25-35.

A. M. 4037. **AND** it came to pass, as he went
A. D. 33. into the house of one of the chief
Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day,
that they watched him.*

2 And behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, ^a Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took

him, and healed him, and let him
A. M. 4037. go:
A. D. 33.

5 And answered them, saying, ^b Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 ¶ And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how

* Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 1 to verse 12.

^a Matt. xii. 10.—^b Exod. xxiii. 5; Deut. xxii. 4; Chap. xiii. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Verses 1-4. *And it came to pass*—About this time, probably just as our Lord was finishing his journey through Herod's dominions; *he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees*—*Τινος των αρχοντων Φαρισαιων*, of a certain one of the ruling Pharisees, that is, of a magistrate, or a member of the great council, called the sanhedrim. This person probably resided generally in Jerusalem, but had a country-seat in Peræa; and happening to meet with Jesus while he abode there, he carried him home to dinner. The invitation, however, it appears was insidious; for we are told *they watched him*—That is, the chief Pharisee and others of his sect, who were gathered together for this very end, watched all his words and actions, in order that they might find something to blame in them, whereby they hoped to blast his reputation as a prophet. *And behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy*—Who, having heard that Jesus was to dine there, had got himself conveyed thither, in hopes of receiving a cure. *And Jesus*—Answering the thoughts which he saw arising in their hearts; *spake unto the lawyers*—The doctors of the law; and other Pharisees who were then present. *Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day*—Can there be any thing in so benevolent an action, as healing a distempered person, inconsistent with the sacred rest required on that day? *And they held their peace*—Not being able, with any face, to deny the lawfulness of the action, and yet being unwilling to say any thing which might seem to authorize or countenance those cures which Christ performed on sabbath days, as well as at other times, and which in general they had been well known to censure. *And he took him*—*Επιλαβομενος*, taking him by the hand, or laying his hand on him, *he healed him and let him go*—*Απελυσε*, sent him away. The moment that Jesus laid his hand on the man, his complexion returned, and his body was reduced to its ordinary size; becoming, at the same time, vigorous and fit for action, as appeared by the manner in which he

went out of the room. Doubtless our Lord could have accomplished this cure as well by a secret volition, and so might have cut off all matter of cavilling. But he chose rather to produce it by an action, in which there was the very least degree of bodily labour that could be, because that thus he had an opportunity of reproving the reigning superstition of the times.

Verses 5, 6. *And answered them*—Accordingly, while the Pharisees were considering with themselves how to turn the miracle against him, he disconcerted them by proving the lawfulness of what he had done from their own practice. *Which of you shall have an ass, &c., fallen into a pit on the sabbath day*—Will you, for fear of breaking the sabbath, let it pass before ye attempt to draw the beast out? and not rather make all the haste you can to save its life, though it should cost you a great deal of work? But the labour of this cure was barely that Jesus laid his hand on the man. His argument, therefore, was what the grossest stupidity could not overlook, nor the most virulent malice contradict. Our Lord had used the same reasoning before, almost in the same words, when vindicating the cure of the man whose hand was withered, Matt. xii. 14; and at another time had urged an argument in effect the same, with regard to the cure of the crooked woman, Luke xiii. 15. Which may serve, among a variety of other instances, to vindicate several repetitions which must be supposed, if we desire to assert the exact and circumstantial truth of the sacred historians. *And they could not answer him again*—What he said was so consonant to common sense, and common practice, that they had not a word to reply. They were much ashamed, therefore, and vexed at their disappointment, having gathered themselves together, and invited him in with a design to insnare him.

Verses 7-11. *And he put forth a parable*—The ensuing discourse is so termed, because several parts of it are not to be understood literally. *To those which were bidden*—From this circumstance, that

A. M. 4037. they chose out the chief rooms; say-
A. D. 33. ing unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 ° But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

^c Proverbs xxv. 6, 7.—^d Job xxii. 29; Psalm xviii. 27; Proverbs xxix. 23; Matthew xxiii. 12; Chapter xviii. 14; James

the guests were bidden, and from what is said, verse 12, it appears that this was a great entertainment, to which many were invited: which renders it still more probable that the meeting was concerted, and the company chosen with a view to insnare Jesus.

When he marked how they chose out the chief rooms—*Πρωτοκλισίας, the chief seats.* The pride of the Pharisees discovered itself in the anxiety which each of them had manifested to get the chief places at table. Jesus had taken notice of it, and now showed them both the evil and the folly of their behaviour, by its consequences. He mentioned this in particular, that pride exposes a man to many affronts, every one being desirous to mortify a vain person; whereas humility is the surest way to respect. The general scope of what our Lord here says is, (not only at a marriage-feast, but on every occasion,) *He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

Verses 12-14. *Then said he also to him that bade him*—In the time of dinner, Jesus directed his discourse to the person who had invited him, and showed him what sort of people he should bid to his feasts. *When thou makest a dinner, &c., call not thy friends*—That is, I do not bid thee call thy friends, or thy rich neighbours. Our Lord leaves these offices of courtesy and humanity as they were, and teaches a higher duty. Or, “by no means confine thy hospitality to thy rich relations, acquaintance, and neighbours, lest the whole of thy reward be an invitation from them to a like entertainment.” So Macknight: but surely it is also implied in this precept of our Lord, that we should be sparing in entertaining those that need it not, in order that we may assist those that do need, with what is saved from those needless entertainments. *Lest a recompense be made thee*—This fear is as much unknown to the world as even the fear of riches. *But when thou makest a feast, call the poor*—Have tables also for the poor, that they may partake of thy entertainments. Dr. Whitby’s observations on this passage are worthy of attention. 1st, “Christ doth not

11 ^d For whosoever exalteth himself. A. M. 4037. shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. A. D. 33.

12 ¶ Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind;

14 And thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

15 ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat

iv. 6; 1 Peter v. 5.—^c Proverbs xxii. 16.—^d Nehemiah viii. 10, 12.

absolutely forbid us to invite our friends, our brethren, or kinsfolk, to testify our mutual charity and friendship, and how dear our relations are to us; only he would not have us invite them out of a prospect of a compensation from them again, but to prefer the exercising of our charity to them who cannot recompense us. As comparative particles are sometimes in sense negative, so negative particles are often in sense only comparative: as Prov. viii. 10, *Receive my instructions, and not* (that is, rather than) *silver*; Joel ii. 18, *Rend your hearts, and not* (that is, rather than) *your garments*; John vi. 27, *Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth, &c.* So here, Be not so much concerned to call thy friends as to call the poor. 2d, Nor does he lay upon us a necessity, by this precept, to call the lame, the blind, or the maimed to our tables; but either to do this, or what is equivalent to us in respect of charge, and more advantageous to them and their families, namely, to send them meat or money, to refresh them at home.” *And thou shalt be blessed*—*Μακάριος, happy.* This will afford thee a much nobler satisfaction than banquets can give: for, though they cannot make thee any recompense in the same way, their prayers shall descend in blessings on thy head; and besides all the pleasure thou wilt find in the exercise of such beneficence, thou shalt be abundantly recompensed at the resurrection of the just, if thy bounties proceed from a principle of faith and piety.

Verse 15. *When one of them that sat at meat heard these things, being touched therewith, he said, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God*—Blessed is the man who shall live in the time of the Messiah, and share the entertainments he will prepare for his people, when these virtues of humility, condescension, and charity shall flourish in all their glory. *To eat bread*, is a well-known Hebrew phrase for sharing in a repast, whether it be at a common meal or at a sumptuous feast. The word *bread* is not understood as suggesting either the scantiness or the meanness of the fare.

A. M. 4037. with him heard these things, he said
A. D. 33. unto him, *‘Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.*

16 *‘Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many :*

† Rev. xix. 9.

“The kingdom of God, here, does not signify the kingdom of heaven in the highest sense, but only the kingdom of the Messiah, of which the carnal Jew here speaks, according to the received sense of his nation, as of a glorious temporal kingdom, in which the Jews should lord it over the Gentile world, enjoy their wealth and be provided with all temporal blessings and delights, in which they placed their happiness.”—Whitby. Thus also Dr. Campbell, who assigns the following reasons for understanding the expression in the same light: “1st, This way of speaking of the happiness of the Messiah’s administration suits entirely the hopes and wishes which seem to have been long entertained by the nation concerning it. 2d, The parable which, in answer to the remark, was spoken by our Lord, is on all hands understood to represent the Christian dispensation. 3d, The obvious intention of that parable is, to suggest the prejudices which, from notions of secular felicity and grandeur, the nation in general entertained on that subject; in consequence of which prejudices, what in prospect they fancied so blessed a period, would, when present, be exceedingly neglected and despised; and, in this view, nothing could be more apposite, whereas there appears no appositeness in the parable on the other interpretation;” that is, on understanding *the kingdom of God*, in the preceding remark, as signifying the kingdom of future glory. ●

Verses 16, 17. *Then said he, A certain man, &c.*—He delivered the following parable to show the person who made the remark, and others, that how great soever the happiness would be of those who should share the blessings of the Messiah’s kingdom, yet that many, who, under mistaken notions of it, professed to desire it, were under the force of such carnal prejudices that, though it would be offered to them with every circumstance that would recommend it, they would in fact slight, yea, and reject it, and that with disdain, preferring carnal to spiritual blessings, a kingdom of this world to one related to another; while, in the mean time, the Gentiles would embrace the gospel with cheerfulness, and thereby be prepared to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the abodes of the blessed. The parable of the marriage-feast, recorded Matt. xxii. 1–14, (where see the note,) was evidently spoken with the same view, though on a different occasion. *Made a great supper*—By this is evidently meant the rich and abundant provision which God has made in his gospel for the spiritual wants of mankind, termed a *feast of fat things*, Isa. xxv. 6, (where see the notes, as also on Isa. lv. 1, 2;) a *feast* of truth and information for the understanding, of pardon and peace for the conscience, of love,

a

17 And ^h sent his servant at supper- A. M. 4037.
time, to say to them that were bid- A. D. 33.
den, Come, for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have

‡ Matt. xxii. 2.—^h Prov. ix. 2, 5.

hope, and joy for the affections; bread to nourish and strengthen, wine to cheer and exhilarate the soul and all its powers and faculties. Observe, reader, there is in Christ, and in the truth and grace displayed in, and communicated by his gospel, what will be food, nay, and a *feast*, a rich and agreeable feast, for the soul of man that knows its own capacities, for the soul of a sinner that knows its own necessities and miseries. This provision is called a *supper*, because in those countries supper-time was the chief time for feasts and entertainments of all kinds, when the business of the day was finished. The manifestation of gospel grace to the world was made in the evening of the world’s day, and the fruition of the fulness of that grace in heaven is reserved for the evening of our day. *And bade many*—To this feast, which is *prepared for all people*, Isa. xxv. 6, God had given a general invitation by the light of reason and conscience, by the secret influences of his Spirit, and the dispensations of his providence; and the whole nation of the Jews he had especially and particularly invited by his servants the prophets. *And at supper-time he sent his servant*—At the opening of the gospel dispensation, he sent the harbinger of the Messiah, John the Baptist, the Messiah himself, his Son and servant, with his servants, the apostles: first twelve, and then seventy, he sent through all parts of the country, during the time of Christ’s personal ministry. And when the Christian mysteries were finished; when sin was expiated by the death of Christ, death overcome by his resurrection, and the truth of the gospel sealed and confirmed by both; when a way into heaven was opened by his ascension, and the Holy Ghost, in his gifts and graces, obtained for his followers, by his intercession: when the gospel church was planted, and this rich provision was ready to be served up on a gospel table,—those who before had been invited were more closely and earnestly pressed to come in immediately, and partake of the bounty of their great Master. Such was the call given to the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea, at and after the day of pentecost, by the apostles and other Christian ministers; such was that which was afterward given to the Gentile nations, and such is the call now given to us. Its language is, *all things are now ready*, therefore *come* to the feast; to come to which, in the gospel language, is to *repent of sin*, and *believe in Christ*. Thus John the Baptist, and thus our Lord and his apostles, invited men to the gospel feast, saying, *The kingdom of God is at hand, ηγγικε, hath approached, or is come: Repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

Verses 18–20. *And they all with one consent*—*Απο μιας* is all that is in the original. It seems most na-

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A. M. 4037. bought a piece of ground, and I must
A. D. 33. needs go and see it: I pray thee have
me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five
yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray
thee have me excused.

tural to supply the ellipsis by the word *γνώμη*, *consent*, as our translators have done, an interpretation maintained by Beza and Wolfius. *Began to make excuse*—As if by mutual agreement they had all contrived to put a slight upon the entertainment, and to affront him that had kindly provided it, and invited them to partake of it. *The first said, I have bought a piece of ground, &c., and another, I have bought five yoke of oxen*—“It is a beautiful circumstance that our Lord here represents both these bargains as already made; so that going to see the farm and to prove the oxen that evening, rather than the next morning, was merely the effect of rudeness on the one hand, and of a foolish, impatient humour on the other; and could never have been urged, had they esteemed the inviter, or his entertainment. Accordingly, it is commonly found in fact, that men neglect the blessings and demands of the gospel, not for the most important affairs in life, with which they seldom interfere; but to indulge the caprice and folly of their own tempers, and to gratify the impulse of present passions, sometimes excited on very low occasions.”—Doddridge. *Another said, I have married a wife, &c., I cannot come*—“As the process of the parable represents a wise and good man offended with this excuse among the rest, we must suppose something either in the circumstance of receiving the message, or of appointing the time for entertaining company on his marriage, which implied a rude contempt of the inviter, and made the reply indecent. It was not necessary to descend to such particulars.” “If the first of the persons here invited had had so important an affair to transact as the purchasing of a farm, or the second the buying of five yoke of oxen, or the third the marrying of a wife, and if these affairs had come upon them unexpectedly, the very evening they had promised to spend at their rich neighbour’s house; but especially if these affairs could not have been delayed without missing the opportunity of doing them, their excuses would have been reasonable. But none of all these was the case. The farm and the oxen were already purchased, and the wife was married; so that the seeing of the farm, and the proving of the oxen, were pieces of unreasonable curiosity, which might easily have been deferred till next morning. And with respect to the new-married man’s pretending that he could not leave his wife for a few hours, it was such an excess of fondness as was perfectly ridiculous; not to mention that he ought to have thought of this, when the invitation was sent him the preceding day. Wherefore, their refusing so late to come to their rich friend’s supper, on such trifling pretences, was the height of rudeness, inasmuch as it implied the greatest disrespect

20 And another said, I have mar- A. M. 4037.
ried a wife: and therefore I cannot A. D. 33.
come.

21 So that servant came, and showed his lord
these things. Then the master of the house
being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly

to their friend, and contempt of his entertainment. No wonder, therefore, that he was very angry when his servant returned and brought him their answer.”—Macknight. We may observe, further, respecting these excuses, that the things which were the matter of them were not only little things, and of small concern, comparatively speaking, and things which might have been easily done at another time, which would not have interfered with this important invitation; but they were *lawful things*. Each of the actions here alleged, in behalf of the refusal of these persons to attend the feast, was wholly lawful: there was nothing criminal in any of them. They were such as might well be, and are constantly done, in perfect consistency with embracing the gospel and its blessings. But these men rendered the things which were otherwise lawful and innocent, criminal and destructive by their abuse. And, while they were kept by means of them from the royal feast, they became the cause of their utter ruin. It was a wise saying of Judge Hale’s (see his *Life*) that “we are ruined by things allowed.” People’s trades and families, and the necessary avocations of life, by the too great anxiety wherewith they are pursued and regarded, become as powerful obstacles to the experience and practice of true religion, and as much prevent men’s eternal salvation, as grosser sins. We have proof of this every day: while men, engaged in pursuits otherwise laudable, by their too close attachment to them, withdraw their minds totally from God, and from heaven, and neglect that which to regard duly would forward and advantage even their temporal concerns. To provide for a family, to prosecute industriously and honestly the business of a man’s calling, to be faithful to his wife, and to take care of his children, are certainly high and commendable duties, enjoined by God, and amiable in the sight of men. But when these, or any of them, are loved and pursued with such attachment and intenseness as to prevent our complying with the gracious invitations of God; to alienate our minds from Christ and the gospel; to keep us from the due and regular discharge of our duty to our God and Redeemer;—then, how laudable soever our pursuits may be, how honest and upright soever our employments, truth it is, they will as certainly exclude us from the joys of our Lord, and his eternal feast; will as certainly draw down his wrath upon us, as if our neglect of him proceeded from any cause more criminal.

Verses 21–24. *So that servant came, and showed his lord these things*—So ministers ought to lay before the Lord in prayer the obedience or disobedience of their hearers. *Then the master of the house*—Who had made the entertainment; *being*

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go

out into the highways and hedges, A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, ¹ That none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper.

¹ Matt. xxi. 43; xxii. 8;

Acts xiii. 46.

angry—As he reasonably might be, to see such an affront put upon his splendid preparations, and such an ungrateful return made for the peculiar kindness and respect he had shown, in sending for these guests; *said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets, &c.*—Being of a benevolent and generous disposition, he determined that preparations so great should not be made in vain: and since those for whom they were first intended slighted the favour, he resolved that a great number still should be made happy with his supper, though they were of the poorer sort, nay, and diseased too; and the rather, because the persons of this class, upon whom he proposed to bestow his supper, had never partaken of such a meal before. He therefore ordered his servant to go as fast as he could *into the streets and lanes of the city*—Where the poor used to be, and to bring them all in, however maimed, or halt, or blind they might be. The servant readily went as directed, and quickly returned, saying, *Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded*—These poor, distressed people, are come in, and have sat down at the table. Many of the Jews were obedient to the gospel call, and were brought to God, and became members of the Church of Christ; but not the scribes and Pharisees, and such as Christ was now at dinner with, but such as are here mentioned, the poor of this world, and the afflicted; or such as were figuratively represented by them, the publicans and sinners. *And yet there is room*—The supper being great, and the hall of entertainment spacious, all those whom the servant happened to find in the streets and lanes of the city did not fill the tables. Wherefore, knowing that his lord's intention was to make as many happy with this feast as possible, he came and told him there was still room for more. *The lord said, Go out into the highways and hedges, &c.*—The benevolence and generosity of this great lord were such, that he could not be easy till as many people were brought in to partake of his supper as his house, with all the apartments where tables could be placed, would contain. Wherefore he ordered his servant to go even out of the city, to the highways and hedges leading into it, where beggars usually had their stations; and to use the most earnest entreaties with those who showed any unwillingness, in order that his house might be filled with guests. Thus the apostles, and first preachers of the gospel, were not to confine their labours to the towns and cities of Judea, but extend them to all parts of the country, and invite to the gospel feast persons of all descriptions: or rather, being rejected by the Jews, they are here commanded to turn, as

Paul expresses it, *to the Gentiles*, and to offer them the blessings of the gospel, though as unlikely to be called into the Church of Christ, as vagrants in the highways are to be invited to a feast at a nobleman's house. As to the clause, *Compel them to come in*, "How vainly," says Whitby, "these words are brought to prove, that men may be compelled by the secular arm to embrace the true faith, appears, 1st, From the nature of a *banquet*, to which no man is compelled by force, but only by the importunity of persuasion: 2d, From the scope of the parable, which respects the calling of the Gentiles, whom only Mohammedans think fit by force of arms to compel to the faith." Indeed, the word *αναγκασον*, rendered *compel*, frequently, as Elsner has shown, signifies only, *pressing persuasion*. And it certainly cannot here imply that any external violence was to be used with these persons; for only a single servant was sent out to them, who surely was not capable of *forcing* so great a multitude to come in, as was necessary to fill his lord's house. The proper meaning of the expression, therefore, here is, Use the most powerful persuasion with them; and so it fitly denotes the great efficacy of the apostle's preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles, whereby vast numbers of them were prevailed with to embrace the gospel. Indeed, force has no manner of influence to enlighten men's consciences; so that, though one should pretend to believe, and should actually practise a worship contrary to his opinion, it could never please God, being mere hypocrisy. Those, therefore, who suppose that this passage of the parable justifies the use of external violence in matters of religion, are grossly mistaken. *For I say unto you, that none, &c.*—This declaration of the master of the house refers to the commands given to his servant, verses 21, 23. Because he had determined to reject and abandon those first invited, therefore his servant was ordered to go out and gather guests from the streets and lanes, and then from the highways and hedges. *None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper*—This is like that sentence which God passed on those ungrateful Israelites who despised the pleasant land. *He sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest*—What is here intended is, that, because the Jews rejected Christ and his gospel, they were given up by God to hardness of heart, and a reprobate mind. "Grace despised," says Henry, "is grace forfeited, like Esau's birthright. They that will not have Christ when they may, shall not have him when they would. Even those that were bidden, if they slight the invitation, shall be forbidden. When the

A. M. 4037. 25 ¶ And there went great multi-
A. D. 33. tudes with him: and he turned, and
said unto them,

26 ¹ If any *man* come to me, and hate
not his father, and mother, and wife, and chil-
dren, and brethren, and sisters, ² yea, and his
own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And ³ whosoever doth not bear his cross,
and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

28 For ⁴ which of you, intending to build a
tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the
cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?

29 Lest haply after he hath laid the founda-

¹ Deut. xiii. 6; xxxiii. 9; Matt. x. 37.—² Rom. ix. 13.
³ Rev. xii. 11.

door is shut, the foolish virgins will be denied entrance." Only, the reader must remember, that not the condition of individuals, but the general state of the nation is here described; in which view, the parabolical representation is perfectly just, notwithstanding many individual Jews have believed on Christ, and obtained eternal life.

Verses 25-27. *And there went great multitudes with him*—It seems they accompanied him from place to place, with eager desire, doubtless, to have the Messiah's kingdom erected; proposing to themselves all manner of wealth and temporal advantage therein. One day, therefore, as they were on the road with him, he thought fit to show them plainly their mistake: *he turned and said, If any man come to me, and hate not, &c.*—As all the hopes of temporal felicity under his reign, which his disciples entertained, were to be blasted; as he himself was to suffer an ignominious death; and as they were to be exposed unto all manner of persecutions, he declared publicly to the multitude, that, if they proposed to be his disciples, it was absolutely necessary that they should prefer his service to every thing in the world, and by their conduct show that they hated father, and mother, and wife, and children, that is to say, loved the dearest objects of their affections less than him. As in this, so in several other passages of Scripture, the word *hatred* signifies only an inferior degree of love. Father and mother, and other relations, are particularly mentioned by our Lord, because, as matters then stood, the profession of the gospel was apt to set a man at variance with his nearest relations. *Whosoever doth not bear his cross, &c.*—See on Matt. x. 37, 38.

Verses 28-33. *Which of you, intending to build a tower,* (the word *πυργος* here signifying the same as the Hebrew *migdol*, seems to denote any great building whatever,) *sitteth not down first and counteth the cost*—To illustrate the necessity of their weighing deliberately, whether they were able and prepared to bear all their losses and persecutions to which the profession of the gospel would expose them, which indeed was the only term on which they could be his disciples, he desired them to con-

sider how prudence would direct them to act in other cases of importance. The most thoughtless person among you, as if he had said, will not resolve on a matter of such importance as the building of a house, without previously calculating the expense; because you know that the builder who begins without counting the cost, being obliged to leave off for want of money, exposes himself to the ridicule of all passengers who look on the half-finished edifice. In like manner, the king who declares war without comparing his forces with those of his enemy, and considering whether the bravery of his troops, and the conduct of his generals, will be able to make up what he wants in numbers, is sure to be ingloriously defeated, unless he humbly sue for peace before the matter comes to an engagement. *So likewise*—Like the person who began to build and was not able to finish; or like the king who, being afraid to face his enemy, sends an embassy and desires terms of peace; *whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath*—Who does not engage so earnestly and resolutely in his Christian warfare, as to hold all things cheap in comparison with life eternal, and be ready to forsake them when I call him to it; *he cannot be my disciple*—He cannot be acknowledged by me as such, because my disciples will be exposed to such trials, to such reproaches, losses, imprisonments, tortures, and martyrdoms, that unless they prefer me, and the cause in which I am engaged, to all visible and temporal things whatever, they certainly will not steadily adhere to me, or continue faithful and constant in my service. "Christ does not here require that we should actually renounce these [temporal] things, but that our heart and our affections should be so taken off from them, that we always love them less than we love him; and be always ready to part with them when we cannot keep them without making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience."—Whitby. To the same purpose Baxter: "A man cannot be Christ's disciple if he prefer not the kingdom of heaven before all worldly interest, and forsake it not all comparatively, in esteem and resolution now, and in act when he is called to it." "It was in this sense that the apostles under-

tion, and is not able to finish it, all
that beheld it begin to mock him,
30 Saying, This man began to build, and
was not able to finish.

31 Or what king going to make war against
another king, sitteth not down first, and con-
sulteth whether he be able with ten thousand
to meet him that cometh against him with
twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great
way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth
conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that

¹ Matt. xvi. 24; Mark viii. 34; Chap. ix. 23; 2 Tim. iii. 12.
² Prov. xxiv. 27.

A. M. 4037. forsaketh not all that he hath, he
A. D. 33. cannot be my disciple.

34 ¶ Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

¶ Matt. v. 13;

stood their Master: for though they are said to have forsaken all and followed him, they still retained the property of their goods, as is evident from the mention that is made of John's house, into which he took our Lord's mother, after the crucifixion; and from Peter and the other disciples prosecuting their old trade of fishing, with their boat and nets, after their Master's resurrection: nevertheless, though they thus retained the use and dominion of their property, they had truly forsaken all, in the highest sense of their Master's precept, being ready, at his call, to leave their families, occupations, and possessions, as often and as long as he thought fit to employ them in the work of the gospel. Upon the whole, therefore, it appears, that the renunciation and self-denial which Christ requires, does not consist in actually parting with all before he calls us to do so, but in being disposed to part with all, that when he calls we may do it." See Macknight.

Verses 34, 35. *Salt is good*—If you are not my disciples indeed, your outward profession will be

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

Mark ix. 50.

very insignificant: for, though salt in general is a good thing, and my servants, as I formerly intimated (see on Matt. v. 13,) are the salt of the earth; yet I must again add, *if the salt have lost his savour*—Or be grown insipid, how can its saltness be restored to it? or what can recover those whom my gospel will not influence and reclaim? *It is neither fit for the land, &c.*—As insipid salt is such a vile and worthless thing, that it is neither fit to be used of itself, as manure for the land, nor even to be cast upon the dunghill, to be there mixed with other manure; *but men cast it out*—It is thrown out of doors, and trampled under foot like mire in the streets. So you, my disciples, will be no less useless and contemptible, if, under the advantages and obligations of a Christian profession, you are destitute of a true principle of integrity and piety, of which you will certainly be destitute if you do not thus deny yourselves, and stand disposed to forsake all for my sake and the gospel's, as far as, and whenever, I shall call you to it. See notes on Mark ix. 49, 50.

CHAPTER XV.

Publicans and sinners flock round our Lord, and he, (1.) Vindicates his readiness to receive them, by the parables of the lost sheep and a piece of money, 1-10. (2.) He further pursues the design of the preceding parables, by delivering that of the prodigal son, 11-32.

A. M. 4037. **THEN** ** drew near unto him all
A. D. 33. the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, ^b and eateth with them.

* Fifth Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 1 to verse 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

Verse 1. *Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners*—That is, some of all the different classes of publicans, or all those of that place, and some other notorious sinners; *for to hear him*—Being influenced to do so through the condescension and kindness which he manifested toward all descriptions of persons, the most abandoned not excepted. Some suppose they came by a particular appointment from all the neighbouring parts. But as Luke goes on in the story, without any intimation of a change, either in the time or the scene of it, it is most probable that these discourses were delivered the same day that Christ dined with the Pha-

a

3 ¶ And he spake this parable unto them, saying, A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

4 ° What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

* Matt. ix. 10.—^b Acts xi. 3; Gal. ii. 12.—^c Matt. xviii. 12.

risee, which, being the sabbath day, would give the publicans, who on other days were employed in their office, a more convenient opportunity of attending. *And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, &c.*—Thinking this behaviour of our Lord inconsistent with the sanctity of a prophet, they were much displeas'd with him for it, and murmured at that charitable condescension, which ought rather to have given them joy.

Verses 2-7. *And he spake this parable*—That he might justify his conversing freely with sinners, in order to their reformation and salvation, he spake the parable of the lost sheep, which he had delivered once before, and also two other parables, which all

A. M. 4037. 5 And when he hath found *it*, he
A. D. 33. layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep ^d which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, ^e more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten ¹ pieces

^d 1 Pet. ii. 10, 25.—^e Chap. v. 32.—¹ *Drachma*, here translated a *piece of silver*, is the eighth part of an ounce, which

declare, in direct contrariety to the Pharisees and scribes, in what manner God receiveth sinners. *What man having a hundred sheep, &c.*—See note on Matt. xviii. 12–15. *Doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness*—Where they used to feed. All uncultivated ground, like our commons, was by the Jews termed *wilderness*, or *desert*, in distinction from arable and enclosed land: *and go after that which is lost*—In recovering a lost soul, Christ, as it were, labours. May we not learn from hence, that to let them alone, who are in sin, is both unchristian and inhuman? *And when he hath found it*—After a long and tedious search, he layeth it on his *shoulders, rejoicing*, as a man in such circumstances naturally would. *And calleth together his friends and neighbours*—Who had been informed of his loss, and grieved on account of it: *saying, Rejoice*—With me, for my labour and search have not been in vain; *I have found my sheep which was lost*—To my great joy, especially as I was ready to despair of finding it. *Likewise joy shall be in heaven*—First, in our blessed Lord himself, and then among the angels of God, and the spirits of just men, perhaps informed thereof by God himself, or by the angels who ministered to them; *over one sinner*—Over one gross, open, notorious sinner; *that repenteth*—That is thoroughly changed in heart and life; *more than over ninety and nine just*—*δικαιοις, righteous persons, who need no repentance*—No such universal change of mind and character, having been the subjects of it in their childhood or youth. It cannot, as Dr. Doddridge justly observes, be our Lord's meaning here, that God esteems one penitent sinner more than ninety and nine confirmed and established saints; (who are, undoubtedly, the persons spoken of as needing no repentance, or no universal change of heart and life, in which sense the word *μετανοια* is commonly used;) for it would be inconsistent with the divine wisdom, goodness, and holiness to suppose this. But it is plainly as if he had said, "As a father peculiarly rejoices when an extravagant child, supposed to be utterly lost, is brought to a thorough sense of his duty, and is effectually reformed; or, as any other person who has recovered what he had given up for gone, has a more sensible satisfaction in it than in several other things equally valuable, but

of silver, if she lose one piece, doth ^{A. M. 4037} not light a candle, and sweep the ^{A. D. 33.} house, and seek diligently till she find *it*?

9 And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

cometh to seven pence halfpenny, and is equal to the Roman penny; Matt. xviii. 28.

not in such danger: so do the holy inhabitants of heaven rejoice in the conversion of the most abandoned sinners. Yea, and God himself so readily forgives and receives them, that he may be represented as having part in the joy." It must be observed, however, that, as the design of the parable is to represent divine things by images taken from the manners of men, what is here said must be understood as spoken with allusion to human passions, which are much more sensibly affected with the obtaining of what was long and vehemently desired, or with the gaining of that which was looked upon as lost, than with the continuance of the good long enjoyed. And when such passions are ascribed to God, they are to be taken in a figurative sense, entirely exclusive of those sensations which result from the commotions of animal nature in ourselves.

Verses 8–10. *Either what woman*—As if he had said, To illustrate the matter by another obvious similitude, that it may yet more powerfully strike your minds, *what woman, having ten pieces of silver*—Though each of them but of the value of a *drachma*; or about seven pence halfpenny, and the whole only about six shillings three pence sterling money: *if she lose one piece*—Out of her little stock; *doth not light a candle, &c.*—Will not immediately make search for it, and take all possible pains to find it. *And when she hath found it, calleth her female friends*—To acquaint them with her good success, concluding it will be agreeable news to them. It might seem hardly worth while to ask the congratulation of her friends on so small an occasion as finding a drachma; but it is represented as the tenth part of her little stock, and the impressible and social temper of the sex may, perhaps, be considered as adding some propriety to the representation. *Likewise, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, &c.*—We may conclude from hence, that, at least in some extraordinary cases, the angels are, either by immediate revelation, or otherwise, informed of the conversion of sinners, which must, to those benevolent spirits, be an occasion of joy; nor could any thing have been suggested more proper to encourage the humble penitent, to expose the repining Pharisee, or to animate all to zeal in so good a work, as endeavouring to promote the repentance and conversion of others.

A. M. 4037. 11 ¶ And he said, A certain man
A. D. 33. had two sons :

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his jour-

¶ Mark xii. 44.

Indeed this part of both these parables is finely imagined. The angels, though high in nature, and perfect in blessedness, are represented as bearing a friendly regard to, and as having exact knowledge of, many things done here below. Thus, from men's conduct in the common affairs of life, described in these parables, Christ proves it to be the general sense of mankind, that every sinner should be sought after by the teachers of religion. For, as men are so moved with the loss of any part of their property, that they seem to neglect what remains while they are employed in endeavouring to recover what happens to be missing ; and, when they have found it, are so overjoyed, that, calling their friends, to whom they had given an account of their misfortune, they tell them the good news, that they may rejoice with them ; so the servants of God should labour with the greatest solicitude to recover whatever part of his property is lost, namely, his reasonable creatures, who, having strayed from him, are in danger of perishing eternally. And they have powerful encouragement to do so, as the reformation of a single sinner occasions more joy in heaven than the steadfastness of ninety and nine righteous persons. By this circumstance, likewise, he insinuated that the Pharisees, who pretended to more holiness than others, instead of repining at his conversing with, and instructing sinners, ought to have imitated the example of the heavenly beings, and to have rejoiced to find these men delighted with his company and discourses, who enjoined them a much stricter life than they hitherto had been used to, inasmuch as this was a certain token of their repentance, and seemed to promise a speedy and thorough reformation. The drift of both parables is to show, that the conversion of sinners is a thing highly acceptable to God, and, consequently, that whatever is necessary thereto is so far from being inconsistent with goodness, that it is the very perfection and excellence of it. Dan. xii. 3.

Verses 11, 12. *And he said, &c.*—Christ delivered next the parable of the lost or prodigal son : “ which of all his parables,” says Dr. Macknight, “ is the most delightful, not only as it enforces a doctrine incomparably joyous, but because it abounds with the tender passions, is finely painted with the most beautiful images, and is to the mind what a charming and diversified landscape is to the eye.” In this parable our Lord pursues the same design as in the two preceding ones : namely, that of vindicating himself in conversing with publicans and sinners, of

ney into a far country, and there wasted A. M. 4037.
his substance with riotous living. A. D. 33.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land ; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country ; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

¶ Amos viii. 11, 12.

ing every sincere penitent, by moving representations of the divine mercy. *A certain man had two sons*—Now grown up to manhood ; *and the younger of them*—Fondly conceited of his own capacity to manage his affairs, and impatient of the restraint he lay under in his father's house ; *said to his father, Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me*—As I am now come to years of discretion, I desire thou wouldst give into mine own hands that portion of thine estate, which, according to an equitable distribution, falls to my share. See here, reader, the root of all sin, a desire of disposing of ourselves independently of God ! *And he divided unto them his living*—Gave them his chief stock of money, reserving the house and estate in his own hands. “ It is plain no significant sense can be put on this circumstance of the parable, as referring to the dispensations of God to his creatures. It is one of those many ornamental circumstances which it would be weakness over-rigorously to accommodate to the general design.”—Doddridge.

Verses 13–16. *And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together*—Having gotten possession of his fortune, he lost no time, but, gathering together all he had, *took his journey into a far country*—That he might be wholly from under the eye of his parent, who was a person of great piety, and be freed from the restraints of religion, he went into a distant land, among the heathen, (verse 15,) where was neither the knowledge nor worship of God, choosing such companions as were most agreeable to his vicious inclinations, and, connected with these, he wallowed in unbounded riot and debauchery. Thus sinners, through a spirit of infidelity, independence of God, pride, self-conceit, and the love of pleasure, soon go far from God, far from his favour and image ; far from the fear and love of him, and all design and desire of pleasing him : and in this state of alienation and distance from him, employ to his dishonour the time and talents he had intrusted them with, to be used for his glory, ζῶντες ἀσωτως, living intemperately, imprudently, foolishly, as the word implies, not considering that God will call them to an account for their abuse of his gifts. *And when he had spent all*—When this wretched course of intemperance, riot, and folly had clouded his understanding, weakened his memory, vitiated his affections, brought infirmity and disease upon his body, and he had squandered away the whole property he had received of his father, it so happened, through the righteous judgment of God upon him, that *there arose a mighty*

A. M. 4037. 16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat ; and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have

famine in that land—Where he sojourned ; *and he began to be in want*—Of the very necessities of life. Observe, reader, in that country which is far from God ; in that state of heart and life, in which men are alienated from the knowledge and love of him, and shut out from all intercourse with him, they will ere long find a *mighty famine* arising, and will be in extreme want of every thing calculated to make them happy. *And went and joined himself to a citizen of that country*—Finding no shelter or relief among those who had been his associates in vice, and had shared in the spoils of his substance ; and yet being unable to brook the mortification of returning home in such circumstances ; to keep himself from starving in the famine, he went still farther into the country, that was far from his father's house, and submitted to accept the most disgraceful employment that a Jew could be engaged in ; he hired himself to a person, who, thinking such a worthless creature unfit for any better post, sent him into his fields to *feed swine*, an employment to which, however mean and disagreeable, this unhappy youth, who had once lived in so much plenty and splendour, was forced to submit. Thus sinners, by wandering far from God, into the ways of vice and misery, join themselves to Satan and his servants, the genuine citizens of that country which is far from God, where they are employed in ministering to the lusts and pleasures of others, that is, in feeding the devil's swine. *And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks, &c.*—The wages he earned by this ignominious service were not sufficient, in a time of such great scarcity, to purchase him as much food of any kind as would satisfy the cravings of his appetite. Being half starved, therefore, he often looked on the swine with envy as they were feeding, and wished that he could have filled his belly with the husks which they devoured ; a circumstance this, which beautifully and forcibly shows the extremity of his misery. *And no man gave unto him*—There was none that took so much pity upon him as to give him one morsel of food ; so sparing did the famine make them, and so much did every one despise this foolish and scandalous prodigal. Thus sinners would fain satisfy themselves with carnal pleasures and worldly comforts, the husks which the swine eat, but the endeavour is vain and fruitless, for the enjoyment of no creature can give true happiness to the intelligent and immortal mind of man, formed and designed to find it in God only.

Verses 17, 18. *And when he came to himself*—When the infamy and distress of his present condition began to lead him into serious consideration ; and he so far recovered the use of his reason, which had before been dethroned and extinguished by the

bread enough and to spare, and I A. M. 4037
perish with hunger ! A. D. 33

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

mad intoxication of sensual pleasure ; when the great distress he was in brought him at length to think and reflect on his unhappy condition, and to retrace the steps that had brought him into it ; *he said*—Namely, in his heart ; *How many hired servants of my father's*—The meanest in his family, the very day-labourers ; *have bread enough and to spare*—Have more meat than they can use. Even the hired servants in God's house are well provided for ; the meanest that will but hire themselves into his family to do his work, and depend upon his reward, shall have all things and abound : the consideration of which should encourage sinners, that have gone astray from God, to think of returning to him : *and I perish with hunger*—I, his child, who have known so many better days, am even ready to die with want, not being thought worth my food by this unkind master, to whom I have hired myself. Observe, reader, 1st, All who have wandered from God, and endeavour to satisfy themselves with earthly things, whether riches, honours, or pleasures, with worldly pursuits and carnal gratifications, living without God in the world, may really be said to be beside themselves, for they act like persons deprived of their reason. Observe, 2d, Sinners will not come to Christ, and enter into his service, till they are brought to see themselves just ready to perish in the service of sin. And though we be thus driven to Christ, he will not therefore reject us, nor think himself dishonoured by our being forced to him, but rather honoured by his being applied to in a desperate case. *I will arise and go to my father*—Whatever be the consequence, I am resolved that I will no longer remain in this miserable condition, but will immediately set out on my way home, if all my little remaining strength can but bring me to the end of such a journey. *And I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned, &c.*—That I may be received again, I am resolved to go in all humility, and confess my crimes to my father, acknowledging that I am utterly unworthy to be owned as a son, and will pray to be taken into his house, only as a hired servant, and will be contented for the future to labour and fare as the servants do, so I may but live in his sight. In saying, *I have sinned against heaven and before thee*, he meant, that God was injured in the person of his earthly father. And certainly nature itself teaches this, that whoever is insolent or disrespectful to his parents, rebels against God ; who, by making them the instruments of communicating life to their children, has imparted to them some of his own paternal honour. In saying, *I am no more worthy to be called thy son*, he shows, that the idea of his undutiful behaviour was strongly impressed on his mind, whereby he was sensible that he had no title to be treated at home

A. M. 4037. 19 And am no more worthy to be
A. D. 33. called thy son: make me as one of
thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But ^ε when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have

^ε Acts ii. 39; Eph. ii. 13, 17.

as a son. At the same time he knew that it never would be well with him till he was in his father's family again; so with joy he entertained the thought of occupying the meanest station in it. Thus, while the liberality of the great Parent of men makes them wantonly run away from his family, the miseries which they involve themselves in, often constrain them to return. By the natural consequences of sin, God sometimes makes sinners to feel, that there is no felicity to be found anywhere but in himself.

Verse 20. *And he arose and came to his father*—Having taken the resolution of returning to his father, he put it immediately in execution; setting out just as he was, barefooted, and all in rags, and being obliged, doubtless, to beg his way. But did his father receive him? Was he welcome? Yes, heartily welcome. And, by the way, we have here an example, instructing parents, whose children have been foolish and disobedient, if they repent and submit themselves, not to be harsh and severe with them; but to be governed, in such a case, by the wisdom that is from above, which is gentle and easy to be entreated. Herein let them be followers of God, and merciful as he is. The passage, however, is chiefly designed to set forth the grace and mercy of God to poor sinners, that repent and return to him, and his readiness to forgive them. *But when he was yet a great way off*—Having only come within sight of home, and his nakedness, and the consciousness of his folly, probably, making him ashamed to proceed further, *his father*—Happening to be looking that way; *saw him*—Before any of the rest of his family were aware of the circumstance; *and had compassion*—*Εσπλαγχνισθη*, his bowels yearned, to observe the wretched condition he was in; and immediately, as if he had forgotten the dignity of his own character, and all the injuries he had received, he ran to his child, and fell on his neck and kissed him. The son advanced diffidently and slowly, under a burden of shame and fear; but the father ran to meet him with his encouragements. This shows our heavenly Father's desire of the conversion of sinners, and his readiness to meet them that are coming toward him. His eyes are on those that go astray from him, he is continually looking to see whether they will return to him, and marks and cherishes the first inclinations which they manifest so to do.

Verse 21. *And the son said*—The perturbation which the aged parent was in, with ecstasy of joy, hindered him from speaking; so the poor,

sinned against heaven, ^h and in thy
sight, and am no more worthy to be
called thy son. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry:

^h Psalm li. 4.

ragged, meager creature, locked in his arms, began and made his acknowledgments with a tone of voice expressive of the deepest contrition. *Father, I have sinned against heaven, &c.*—As it commends the good father's kindness, that he showed it before the prodigal expressed his repentance; so it commends the prodigal's repentance, that he expressed it after his father had showed him so much love. When he had received the kiss, which sealed his pardon, yet he said, in a spirit of deep contrition, *Father, I have sinned*. Observe, reader, even those who have received the pardon of their sins, and the comfortable sense of their pardon, yet must have in their hearts a sincere sorrow for them, and with their mouths must make a penitent confession of them, even for those sins which they have reason to hope are pardoned. David wrote the fifty-first Psalm after Nathan had said, *The Lord hath taken away thy sin: thou shalt not die*. Nay, a comfortable sense of the pardon of sin should increase our sorrow for it; and that is ingenuous, evangelical sorrow, which is increased by such a consideration. Thus Ezek. xvi. 61, 63, *Thou shalt be ashamed and confounded when I am pacified toward thee*. The more we see of God's readiness to forgive us, the more difficult it should be to us to forgive ourselves. The son was going on with his confession and submission, but the father, grieved to see him in that miserable plight, interrupted him, and prevented his proceeding, by ordering his servants, some to bring out the best robe immediately, and a ring and shoes, that he might be clothed in a manner becoming his son; and others, to go and kill a fatted calf, that they might eat and rejoice, and all this without one word of rebuke. This kind treatment was far beyond what the prodigal did or could expect: he came home between hope and fear, fear of being rejected, and hope of being received; but his father was not only better to him than his fears, but better to him than his hopes; not only received him, but received him with respect. He came home in rags, and his father not only clothed but adorned him, putting on him, *την σολην την πρωτην*, the first, best, or principal robe, the garment laid by, and used only on festival occasions; *and a ring on his hand*—As a further token of his welcome reception into the family, and of his father's love and regard. He returned barefoot, and with feet doubtless sore with travelling; but his father provided him with proper shoes, to render him easy and comfortable. He came faint and hungry; and his father not only fed but feasted him. and that

A. M. 4037. 24 ⁱ For this my son was dead, and
A. D. 33. is alive again; he was lost, and is
found. And they began to be merry.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go

ⁱ Verse 32; Eph. ii. 1;

with the best provision he had. Thus, for true penitents, who return to their duty, and cast themselves upon the divine mercy in Christ, God doth exceedingly above what they could have dared to ask or think. He clothes them when naked with the robe of righteousness, the garment of salvation, justifies their persons through faith in him who is the Lord their righteousness, and regenerates and sanctifies their nature by his saving grace, restoring them to his blessed image and likeness. And, as a token of their adoption into his family, sends into their hearts the Spirit of his Son, crying, Abba, Father, and sealing them to the day of redemption, signified by the ring put on the prodigal's hand. Their feet also are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, that they may proceed forward with ease and comfort through the journey of life, however rough the road may be in which they have to travel: in other words, through faith in the gospel, and its encouraging declarations and promises, they obtain that peace and tranquillity of mind, that resignation, patience, and contentment, which enables them to persevere in the way of duty, whatever trials they may meet with therein: and they are fed with the bread of life, nay, feasted with the rich and abundant consolations of the gospel: while the whole family of God rejoices at their return to their heavenly Father's house. Thus the father of the prodigal exhorts, *Let us eat and be merry*—Greek, *και χαριστες ευφρανθημεν*, *eating, let us rejoice, or be cheerful*. The English word, *merry*, both here and wherever else it occurs, whether in the Old or New Testament, implies nothing of levity, but a solid, serious, religious, heart-felt joy: indeed, this was the ordinary meaning of the word two hundred years ago, when our translation was made.

Verse 24. *For this my son was dead*—Was considered by me as dead; *and is alive again*—"It is by a very common and beautiful emblem, that vicious persons are represented as dead, both by sacred and profane authors; and the natural death of their children would be less grievous to pious parents than to see them abandoned to such a course as this young sinner took."—Doddridge. *He was lost and is found*—We looked upon him as utterly lost, but lo! he is come back again, beyond all ex-

in; therefore came his father out, and A. M. 4037.
entreated him. A. D. 33.

29 And he answering, said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me; and all that I have is thine.

v. 14; Rev. iii. 1.

pectation, in safety. Two things here are worthy of observation: 1st, That the conversion of a soul from sin to God is the raising of that soul from death to life, and the finding of that which seemed to be lost. It is a great, wonderful, and happy change: it is like that which passes upon the face of the earth when the spring returns. 2d, The conversion of sinners is very pleasing to the God of heaven, and all that belong to his family ought to rejoice in it. Those in heaven do, and those on earth should, rejoice. *And they began to be merry*—They sat down to the feast, rejoicing exceedingly at the happy occasion of it.

Verses 25–28. *Now his elder son was in the field*—The elder son seems to represent the Pharisees and scribes mentioned verse 2. And now while every one in the family heartily joined in expressing their joy on account of the safe return of the second son, the elder brother, happening to come from the field, heard the noise of singing and dancing within; wherefore, calling out one of the servants, he asked what these things meant. The servant replied, that his brother was unexpectedly come, and that his father, being very glad to see him, had killed the fatted calf, and was making a feast, because he had received him safe and sound. The servant probably mentions the killing of the fatted calf rather than the robe or ring, as having a nearer connection with the music and dancing. When the elder brother heard this, he fell into a violent passion, and would not go in; the servant therefore came and told his father of it. The father rising up, went out, and with incomparable goodness, entreated his son to come and partake in the general joy in the family on account of his brother's return. This act of condescension gives a great heightening to the character of the father, and adds an inexpressible beauty and elegance to the parable; and when we consider it as referring to the love and condescension of our Almighty Father, it must certainly be very consolatory to our souls.

Verses 29, 30. *But he answering, said to his father*—The kindness and respect which his father showed him on this occasion, did not soften him in the least. He stubbornly persisted in his anger, and answered the affectionate speeches of his parent with nothing but

A. M. 4037. 32 It was meet that we should make
A. D. 33. merry, and be ⁱ glad: ^k for this thy bro-

ther was dead, and is alive again; A. M. 4037.
and was lost, and is found. A. D. 33.

ⁱ Psalm li. 8; Isaiah xxv. 10.

^k Verse 24.

loud and haughty accusations of his conduct. *These many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time*—This branch of the parable is finely contrived to express the high opinion which the Pharisees, here represented by the elder brother, entertained of their own righteousness and merit. *Yet thou never gavest me a kid, &c.*—Perhaps God does not usually give much consolation to those who never felt the deep sorrows of repentance. *But as soon as this thy son was come*—The ungracious youth disdained to call him his brother, and at the same time insolently insinuated, that his father seemed to despise all his other children, and to reckon this prodigal only his son; *which hath devoured thy living with harlots*—Hath wasted thy property in a long course of scandalous debaucheries, to his own ruin, and the infamy of the family. *Thou hast killed for him the fatted calf*—And made him as welcome as if he had been the most dutiful child upon earth. *And he said*—With great gentleness, when he might have taken offence at his son's unbecoming reply, *Son, thou art ever with me*—And art every day receiving some token of my kindness. By calling him his son, after the insolent speech he had made, the father insinuated, that he acknowledged him likewise for his son, and that neither the undutifulness of the one, nor the frowardness of the other of his children, had extinguished his affection, or cancelled the relation subsisting between them. *All that I have is thine*—As thou hast formerly lived in my family, and hast had the command of my property, as far as thy exigencies required; so thou art at present heir to the bulk of my estate. This is a material intimation, and suggests a strong reason against murmuring at the indulgence shown to the greatest sinners. As the father's receiving the youngest son did not cause him to disinherit the elder, so God's receiving notorious sinners will be no loss to those who have always served him: neither will he raise these to a state of glory equal to that of those who have always served him, if they have, upon the whole, made a greater progress in inward as well as outward holiness.

Verse 32. *It was meet that we should make merry and be glad*—Both reason and natural affection justify me in calling the whole family to rejoice on the present occasion. *For this thy brother was dead, &c.*—As thy brother is returned to us sensible of his folly, and determined to lead a new life in future, his arrival is like his reviving after death, at least, it is his being found after he was really lost. For which reason our joy ought to bear a proportion to the greatness of this occasion. There is a beautiful opposition between the father's words here, and those of the elder son, verse 30. The latter had there indecently said to his father, *This thy son*. The father, in his reply, mildly reproves him, and tenderly says, *This thy brother*—As if he had said, "Though he

hath devoured my living with harlots, he is thy brother, as well as my son: wherefore thou shouldst not be angry because he hath repented and is returned, after we thought him irrecoverably lost. Thus the goodness with which the father bore the surly peevishness of his elder son was little inferior to the mercy shown in the pardon that he granted to the younger: and we have herein a moving intimation that the best of men ought to look on the most abandoned sinners as, in some respect, their brethren still, and should especially remember the relation, when there appears any inclination in such sinners to return." Jesus having thus set before them the affectionate behaviour of an earthly parent toward his undutiful children, left every one to judge whether such weak and wicked creatures can love their offspring with more true tenderness than the great Father Almighty loves his, or can show them more indulgence for their benefit. Indeed, "in this inimitable composition, the amazing mercy of God is painted with captivating beauty; and in all the three parables, the joys occasioned among heavenly beings by the conversion of a single sinner are represented; joys even to God himself, than which a nobler and sweeter thought never entered into the mind of rational creatures. Thus high do men stand in the estimation of God; for which cause they should not cast themselves away in that trifling manner wherein multitudes destroy themselves; neither should any think the salvation of others a small matter, as some who are intrusted with their recovery seem to do. Had the Pharisees understood the parable, how criminal must they have appeared in their own eyes, when they saw themselves truly described in the character of the eldest son, who was angry that his brother had repented! Withal, how bitter must their remorse have been, when they found themselves, not only repining at that which gave joy to God, the conversion of sinners, but excessively displeased with the methods of his procedure in this matter, and maliciously opposing them! If these parables had been omitted by Luke, as they have been by the other three historians, the world would certainly have sustained an unspeakable loss."—Macknight.

Many have considered this parable in a view of peculiar application to the Jews and Gentiles; and have observed, that the murmurs of the Jews against the apostles for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, are represented by the conduct of the elder brother. This was certainly a case comprehended in our Lord's design, but he undoubtedly had something more in his intention: he meant to show, that had the Pharisees been as eminently good as they themselves pretended to be, yet it would have been very unworthy their character to take offence at the kind treatment which any sincere penitent might receive. Thus does he here, and in many parallel texts, con-

demn their conduct on their own principles, though elsewhere, on proper occasions, he shows the falsehood of those principles, and plainly exposes their hypocrisy and guilt. But our Lord had still a further design in delivering this parable; he intended to give us, as he has done, a lively emblem of the character and condition of sinners in their fallen state. Like this prodigal, they are impatient of the most necessary restraints, fondly conceited of their own wisdom; and when enriched by the bounties of the great common Father, they ungratefully run from him, saying to him, in effect, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* Sensual pleasures are eagerly sought; and perhaps all their earthly possessions and hopes are quickly paid as the price of them: while the means of obtaining these pleasures continue, not a serious thought of God can find place in their minds. And even when afflictions come upon them, still they make hard shifts, before they will let the grace of God, concurring with his providence, persuade them to think of a return. When they see themselves naked and indigent, enslaved and undone, then they *come to themselves*, and recover the exercise of their reason. Then they remember the blessings they have thrown

away, and attend to the misery they have incurred. And hereupon they resolve to return to their heavenly Father, and put the resolution immediately in practice: they *arise and go* unto him. Behold with wonder and pleasure the gracious reception they find from divine injured goodness! When such a prodigal comes to his Father, the Father sees him afar off: he pities, meets, embraces him, and interrupts his acknowledgments with the tokens of his returning favour. He arrays him with the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness, imputed and implanted, with pardon and holiness, adorns him with all his sanctifying graces, and honours him with the tokens of adopting love, and all the glorious privileges and immunities of his children. And all this he does with unutterable delight, in that he who was lost is now found. Let no elder brother murmur at this indulgence, but rather welcome the prodigal back into the family. And let those who have been thus received wander no more, but emulate the strictest piety of those who for many years have served their heavenly Father, and made it their daily care, not to transgress his commandments, but to walk before him in all well-pleasing.

CHAPTER XVI.

(1.) Christ delivers the parable of the unjust steward, and therein shows how worldly possessions and enjoyments may be used for our eternal advantage, 1-8. (2.) He applies and improves the parable, 9-13. (3.) He rebukes the scoffing Pharisees for their pride, covetousness, and hypocrisy, 14, 15. (4.) He declares that the New Testament dispensation, the blessings of which both Jews and Gentiles were beginning ardently to desire, would not annul, but fulfil the law, whether ceremonial or moral, 16-18. (5.) To enforce the preceding admonitions, he delivers the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in which he represents that riches abused do but secure and enhance eternal torments; and that no other means of conversion can be granted to such as neglect the warnings of Scripture, 19-31.

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

AND *he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same

* Ninth Sunday after Trinity,

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

Verse 1. *And he also, &c.*—To give a further check to the maliciousness of the Pharisees, and the obstinacy with which they opposed every thing that was good, he delivered, while they were still present, the parable of the crafty steward, whom he proposed as an example of the dexterous improvement which worldly men make of such opportunities and advantages as fall in their way for advancing their interest. By this parable, Jesus designed to excite his disciples to improve, in like manner, the advantages they might enjoy for advancing their own spiritual welfare; and particularly to spend their time and money in promoting the conversion of sinners, which, of all the offices in their power, was the most acceptable to God, and the most beneficial to man. *He said also to his disciples*—Not only to the scribes and Phari-

was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

2 And he called him, and said unto him,

gospel, verse 1 to verse 10.

sees, to whom he had been hitherto speaking, but to all the younger as well as the elder brethren, to the returning prodigals, who were now *his disciples*. *A certain rich man had a steward*—To whom the care of his family, and all his domestic concerns, were committed: Christ here teaches all that are now in favour with God, particularly pardoned penitents, to behave wisely in what is committed to their trust. *And the same was accused unto him, &c.*—Some of the family, who had a real concern for their lord's interest, observing the steward to be both profuse in his distributions, and negligent in taking care of the provisions of the family, thought fit to inform their lord, that he was wasting his goods. Dr. Whitby quotes Rab. D. Kimchi, on Isa. xl. 21, commenting as follows, "The fruits of the earth are like a table spread in a house; the owner of this

A. M. 4037. How is it that I hear this of thee?
A. D. 33. give an account of thy stewardship:
for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

¹The word *Batus*, in the original, containeth nine gallons, three quarts; See Ezek. xiv. 10, 11, 14.—²The word here interpreted a *measure*, in the original, containeth about fourteen bushels

house is God; man in this world is, as it were, the steward of the house, into whose hands his Lord hath delivered all his riches; if he behave himself well, he will find favour in the eyes of his Lord; if ill, he will remove him from his stewardship." And thus, adds the doctor, "the scope of this parable seems to be this: that we are to look upon ourselves, not as lords of the good things of this life, so as to get and use them at our pleasure, but only as stewards, who must be faithful in the administration of them."

Verses 2-4. *And he called him, and said, How is it that I hear this of thee*—His lord, having called him, told him what was laid to his charge; and as he did not pretend to deny the accusation, he ordered him to give in his accounts, because he was determined he should occupy his office no longer. *Then the steward said, What shall I do?*—The steward, having heard his doom pronounced, began to consider with himself, how he should be supported when he was discarded. He was of a disposition so prodigal, that he had laid up nothing; he thought himself incapable of bodily labour, (being old, perhaps,) or could not submit to it, and to beg he was ashamed. He was not, however, as appears from what follows, ashamed to cheat! This was likewise, says Mr. Wesley, a sense of honour! "By men called honour, but by angels, pride." *I am resolved what to do*—So he said within himself, after a little consideration; a lucky thought, as he doubtless accounted it, coming into his mind. He was not yet turned out of his office; he therefore resolved to use his power in such a manner as to make himself friends, who would succour him in his need. *That they may receive me into their houses*—That the tenants or debtors of his lord, who paid their rents or debts, not in money, but in wheat, oil, or other produce of the ground they rented or possessed, might give him entertainment in their houses, or provide for him some other means of subsistence.

Verses 5-7. *So he called, &c.*—In pursuance of this scheme he sent for all those of his lord's debtors whom he could hope to oblige by so fraudulent a

6 And he said, A hundred ¹measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred ²measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write four-score.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than ^athe children of light.

9 And I say unto you, ^bMake to yourselves

and a pottle.—^aJohn xii. 36; Eph. v. 8; 1 Thessalonians v. 5.—^bDaniel iv. 27; Matthew vi. 19; xix. 21; Chapter xi. 41; 1 Timothy vi. 17, 18, 19.

proposal, determining to lower the several articles in his book, which stood chargeable to the account of each of them; and said to the first, *How much owest thou*—How much hast thou agreed to pay for the rent of the ground thou occupiest, or of how much hast thou acknowledged the receipt? *And he said, A hundred measures of oil*—The word *batus*, here rendered *measures*, is evidently derived from the Hebrew כתיב, which we render *baths*, in the Old Testament. According to Bishop Cumberland, a bath contained about seven gallons two quarts and half a pint. *And he said, Take thy bill*—Συ το γραμμα, *thy writing*; the writing in which thou hast promised the payment of so many baths as rent, or in which thou hast acknowledged the receipt of so many. The writing, whatever it was, was doubtless of the obligatory kind, and probably in the hand-writing of the tenant, or debtor, who thereby bound himself to pay these baths, and was signed by the steward, who here ordered him to alter, or write it over again, and make himself liable to pay only *fifty*, instead of a *hundred*. The word *κορυς*, rendered *measures*, in the next verse, is the כור, or *homer*, of the Hebrews, containing about eight bushels and a half, standard measure. The twenty homers which he allowed the debtors to deduct, would contain one hundred and seventy bushels of wheat, and might be as valuable as fifty baths, or three hundred and seventy-eight gallons of oil; so that the obligation conferred on both those debtors might be equal.

Verses 8, 9. *And the lord*—Rather, *his lord*, or master, for it is Jesus, and not the evangelist, who speaks this, as is plain from both the structure of the parable itself, and from the application which Jesus makes of it in the next verse; *commended the unjust steward, because he had acted wisely*—Or, prudently for himself, as *φρονιμως* here signifies. Properly, indeed, his master commended neither the actor nor the action; but solely the provident care about his future interest which the action displayed; a care worthy the imitation of those who have in view a nobler futurity, eternal life. And the com-

A. M. 4037. friends of the ³ mammon of unright-
A. D. 33. eousness; that when ye fail, they
may receive you into everlasting habitations.

10 ° He that is faithful in that which is least,
is faithful also in much; and he that is un-
just in the least, is unjust also in much.

* Or, riches.—^c Matt. xxv. 21; Chap. xix. 27.

mendation is here mentioned by our Lord, merely in order that he might recommend that precaution to our imitation. For, though the dishonesty of such a servant was detestable, yet his foresight, care, and contrivance about the interests of this life, deserve to be imitated by us, with regard to the more important concerns of another. *For the children of this world*—Those who seek no other portion than the things of this world; *are wiser than the children of light*—Not absolutely, for they are, one and all, egregious fools, and must be accounted such by all who believe there is a life to come, a life of unspeakable and eternal happiness or misery; but they are more consistent with themselves; they are truer to their principles; they more steadily pursue their end; they *are wiser in their generation*: that is, in their own way, and for this present life, than the children of God are, with respect to the life that is future and eternal. The latter, though enlightened by God to see where their true happiness lies, seldom appear so thoughtful and active in the great concerns of religion, as worldly men are in pursuit of the momentary and precarious possessions of this world. *Make yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*—Be good stewards even of the lowest talents wherewith God hath intrusted you, and particularly of your property. Make yourselves friends of this, by doing all possible good with it, particularly to the children of God. *Mammon* means riches, or money, which is here termed *mammon of unrighteousness*, or of *deceit*, or *unfaithfulness*, as *ἀδικίας* may be rendered, because of the manner in which it is either used or employed; or on account of its being so apt to fail the expectation of the owners; in which view it is opposed to *true riches*, verse 11. The phrase is plainly a Hebraism, as *οικονομος της ἀδικίας*, *steward of unrighteousness*, or *unfaithfulness*, verse 8; and, *κριτης της ἀδικίας*, *judge of unrighteousness*, chap. xviii. 6, which two last expressions our translators have, with perfect fidelity, changed into the *unjust steward*, and the *unjust judge*: if they had taken the same liberty in many other places, they would have made the Scriptures plainer than they now appear to be to an English reader. It is justly observed by Dr. Doddridge here, that “nothing can be more contrary to the whole genius of the Christian religion, than to imagine that our Lord would exhort men to lay out their ill-gotten goods in works of charity, when justice so evidently required they should make restitution to the utmost of their abilities.” *That when ye fail*—When your flesh and heart fail; when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, those of them who are gone before, may

11 If therefore ye have not been A. M. 4037
faithful in the unrighteous ‘mammon,’ A. D. 33.

who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that
which is another man’s, who shall give you
that which is your own?

* Or, riches.

receive, may welcome you into everlasting habitations—And you may for ever enjoy the reward of your pious charity and love, in the friendship of all those truly worthy persons who have been relieved by it. Or, this expression, *they may receive you*, may be a mere Hebraism for, *ye shall be received*, namely, by God, if you make a right use of his gifts. Here, as it were, our Lord, with great propriety, suggests the thoughts of death as an antidote against covetousness, an unreasonable passion, to which, however, many on the very borders of the grave are wretchedly enslaved. Upon the whole, the true scope of this parable is, to teach those who have their views extended to eternity, to be as active and prudent in their schemes for the life to come as the children of this world are for the present; and particularly to do all the good to others in their power; a duty highly incumbent on those especially whose business it is to reclaim sinners, not only because sinners are in themselves fit objects of charity, as well as saints, but because charitable offices done to them, may have a happy tendency to promote their conversion. “That this was the lesson which Jesus designed particularly to inculcate by this parable, is evident from the application of it; and his advice therein is worthy of the most serious attention; the best use we can make of our riches being undoubtedly to employ them in promoting the salvation of others. For if we use our abilities and interest in bringing sinners to God, if we spend our money in this excellent service, we shall conciliate the good-will of all heavenly beings, who greatly rejoice at the conversion of sinners, as was represented in the preceding parables; so that, with open arms, they will receive us into the mansions of felicity. And therefore, while self-seekers shall have their possessions, and honours, and estates torn from them, with the utmost reluctance, at death, they who have devoted themselves, and all that they had, to the service of God, shall find their consumed estates to be greatly increased, and their neglected honours abundantly repaired, in the love and friendship of the inhabitants of heaven, and in the happiness of the world to come, and shall rejoice in having disposed of their wealth to such an advantage.” —Macknight.

Verses 10–12. *He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much*—Here our Lord proceeds in the application of the parable. As if he had said, Whether ye have more or less, see that ye be faithful as well as wise stewards: for if you make that use of your riches which I have been recommending, you shall be received into those

A. M. 4037. 13 ^d No servant can serve two mas-
A. D. 33. ters: for either he will hate the one,
and love the other; or else he will hold to the
one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve
God and mammon.

^d Matt. vi. 24.—^e Matt. xxiii. 14.

everlasting habitations, where all the friends of goodness dwell, because, by your fidelity in managing the smallest trust of temporal advantages committed to your care, you show that you are capable of the much greater trust of spiritual and heavenly employments and enjoyments, things of a much higher nature. *And he that is unjust in the least—* He that useth these lowest gifts unfaithfully; *is unjust also in much—* Is likewise unfaithful in spiritual things. In other words, if you do not use your riches, and power, and other temporal advantages, for the glory of God, and the good of your fellow-creatures, you shall be excluded from the abodes of the blessed, because, by behaving unfaithfully in the small trust committed to you now, you render yourselves both unworthy and incapable of a share in the everlasting inheritance. *For if ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous—* Or rather, as the word here signifies, the *false, the deceitful mammon—* That is, in the use of your riches, and other temporal blessings, very properly called the false mammon, because they always deceive those who confide in them as the sovereign good; *who will commit to your trust the true riches?—* Spiritual and eternal blessings, which alone are true riches. "The word *riches* is substituted by our translators instead of *mammon*, which was the word Christ intended, and which, for that reason, should find its place in the translation of this verse. *Mammon*, coming from the Hebrew מַמְּוֹן, signifies *whatever one is apt to confide in*; and because men put their trust generally in external advantages, such as riches, authority, honour, power, knowledge, the word *mammon* is used to denote every thing of that kind, and particularly *riches*, by way of eminence."—Macknight. See note on Matt. vi. 24. *And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's—* The word *man* is not in the original, and is improperly supplied in the translation, for it is not *man* but *God* who is intended; to whom the riches, and other advantages in our possession, do properly belong; who has committed them to us only as stewards, to be laid out for the good of his family, and who may any moment call us to give an account of our management. Observe well, reader, none of these temporal things are ours; we are only stewards of them, not proprietors: God is the proprietor of all: he lodges them in our hands for a season, but still they are his property. "Rich men," says a late writer, "understand and consider this! If your steward uses any part of *your* estate, (so called in the language of men,) any further, or any otherwise than you direct, he is a knave: he has neither conscience nor honour. Neither have *you* either the one or

14 ¶ And the Pharisees also, ^e who A. M. 4037.
were covetous, heard all these things, A. D. 33.
and they derided him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which
justify yourselves before men; but ^f God

^f Chap. x. 29.—^g Psa. vii. 9.

the other, if you use any part of that estate which is in truth God's, not yours, any otherwise than he directs." *Who shall give you that which is your own—* That which, when it is conferred upon you, shall be perpetually in your possession, shall be your own for ever. Our Lord's meaning, therefore, is, "Since you have dared to be unfaithful in that which was only a trust committed to you by God for a short time, and of which you knew you were to give him an account, it is evident you are not fit to be intrusted by him with the riches of heaven; these being treasures which, if he bestowed them on you, would be so fully your own, that you should have them perpetually in your possession, and never be called to an account for your management of them."

Verse 13. *No servant can serve two masters—* See note on Matt. vi. 24. As if he had said, You cannot be faithful to God, if you trim between him and the world; if you do not serve him alone. Beware, therefore, of indulging, even in the least degree, the love of the world, for it is absolutely inconsistent with piety: "insomuch that a man may as well undertake, at one and the same time, to serve two masters of contrary dispositions and opposite interests, as pretend to please God while he is anxiously pursuing the world for its own sake. In this manner did Jesus recommend the true use of riches, power, knowledge, and the other advantages of the present life, from the consideration that they are not our own, but God's; that they are only committed to us as stewards, to be employed for the honour of God and the good of men: that we are accountable to the proprietor for the use we make of them, who will reward or punish us accordingly; and that every degree of covetousness is such a serving of mammon as is really idolatrous, and altogether inconsistent with the duty we owe to God."—Macknight.

Verses 14, 15. *The Pharisees, who were covetous—* Of a very worldly spirit; *heard all these things—* Namely, concerning the true use of riches, and the impossibility of men's serving God and mammon at the same time; *and they derided him—* As a visionary, who despised the riches, honours, and pleasures of life for no other reason but because he could not procure them. The original word, ἐξευκτερίζον, is very emphatical, signifying, *they mocked him*, by a scornful motion of the mouth and nose, as well as by what they spake to him. The word might properly be rendred, *they sneered*. "There was a gravity and dignity in our Lord's discourse which, insolent as they were, would not permit them to laugh out; but by some scornful air they hinted to each other their mutual contempt."—Doddridge.

A. M. 4037. knoweth your hearts: for ^hthat which
A. D. 33. is highly esteemed among men, is
abomination in the sight of God.

16 ⁱThe law and the prophets *were* until
John: since that time the kingdom of God is
preached, and every man presseth into it.

17 ^kAnd it is easier for heaven and earth to
pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

^h 1 Sam. xvi. 7.—Matt. iv. 17; xi. 12, 13; Luke vii. 29.
^k Psa. cii. 26, 27; Isa. xl. 8; li. 6; Matt. v. 18; 1 Pet. i. 25.

And he said, *Ye are they which justify yourselves before men*—By shunning the company of sinners, and your care of external appearances, you make specious pretences to extraordinary sanctity before the world, and you seldom fail to acquire a great reputation for it. Or, the meaning may be, You think yourselves righteous, and persuade others to think you so. *But God knoweth your hearts*—You cannot justify yourselves before him, who knows you to be so far from being righteous, that you are very wicked. For though you may have covered the foulness of your crimes with the painted cloak of hypocrisy, and by going about, thus adorned, have cheated those who look no further than the outside, into a high admiration of you, you cannot screen yourselves from the detection of God, whose eye penetrates through every covering, and who judges of things not by their appearances, but according to truth. *For that which is highly esteemed among men, &c.*—In consequence of which it comes to pass that he often abhors both men and things that are held in the highest estimation.

Verses 16–18. *The law and the prophets were in force until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached*—The gospel dispensation takes place, and humble, upright men, receive it with inexpressible earnestness. Dr. Whitby's paraphrase on this passage shows its connection with the preceding paragraph, thus: "It is not to be wondered that you now hear from John and me higher precepts of charity and contempt of the world, than you find in the law or prophets, which moved you to your duty by promises of temporal blessings in the land of Canaan; since now the kingdom of heaven is preached, and every one that enters into it forces his way by breaking through the love of temporal concerns and sensual pleasures. For, to give you another instance (see verse 18) of a like nature, whereas the law admitted of divorces at the pleasure of the husband, by reason of the hardness of your hearts, the gospel forbids this now on any other score than that of fornication, which, from the nature of the sin, dissolves the marriage. Yet, that you may not cavil at me as a dissolver of the law, I declare that all the moral precepts of it shall obtain and be of perpetual obligation under the gospel dispensation." *Every man presseth into it*—The intention of this clause, says Dr. Campbell, "is manifestly to inform us, not how great the number was of those who entered into the kingdom of God, but

18 ^lWhosoever putteth away his ^{A. M. 4037}
wife, and marrieth another, com- ^{A. D. 33.}
mitteth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her
that is put away from *her* husband, committeth
adultery.

19 ¶ *There was a certain rich man, which
was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared
sumptuously every day:

^l Matthew v. 32; xix. 9; Mark x. 11; 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.
* First Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 19 to the end.

what the manner was in which all who entered obtained admission. The import, therefore, is only, *Every one who entereth it, entereth it by force.* We know that during our Lord's ministry, which was (as John's also was) among the Jews, both his success, and that of the Baptist, were comparatively small. Christ's flock was literally, even to the last, *πομνιον μικρον, a very little flock.* It was not till after he was *lifted up* upon the cross, that, according to his own prediction, he *drew all men to him.*" See on Matt. xi. 12. *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass*—For the whole system of created nature to be destroyed, than for one tittle of the law to fail, or the least precept of it to be set aside as faulty. See note on Matt. v. 18. *Whosoever putteth away his wife, &c.*—And far from doing any thing to lessen or abate the force of it, I rather assert it in its utmost extent and spirituality, forbidding all divorces, except for the cause of adultery, and even looking on a woman so as to desire her. See on Matt. v. 28, 32.

Verse 19. *There was a certain rich man, &c.*—Our Lord, in the last paragraph, having exposed those parts of the character of the Pharisees which were most odious in the sight of God, and the roots from whence their other wickedness sprang, namely, their hypocrisy and worldly spirit, proceeds now sharply to rebuke their voluptuousness and love of pleasure, and set before them the consequences thereof in a most awakening parable, in which he unveils before their sight the rewards and punishments of the eternal world. It is the most alarming of all Christ's parables, and the characters in it are drawn in such lively colours that many have been of opinion, in all ages of the church, that it is not a parable, but a real history. But the circumstances of the story are evidently parabolical, and some ancient MSS., particularly that of Beza, at Cambridge, have, at the beginning,—*And he spake unto them another parable.* It matters not much, however, to us, in the application of it, whether it be a parable or a real history, since the important truths contained in it are equally clear and equally certain, in whichever light it be considered. *Which was clothed in purple and fine linen*—And on that account, doubtless, was highly esteemed, and that not only by those who sold these articles, but by most that knew him, as encouraging trade, and acting according to his quality. *And fared sumptuously every day*—Taking care, not only to gratify his vanity by the finery and delicacy of his

A. M. 4037. 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs

dress, but his palate also with the most exquisite meats which nature, assisted by art, could furnish: and consequently was esteemed yet more, for his generosity and hospitality in keeping so good a table. The original expression, *ευφραινομενος καθ' ημεραν λαμπρος*, is very expressive, signifying that he feasted splendidly, or, delighted and cheered himself with luxury and splendour every day. His tables were loaded with the richest dainties, the most delicate wines delighted his taste, and all things ministering to sensuality were plentifully provided. Who so blessed as he? for every day this same delight returned; every day presented a new scene of bliss.

Verses 20, 21. *And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus*—According to the Greek pronunciation; or *Eliazar*, according to the Hebrew; a name very proper for a person in such a condition, signifying, *the help of God*; or if, as some think, the word be derived from *לֵאזֵר*, *lo azer*, a helpless person. *Which was laid at his gate full of sores*—He was so diseased and decrepit that he could not go himself to the rich man's gate, but he was carried by some compassionate hand or other, and laid there; he was so naked that his ulcers lay uncovered and exposed to the weather; and so poor, that he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. This expression, *επιθυμων χορτασθηναι απο των ψιχιων*, as Dr. Campbell observes, does not afford any foundation for supposing that he was refused the crumbs, the word *επιθυμων*, rendered *desiring*, not implying so much in the Scriptural use of it, and the other circumstances of the story not being consistent with such an opinion. For when the historian says, that he was laid at the rich man's gate, he means not, surely, that he was once there, but that he was usually so placed, which would not probably have happened if he had got nothing at all by being laid there. The other circumstances concur in heightening the probability. Such are, the rich man's immediately knowing him; his asking that he might be made the instrument of the relief wanted; to which may be added, that, though the patriarch upbraids the rich man with the carelessness and luxury in which he lived, he says not a word of inhumanity; yet, if we consider Lazarus as having experienced it so recently, it could hardly, on this occasion, have failed to be taken notice of. Can we suppose that Abraham, in the charge he brought against him, would have mentioned only the things of the least moment, and omitted those of the greatest? "Much injury," adds the doctor, "has been done to our Saviour's instructions, by the ill-judged endeavours of some expositors to improve and strengthen them. Many, dissatisfied with the simplicity of this parable, as related by the evangelist, and desirous, one would think, to vindicate the character of the Judge from the charge of excessive severity, in the condemnation of the rich man, load

which fell from the rich man's table: A. M. 4037. moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. A. D. 33.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died,

that wretched sinner with all the crimes which can blacken human nature, and for which they have no authority from the words of inspiration. They will have him to have been a glutton and a drunkard, rapacious and unjust, cruel and hard-hearted, one who spent in intemperance what he had acquired by extortion and fraud. Now, I must be allowed to remark that, by so doing, they totally pervert the design of this most instructive lesson, which is, to admonish us, not that a monster of wickedness, who has, as it were, devoted his life to the service of Satan, shall be punished in the other world; but that the man, who, though not chargeable with doing much ill, does little or no good, and lives, though not perhaps an intemperate, a sensual life; who, careless about the situation of others, exists only for the gratification of himself, the indulgence of his own appetites, and his own vanity, shall not escape punishment. It is to show the danger of living in the neglect of duties, though not chargeable with the commission of crimes; and particularly the danger of considering the gifts of Providence as our own property, and not as a trust from our Creator, to be employed in his service, and for which we are accountable to him. These appear to be the reasons for which our Lord has here shown the evil of a life, which, so far from being universally detested, is at this day but too much admired, envied, and imitated." Thus also Henry: "It is not said that the rich man abused Lazarus, forbid him his gate, or did him any harm; but it is intimated that he slighted him, was under no concern for him, took no care about him. Here was a real object of charity, and a very moving one, which spoke for itself, and was presented to him at his own gate. The poor man had a good character, and a good carriage, and every thing that could recommend him. A little thing done for him would have been considered as a great kindness; and yet the rich man took no cognizance of his case; did not order him to be taken in and lodged in his barn, or one of his out-buildings, but let him lie there. Observe, reader, it is not sufficient not to oppress and trample upon the poor: we shall be found unfaithful stewards of our Lord's goods, in the great day, if we do not succour and relieve them. The reason given for the most fearful doom is, *I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat*. I wonder how those rich people, that have read the gospel of Christ, and say they believe it, can be so unconcerned, as they often are, in the necessities and miseries of the poor and afflicted." *Moreover*—Or rather, *yea even*, as *αλλα και* should be rendered, (for the circumstance is undoubtedly mentioned as an aggravation of the poor man's distress,) *the dogs came and licked his sores*—In this manner did Lazarus, a child of God, and an heir of heaven, laid at the rich man's gate, drag out an afflicted life, pining away with hunger, and cold, and

A. M. 4037. and was carried by the angels into
A. D. 33. Abraham's bosom. The rich man
also died, and was buried :

painful disease; while the great man within, though a child of wrath, and an heir of hell, spent every day in the highest luxury of dress and table: the former, according to the opinion of the world, being a remarkable instance of the greatest misery, and the other of the most consummate felicity.

Verse 22. *And it came to pass*—In a little time; that the beggar died—Worn out with hunger, and pain, and want of all things; and was carried by angels (amazing change of the scene!) into Abraham's bosom—So the Jews styled paradise; the place or state where the souls of good men remain from death to the resurrection. The expression alludes to the way of representing the felicities of heaven, by sharing a magnificent banquet with Abraham and the other patriarchs; (see Matt. viii. 11; Luke xxii. 30;) and nothing could better describe the honour and happiness of Lazarus, who had lain in so wretched a condition before the rich man's gate, than telling us that he was placed next to Abraham, and so, as the Jews expressed themselves, *lay in his bosom*, John xiii. 23. *The rich man also died*—For death knocks with equal boldness at the sumptuous mansion of the rich, or even at the palace of the prince, and at the cottage of the peasant. This rich man's purple and fine linen, and his faring sumptuously every day, could not keep death from him: nay, probably these things served to hasten its approach: for various diseases, and even those of a very dreadful and tormenting kind, are frequently the certain consequences of luxury and high living. *And was buried*—Doubtless with pomp enough, though we do not read of his lying in state: that stupid, senseless pageantry, that shocking insult on a poor putrifying carcass, was reserved for our enlightened age! We read nothing of poor Lazarus's funeral: and indeed, this is one advantage which the rich have over the poor, their wealth will provide for them a costly funeral! Their clay-cold corpse shall be enclosed in a coffin covered with velvet, many mourners shall be hired to put on a melancholy aspect, a cloak for a glad heart, and horses decked with nodding plumes, shall bear their wretched remains to the cold, senseless tomb! But alas! what is all this pomp to the soul, which, the moment it leaves the body, enters on an eternal scene of bliss or wo! Nay, and even before it leaves it, has views and feelings very different, according to the difference of the state it finds itself to be in, and the apprehensions of coming misery, or expectations of approaching happiness which it entertains. How great was the difference in these respects between the feelings of the rich man and those of Lazarus, when on the verge of eternity! the approach of death being very terrible to the former, while the latter described the goal with inexpressible joy. And from the moment of their departure, how utterly were all things respecting them reversed! the beggar, being a pious man, finds himself, after being wasted by guardian

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, A. M. 4037.
being in torments, and seeth Abraham A. D. 33.
afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

angels through the unknown regions, laid in Abraham's bosom; whereas the man that was in high life, having probably always pleased himself with the thought that there would be no future state, is amazed beyond what can be expressed, when he finds himself plunged in the torments of hell.

Verse 23. *And in hell*—*Ev τω αδη, in hades*; that is, in the unseen, or invisible world. It must be observed, that both the rich man and Lazarus were in *hades*, though in different regions of it: *he lifted up his eyes, being in torments*—Our Saviour adapts this circumstance of the parable, says Lightfoot, to the popular opinion of the Jews. The rabbins say, that the place of torment and paradise are so situated, that what is done in the one may be seen from the other. "Because the opinions, as well as the language, of the Greeks," says Dr. Macknight, "had by this time made their way into Judea, some imagine that our Lord had their fictions about the abodes of departed souls in his eye when he formed this parable: but the argument is not conclusive. At the same time it must be acknowledged, that his descriptions of those things are not drawn from the writings of the Old Testament; but have a remarkable affinity to the descriptions which the Grecian poets have given of them. They, as well as our Lord, represent the abodes of the blessed as lying contiguous to the regions of the damned, and separated only by a great impassable river, or deep gulf, in such a sort that the ghosts could talk with one another from its opposite banks. In the parable, souls, whose bodies were buried, know each other, and converse together, as if they had been imbodied. In like manner, the Pagans introduce departed souls talking together, and represent them as having pains and pleasures analogous to what we feel in this life. It seems, they thought the shades [spirits] of the dead had an exact resemblance to their bodies. The parable says, the souls of wicked men are tormented in flames; the Grecian mythologists tell us they lie in a river of fire, where they suffer the same torments they would have suffered while alive had their bodies been burned." It will not, however, at all follow from these resemblances, that the parable is formed on the Grecian mythology, or that our Lord approved of what the common people thought or spake concerning those matters, agreeably to the notions and language of the Greeks. "In parabolical discourses provided the doctrines inculcated are strictly true, the terms in which they are inculcated may be such as are most familiar to the ears of mankind, and the images made use of such as they are best acquainted with." What we are here taught with certainty is, that as the souls of the faithful, immediately after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity; so, unholy and un sanctified souls, immediately after they are forced from the pleasures of the flesh by death, are in misery and torment, ceaseless, remediless, and endless torment, to

A. M. 4037. 24 And he cried, and said, Father
A. D. 33. Abraham, have mercy on me, and
send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his
finger in water, and ²⁴ cool my tongue: for I
²⁵ am tormented in this flame.

²⁴ Zech. xiv. 12.—²⁵ Isa. lxvi. 24; Mark ix. 44, &c.

be much increased and completed at the general resurrection. *And seeth Abraham afar off*—And yet knew him at that distance; and shall not Abraham's children, when they are together in paradise, know each other? *and Lazarus in his bosom*—Having a view of the seats of the blessed at a distance, the first object that he beheld was Lazarus, the beggar, (who had so often been laid naked, and hungry, and covered with sores, at his gate,) sitting next to Abraham, in the chief place of felicity. In consequence of which, doubtless, the stings of his conscience were greatly multiplied, and he was racked with envy and self-accusing reproaches.

Verses 24, 25. *He cried, Father Abraham, have mercy on me*—Being in an agony of pain, by reason of the flames, and the anguish felt in his conscience, he cried to Abraham to take pity on him, his son, and send Lazarus to give him, if it were but the very least degree of relief, by dipping the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue, for his torment was intolerable. Abraham might have replied, Thou art not my son, I disown thee; what has become of thy purple and fine linen, thy perfumes, thy feasting, thy dancing? Where are thy delicious wines, now that thou art so earnestly begging a drop of water to cool thy tongue? Instead of thy stately palace, thou art shut up in hell; instead of pleasure, thou art filled with pain; instead of music and mirth, nothing is heard but wailing and gnashing of teeth. No: such speeches, however just, would not have been suitable to the humanity of blessed Abraham; for which reason that good patriarch did not so much as put this wicked man in mind of his ill-spent life; only, being to justify God for having made so sudden and so remarkable a change in his state, he called him his son, and spake of his past debauched way of living in the softest manner possible, showing us the sweet disposition of the blessed in heaven. It cannot be denied, that there is one precedent here in Scripture, of praying to a departed saint: but who is he that prays? and with what success? Will any one who considers this be inclined to imitate him? *And Abraham said, Son*—That is, according to the flesh; *remember, &c.*—Is it not worthy of observation, that Abraham will not revile, even a damned soul? And shall living men revile one another? *That thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things*—He bade him consider, that in his lifetime he chose and accepted of worldly things, *as his good*, his happiness, despising heaven, and valuing, and seeking nothing but the riches, pleasures, and honours of earth. And can any be at a loss then to know why he was in torments? This damnable idolatry, had there been nothing else, was enough to sink him to the nethermost hell. But Abraham further inti-

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25 But Abraham said, Son, ²⁶ remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

²⁶ Job xxi. 13; Chap. vi. 24.

mates to him, that having enjoyed the good things of this world in the greatest perfection, he could not think it hard if, by the sentence of God, in the open violation of whose laws he had lived, especially of the great law enjoining sincere and fervent love to God and man, he was deprived of that heaven, and of those spiritual and eternal blessings, which he had always despised. *And likewise Lazarus evil things*—He reminded him that Lazarus, on the other hand, had borne the miseries of life with patience, had trusted in God, and looked forward to a better state: *but now he is comforted*—His afflictions are all brought to an end, and he is refreshed with eternal joys, which know neither hunger, nor cold, nor pain. He who had no house in which to hide his head, is now a free citizen, and blessed inhabitant of heaven: immortal joys and everlasting love refresh his soul, who lately desired the crumbs from thy table. Glory is his splendid robe for ever, health and gladness attend him always, who was covered only with sores and ulcers upon earth; and he is delighted with the sweet society of God, of angels, and of all the saints, whom no man regarded upon earth, and whose sores the dogs licked, more compassionate than his fellow-creatures. *And thou art tormented*—Instead of thy purple robe and fine linen, thou art invested with a robe of fiery flame: instead of sumptuous fare, art fed with bitter tears, and gnawed continually by a condemning conscience; instead of thy past elegancies and comforts, nothing but torment and anguish surrounds thee. Observe well, reader, it is not the merely being in a state of poverty and affliction on the one hand, or of wealth, affluence, and ease on the other, that causes this difference in the future conditions of men, that in itself saves or destroys their souls: but it is the right or wrong use of either state. When a man considers the good things of this life as his chief good; when his heart is taken up by them, and he is so intent on the gaining, the retaining, the increasing, or the enjoyment of them, as to neglect making his peace with God, and giving his heart to him in holy love, and his life in uniform obedience; or, when he makes his riches the instruments of pride, luxury, and uncharitableness; of impiety toward God, and inhumanity toward his fellow-creatures;—then he so receives his good things here as to give up all right to the good things hereafter; and having been here *comforted* by the enjoyment of temporal goods, will hereafter be *tormented* by the suffering of eternal evils. "For," as an able writer well observes, and as is intimated in the note on verse 21, "our Lord's principal view in this discourse most evidently was, to warn men of the danger of that worldly-mindedness, neglect of religion, and devotedness to pleasure and profit, which

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A. M. 4037. 26 And besides all this, between us
A. D. 33. and you there is a great gulf fixed :
so that they which would pass from hence to
you, cannot ; neither can they pass to us, that
would come from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, fa-
ther, that thou wouldest send him to my father's
house :

¶ Isa. viii. 20 ; xxxiv. 16 ;

is not so much any one vice, as it is the foundation
and source of all vices. It is that which makes men
regardless of futurity, and not to have God in all
their thoughts. It is that deceitfulness of riches,
ambition, and voluptuousness, and the care of things
temporal, which stifle all sense of religion, choke the
word, and it becomes unfruitful."

Verses 26-29. *Besides all this*—As to the favour
thou desirest from the hand of Lazarus, it is a thing
impossible to be granted ; for *between us and you*
there is a great gulf fixed—*Χασμα μέγα ἐστηρικται, a*
great chasm, or void, is established. Dr. Campbell
renders the clause, *There lieth a huge gulf betwixt*
us and you, so that they who would pass hence to
you cannot. If any should be so compassionate as
to desire to help you, they are not able : *neither can*
they pass to us who would come thence—But we must
still continue in an unapproachable distance from
each other : the passage is for ever closed : the great
gulf is for ever fixed : and whether a person be happy
or miserable in a future state, each is unchangeable !
Each, O solemn thought ! each is eternal !
Then he said, I pray that thou wouldest send him to
my father's house—The rich man, finding that no-
thing could be done for himself, and that his own
case was irretrievable, began to be in pain about his
relations. He had five brethren alive, who, it seems,
were living in pride and luxury, and either enter-
taining the Sadducean opinion concerning a future
state, or living in forgetfulness and neglect of it ;
therefore, that he might prevent their ruin, and, if
possible, ease himself of the painful reflections which
he felt for having been instrumental in corrupting
them, he entreated Abraham to send Lazarus unto
them, in hopes it would reclaim them : for he sup-
posed, if those in paradise could not pass to those in
torment, there might be a passage from paradise to
the earth, as it was evident there was from the earth
thither. By making this request, the man acknow-
ledged both his own wickedness and the principle
from which it proceeded : he had either disbelieved
the doctrine of a future state, or had disregarded it,
had set his affections on the present world, and
chosen it for his portion ; and by his example, at
least, had seduced his brethren into the same de-
structive courses. *That he may testify unto them*—
The certain truth of the immortality of the soul, and
of a future state of rewards and punishments, and the
infinite importance thereof ; *lest they also come into*
this place of torment—He might justly fear lest their
reproaches should add to his own misery. *Abraham*

28 For I have five brethren ; that A. M. 4037
he may testify unto them, lest they A. D. 33.
also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, ¶ They have
Moses and the prophets ; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham : but
if one went unto them from the dead, they
will repent.

John v. 39, 45 ; Acts xv. 21 ; xvii. 11.

saith, They have Moses, &c.—Abraham replied,
that they had the books of Moses and the prophets,
from which they might learn the certainty and im-
portance of these things, if they would be at the
pains to read and consider them : *let them hear them*—
Let them hearken to the warnings and instructions
given them in those divine records, and they will
have means sufficient to prevent their damnation.

Verses 30, 31. *And he said, Nay, father Abraham,*
&c.—He answered, that the writings of Moses and
the prophets had proved ineffectual to himself, and
he feared would be so to his brethren ; but that they
would certainly change their sentiments, and reform
their lives, if one actually appeared to them from
the dead. "It is uncertain," says Dr. Macknight,
"whether the rich man, by *one from the dead*,
meant an apparition, or a resurrection. His words
are capable of either sense : yet the quality of the
persons to whom this messenger was to be sent,
makes it more probable that he meant an apparition.
For, without doubt, the character Josephus gives us
of the Jews in high life, namely, that they were
generally Sadducees, was applicable to those breth-
ren ; so that, disbelieving the existence of souls in
a separate state, nothing more was necessary, in the
opinion of their brother, to convince them, than
that they should see a real apparition," or spirit
from the invisible world. *And he said, If they*
hear not Moses, &c.—Abraham tells the rich man,
that if they did not hearken to Moses and the pro-
phets, neither would they be persuaded to a tho-
rough repentance and reformation, though a person
should come back from the dead to visit them : for
though such an event might indeed alarm them for
a time, the same prejudices and lusts, which had
led them to despise or disregard those methods of
instruction which God had afforded them, would
also lead them, ere long, to slight and neglect such
an awful appearance as he desired they might see.
If it be objected here, that Moses nowhere expressly
asserts a future state of rewards and punishments,
it may be replied, that the facts recorded by him
strongly enforce the natural arguments in proof of
it ; and the prophets speak plainly of it in many
places. Bishops Atterbury and Sherlock have
shown clearly and fully the justness of Abraham's
assertion here, in their excellent discourses on this
text, which well deserve the attentive perusal of
every professor of Christianity." The impenitence
of many who saw another Lazarus raised from the
dead, (John xi. 46,) and the wickedness of the sol-

A. M. 4037. 31 And he said unto him, If they
A. D. 33. hear not Moses and the prophets,

neither will they be persuaded, A. M. 4037
though one rose from the dead. A. D. 33.

John xii. 10, 11.

diers who were eye-witnesses to the resurrection of Christ, and yet, that very day, suffered themselves to be hired to bear a false testimony against it, (Matt. xxviii. 4, 15,) are most affecting and astonishing illustrations of this truth; for each of these miracles was far more convincing than such an appearance as is here referred to would have been."—Doddridge. Certainly, if men be so immersed in vice and wickedness as to be inattentive to the evidences of a future state, which God has already afforded them by the inspired writings; or, if they be careless about such a state, they would, for the same reasons, reject all other means whatsoever, which God might make use of for their conviction and reformation. Reader, put thy own heart to the trial: dost thou really believe the awful representation of future things given in this parable by him who is ordained judge of the living and dead? Dost thou really believe that a life of sin and voluptuousness; of worldly-mindedness, love of pleasure, honour, or profit, will assuredly bring thy soul to the place of torment, where a drop of water is not to be had? If thou dost believe this, what madness is it to continue one moment in such a state, and to have less regard for thy own most precious soul, than a damned spirit had for the souls of his relations! But if thou believe not, what thinkest thou would persuade thee of the truth? Would it convince thee, were the request of the rich man on behalf of his brethren granted thee, and one came from the dead to testify to thee these dreadful truths? Do not mistake the matter: if thou dost not believe upon the abundant evidence already given, sufficient to convince any reasonable thinking man, whose eyes are not entirely blinded by worldly lusts and pleasures, neither wouldst thou be persuaded though a spirit came back from the dead to warn thee. Abraham assures the rich man, that if the writings of Moses and the prophets, though far less clear and explicit on the subject of a future state than the Scriptures of the New Testament, did not convince his brethren of the reality of it, they would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead; how much more, then, may we assert, that a person's coming from the dead would not persuade those who resist the much greater evidence with which we are favoured since

life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel. If men regard not the public revelation, which has been confirmed by miracles, and the evident accomplishment of a variety of prophecies, neither would they be influenced by a private testimony given to themselves: for, 1st, A messenger from the dead could say no more than what is said in the Scriptures, nor say it with more authority. 2d, There would be much more reason to suspect an event of that kind to be a delusion than to suspect the Scriptures to be so; and those that are infidels in the one case would certainly be so in the other. 3d, The same strength of depravity that resists the convictions of the written word, would certainly triumph over those produced by a witness from the dead. 4th, The Scripture is now God's ordinary way of making known his mind to us, and a way perfectly sufficient; and it would be presumption for us to prescribe any other; nor have we any ground to expect or pray for the grace of God to accompany or bless any other way, when that is rejected, and set aside. Let us, then, not desire or look for any other, but be wise, and pay a greater deference than we have done to the exceeding goodness of our God, for having given us so clear a revelation of his will in the blessed Scriptures, and so plainly marked out before us the way to future felicity and glory! Let us well consider the foundation on which those Scriptures stand, and take them for our guide, assured that their authority is divine, and their instructions all-sufficient. From them let us, as reasonable men, as men peculiarly favoured with so inestimable a treasure from the great King of heaven;—from them let us weigh in the balance of true reason the gains of time and eternity: let us put into one scale the enjoyment of all our hearts could wish upon earth, and in the other the suffering of unutterable and everlasting misery: and how light will the scale of earthly happiness be to that of endless torment! Let us put into one scale the denial of all our evil affections, nay, and a life of poverty and suffering; and in the other the gain of everlasting felicity; and how light, how very light, will all the sufferings of time be to the exquisite joys and glories of eternity. See Dodd's Discourses on the Miracles and Parables.

CHAPTER XVII.

In this chapter, (1,) Christ repeats his exhortations to an inoffensive conduct, and a forgiving temper; and warns his disciples not to arrogate any merit to themselves, 1-10. (2,) He heals ten lepers, one of whom was a Samaritan, who returns after his cure, and gives Jesus thanks for it, 11-19. (3,) He cautions the Jews against expecting a pompous kingdom of the Messiah, and warns them of the approaching national destruction, which would be the consequence of rejecting him, 20-37.

A. M. 4037. **THEN** said he unto the disciples,
A. D. 33. ^a It is impossible but that offences will come : but wo *unto him* through whom they come !

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 ¶ Take heed to yourselves : ^b If thy brother trespass against thee, ^c rebuke him ; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again

^a Matt. xviii. 6, 7 ; Mark ix. 42 ; 1 Cor. xi. 19.—^b Matt. xviii. 15, 21.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

Verses 1. *Then said he unto the disciples*—Our Lord, about this time, thought proper to repeat to the people, who then attended on his ministry, and were desirous of being instructed by him, several particulars of his doctrine, which he had formerly delivered in a more private way to his apostles, and some others of his disciples, as follows : *It is impossible but that offences will come*—Considering the general corruption of human nature, the snares of the world, and the temptations of Satan, it cannot be but that one way or other offences will be given and taken : stumbling-blocks will be laid in the way of such as are travelling to the heavenly Jerusalem, and many will stumble at them, and fall over them ; will be hindered in the way, or turned out of it ; for many professing my religion will act in a manner very unsuitable to it, unworthy of themselves, and disgraceful to the holy name they bear. *But wo unto him through whom they come*—Let me warn you, therefore, as you love your own souls, to guard against the guilt and danger of being stumbling-blocks in the way of others. *It were better for him, &c.*—I assure you that such a one, especially he that by an immoral life proves a reproach and scandal to my cause, had better die by the hand of violence, and suffer the most shocking execution, than that he should offend, or cause to stumble and fall, *one of these little ones*, that is, one weak believer, or any other of my despised and persecuted followers. See on Matt. xviii. 7-9.

Verses 3, 4. *Take heed to yourselves*—That you may neither offend others, nor be offended by others, but that you may keep all your passions under proper regulation, and may be preserved from those resentments of injuries, real or supposed, which, if yielded to, might occasion much sin to yourselves or others. *If thy brother trespass against thee, &c.*—But while our Lord cautioned them against all angry passions, and that quarrelsome temper which they naturally produce, he thus prescribed a seasonable and prudent reprehension of any fault that might be committed, accompanied with forgiveness on the part of the person injured, as the best means of dis-

to thee, saying, I repent ; thou shalt A. M. 4037.
forgive him. A. D. 33.

5 ¶ And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

6 ^d And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea ; and it should obey you.

7 But which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat ?

^c Lev. xix. 17 ; Prov. xvii. 10 ; James v. 19.—^d Matt. xvii. 20 ; xxi. 21 ; Mark ix. 23 ; xi. 23.

arming the temptations that might arise from such a disposition. See on Matt. xviii. 21. *And if he repent, forgive him*—Immediately, without insisting on any rigorous satisfaction. *And if he trespass against thee seven times a day*—That is, very frequently ; *and seven times a day turn again, saying, I repent*—That is, if he give sufficient proof that he does really repent, after having sinned ever so often ; *thou shalt forgive him*—Shalt receive him just as if he had never sinned against thee. But this forgiveness is due only to real penitents. See on Matt. xviii. 21, 22. In a lower sense, we are to forgive all, penitent or impenitent, so as to bear them the sincerest goodwill, and to do them all the good we can ; and that not seven times only, but seventy times seven.

Verses 5, 6. *And the apostles said, Lord, increase our faith*—That we may thus forgive, and neither offend nor be offended. *And he said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed*—You would be able to overcome all temptations, even those, the conquering of which may be compared to the plucking up of trees and planting them in the ocean, that is, compared to things impossible. Some, taking this example (by which the efficacy of faith is illustrated) in a literal sense, have supposed, that the apostles desired Jesus to increase their faith of working miracles. But the expression is undoubtedly proverbial, signifying, not the working of miracles, but the doing of things extremely difficult.

Verses 7-10. *But which of you, &c.*—But while you endeavour to live in the exercise of this noble grace of faith, and in a series of such services as are the proper fruits of it, be careful, in the midst of all, to maintain the deepest humility, as in the presence of God your heavenly Master, on whom, as you are his servants, you can have no claim of merit : *Which of you, having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, &c.*—To make his disciples sensible that, after they had done their utmost to discharge the whole duty incumbent on them as God's servants, sent forth to seek and save lost souls, they had merited nothing thereby ; he bade them consider in what manner they received the services of their own

A. M. 4037. 8 And will not rather say unto him, A. D. 33. Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, * and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are ^funprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

11 ¶ * And it came to pass, ^g as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village,

* Chap. xii. 37.—^f Job xxii. 3; xxxv. 7; Psa. xvi. 2; Matt. xxv. 30; Romans iii. 12; xi. 35; 1 Corinthians ix. 16, 17; Philem. 11.

dependants. They reckoned themselves under no obligation to a servant for doing the duty which his station bound him to perform. In like manner he, their Master, did not reckon himself indebted to them for their services. And therefore, instead of valuing themselves upon what they had done, and expecting great rewards for it, it became them, after having performed all that was commanded them, to think and say that they had done nothing but their duty. *When ye shall have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants*—For a man cannot profit God. Happy is he who judgeth himself an unprofitable servant; miserable is he whom God pronounces such. But though we are unprofitable to him, our serving him is not unprofitable to us. For he is pleased to give, by his grace, a value to our good works, which, in consequence of his promise, entitles us to an eternal reward.

Verses 11–14. *He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee*—As Samaria lay between Galilee and Judea, and therefore our Lord, taking his journey to Jerusalem, must go first through Galilee, and then through Samaria, it is inquired why it is here said that he passed *through the midst of Samaria and Galilee*. To this Grotius, Whitby, Campbell, and some others, answer, that the original expression, *δια μεσσω Σαμαριας και Γαλιλαιας*, means, *between Samaria and Galilee*, or through those parts in which the two countries bordered on each other; or through the confines of them. *There met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off*—As lepers were banished from the towns, they were likewise obliged to keep at a distance from the roads which led to them. Curiosity, however, to see the travellers who passed, or, it may be, an inclination to beg, having brought these ten as nigh to the public road as they were permitted to come, they espied Jesus, and cried to him, beseeching him to take pity on them, and cure them. They had heard of some of the great miracles which he had per-

formed, and either knew him personally, having seen him before, or guessed that it might be he by the crowds which followed him. *And he said, Go show yourselves to the priests*—Intimating that the cure they desired should be performed by the way. *And as they went*—In obedience to his word; *they were cleansed*—Namely, by his wonder-working power; the efficacy of which was often exerted on objects at a distance, as well as on such as were near.

there met him ten men that were A. M. 4037 lepers, ^h which stood afar off: A. D. 33.

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, ⁱGo show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to

* Fourteenth: Sunday after Trinity, gospel, verse 11 to verse 20. ^h Luke ix. 51, 52; John iv. 4.—ⁱ Lev. xiii. 46.—^j Lev. xiii. 2; xiv. 2; Matt. viii. 4; Chap. ¶ 14.

formed, and either knew him personally, having seen him before, or guessed that it might be he by the crowds which followed him. *And he said, Go show yourselves to the priests*—Intimating that the cure they desired should be performed by the way. *And as they went*—In obedience to his word; *they were cleansed*—Namely, by his wonder-working power; the efficacy of which was often exerted on objects at a distance, as well as on such as were near.

Verses 15–19. *And one of them, when he saw that he was healed*—Was so affected, that, with a heart full of gratitude and joy, he immediately *turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God*—Made a free and open acknowledgment of the signal mercy which he had received. Though he had kept at a distance from Jesus before, yet being sensible that he was now perfectly clean, he came near, that all might have an opportunity of beholding the miracles; *and fell down on his face at his feet*—In the deepest humiliation, giving him thanks as the immediate author of his cure; and yet this man *was a Samaritan*—One of that heretical nation, from which one would have expected less of any thing good than from the Jews, the professors of the true religion, and members of God's visible church. Therefore, to make known the good disposition of the man, though he professed a false religion, and to intimate that the others, who had been more favoured with external privileges and advantages, ought to have showed as great a sense of piety and gratitude as he; *Jesus said, Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?*—Why did they not return to give thanks? This intimates that ingratitude is a very common sin; of the many that receive mercy from God, there are but few, very few, that return to give thanks in a right manner; that render according to the benefits done unto them. *There are not found to give glory to God, save this stranger*—*Ο αλλογενης υιος, this alien*—Such, ever since the

A. M. 4037. give glory to God, save this stranger.
A. D. 33.

19 ^k And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

20 ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The king-

^k Matt. ix. 22; Mark v. 34; x. 52; Chap. vii. 50; viii. 48; xviii. 42.—^l Or, with outward show.

dom of God cometh not ¹ with observation. They call them *Cuthites* to this day. Thus many, who profess revealed religion, are undone and quite shamed by some that are governed only by natural religion, and that not only in moral virtue, but in piety and devotion. "The ingratitude of these Jewish lepers, now cured, will appear monstrous, if we consider that the malady from which they were delivered is in itself one of the most loathsome diseases incident to human nature, and a disease which, by the law of Moses, subjected them to greater hardships than any distemper whatsoever. But though the cure of this dreadful affliction was produced without the smallest pain or even trouble to the lepers, and so speedily that it was completed by the time they had got a little way off, as appears by the Samaritan's finding Jesus where he left him, these Jews would not give themselves the trouble of returning to glorify God, by making the miracle public, nor to honour Jesus, by acknowledging the favour. Such were the people that gloried in their being *holy*, and insolently called the men of all other nations *dogs*. But their hypocrisy and presumption received a severe reprimand on this occasion. For our Lord, in his observations on their behaviour, plainly declared, that the outward profession of any religion, however true and excellent that religion may be in itself, is of no value before God in comparison of piety and inward holy dispositions."—Macknight.

Verses 20, 21. *When he was demanded of the Pharisees*—It is uncertain whether what is here mentioned took place while our Lord was on his journey, or after he came to Jerusalem; *when the kingdom of God should come*—That is, when the kingdom of the Messiah, which they had learned to term *the kingdom of God*, was to commence? They had very grand notions of the extent of the Messiah's kingdom, of the number of his subjects, the strength of his armies, the pomp and eclat of his court, and were eager to hear of its being speedily erected. Or, being inveterate enemies of Christ, they might possibly ask the question in derision, because every thing about Jesus was very unlike to the Messiah whom they expected. *He answered, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation*—With such outward pomp as draws the observation of mankind: or, as Dr. Whitby explains the expression, not with that royal splendour or worldly grandeur which shall render it conspicuous in the eyes of the world, as you expect. *Neither shall they say, Lo here, or, Lo there*—This shall not be the language

dom of God cometh not ¹ with observation. A. M. 4037. A. D. 33.

21 ¹ Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, ² the kingdom of God is ² within you.

22 ¶ And he said unto the disciples, ³ The days will come, when ye shall desire to see

¹ Verse 23.—² Rom. xiv. 17.—³ Or, among you; John i. 26. ⁴ Matt. ix. 15; John xvii. 12.

of those who are, or shall be, sent by me to declare the coming of my kingdom, nor shall men seek for it in this or that place, saying, Lo, it is here, or, Lo, it is there; *for behold, the kingdom of God is within you*—It is an internal, spiritual kingdom; erected in the hearts of men, consisting in the subjection of their wills to the will of God, and in the conformity of their minds to his laws. Wherever it exists, it exists in men's hearts. See Rom. xiv. 17. Or, as our Lord was addressing the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, and cannot be understood as speaking of the power his kingdom had gained over their hearts, whose temper was entirely alienated from the nature and design of it; the clause, perhaps, ought rather to be rendered, *The kingdom of God is among you*. Thus Beza, Raphelius, Whitby, Doddridge, and many others understand it: namely, as signifying that the Messiah's kingdom began now to appear among them, the gospel of the kingdom being now preached, miracles, in confirmation of it, being wrought, and the grace of God, which accompanied it, turning many sinners from the evil of their ways, and transforming them into the divine image. Thus Grotius paraphrases the passage, "*Already among you*," that is, "among this very Jewish people, that kingdom begins to exert its power; you not observing it, and an evident sign of this are miracles. Accordingly, Matt. xii. 28, Christ speaks to the same Pharisees after this manner: *If I, by the finger of God, cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come nigh unto you; or rather, come upon, or among you*, (as ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, properly means,) where, by the word *you*, the whole Jewish people are in like manner intended." See also Matt. xxi. 43, where our Lord says, *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you*.

Verses 22–25. *The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man*—One day of mercy, or one day wherein you might converse with me, as you do now. Having spoken to the Pharisees, he now addressed his disciples, and in the hearing of the Pharisees prophesied concerning the destruction of the Jewish state, whose constitution, both religious and civil, was the chief obstacle to the erection of his kingdom; for the attachment which the Jews had to their constitution was the spring of all their opposition to Christianity, and of their cruelty to its abettors. A prediction of this nature, delivered as the continuation of his answer to the Pharisees, who desired to know when Messiah's kingdom should come, plainly signified, that it would first become conspicuous in the destruction

A. M. 4037. one of the days of the Son of man,
A. D. 33. and ye shall not see it.

23 ° And they shall say to you, See here! or, See there! go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

24 ° For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25 ° But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26 ° And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 ° Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot: they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

° Matt. xxiv. 23; Mark xiii. 21; Chap. xxi. 8.—° Matt. xxiv. 27.—° Mark viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 33; Chap. ix. 22.—° Gen. vii.; Matt. xxiv. 37.—° Gen. xix.—° Gen. xix. 16, 24. ° 2 Thess. i. 7.—° Matt. xxiv. 17; Mark xiii. 15.

of the Jewish commonwealth. But because love and compassion were eminent parts of our Lord's character, he spake of that dreadful catastrophe in such a manner as might be most profitable to his hearers. He told them, first of all, that they and the whole nation should be in the greatest distress before the destruction of their constitution, and the full establishment of Messiah's kingdom; and that they should passionately wish for Messiah's personal presence to comfort them under their afflictions, but should not be favoured with it. Next he cautioned them against the deceivers which, in that time of universal distress, would arise, pretending to be the Messiah, and promising to deliver the people from the powers which oppressed them. He told them, that these deceivers would lurk a while in private, till, by the diligence of their emissaries spreading abroad their fame, and exhorting the people to go out to them, they had gathered a force sufficient to support them. *They shall say to you, See here, or see there; go not after them*—Do not go forth to them, nor follow them, for by this mark you shall know them to be deceivers. *For as the lightning, &c., shall the Son of man be in his day*—So manifest, so swift, so wide, so irresistible, so awful in its consequences shall his coming be. He shall come, indeed, but in a manner very different from that in which the generality of this people expect him, even to execute a sudden and unavoidable destruction upon his enemies, and establish his religion and government in a great part of the world. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 23-27. *But first he must suffer many things*—See on Matt. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 33.

29 But 'the same day that Lot A. M. 4037. went out of Sodom, it rained fire A. D. 33. and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all:

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man ° is revealed.

31 In that day, he ° which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 ° Remember Lot's wife.

33 ° Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life, shall preserve it.

34 ° I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 ° Two *men* shall be in the field; the one

° Gen. xix. 26.—° Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35; Chap. ix. 24; John xii. 25.—° Matt. xxiv. 40, 41; 1 Thess. iv. 17.—° This 36th verse is wanting in most of the Greek copies.

Verses 26-30. *As it was in the days of Noe, &c.*—In the next place, he foretold the stupidity of the generation he should come to destroy, comparing it to that of the old world, about the time of the flood; who, being wholly unaffected with the admonitions which Noah gave them, while building the ark, and with the threatenings which he then denounced, went on as usual, following their ordinary occupations, and pursuing their pleasures, both lawful and unlawful, in great security. The consequence of which was, that, ere they were aware, the flood came and destroyed them all. See on Matt. xxiv. 37, 39. *Likewise, as it was in the days of Lot*—The Jewish people shall be sunk in carnal security at the coming of the Son of man to execute judgment upon them, as the Sodomites were, when they were unexpectedly destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven.

Verses 31, 32. *In that day*—(Which will be the grand type of the last day,) when ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies; *he which shall be upon the house-top, let him not come down*—See on Matt. xxiv. 17, 18; Mark xiii. 15. *Remember Lot's wife*—And escape with all speed, without ever looking behind you. See note on Gen. xix. 26.

Verses 33-37. *Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it*—The sense of this and the following verses is, Yet, as great as the danger will be, do not seek to save your lives by violating your consciences; if you do, you will surely lose them; whereas, if you should lose them for my sake, you shall be repaid with life everlasting. But the most probable way of preserving them now is to be always ready to give them up: a peculiar providence

A. M. 4037. shall be taken, and the other
A. D. 33. left.

37 And they answered and said unto him,

^b Job xxxix.

shall then watch over you, and put a difference between you and other men. *Two men shall be in one bed, &c.*—See on Matt. xxiv. 40, 41. The minds of your enemies shall be so overruled by God, that, in cases where two persons are equally in their power, one of them shall be carried off, and the other left to make his escape. *And they said, Where, Lord, shall all these things happen? And he said, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered*—As eagles find out, and gather round a carcass, so, wherever wicked men are, the judgments

^b Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

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30; Matt. xxiv. 28.

of God will pursue them; and particularly in whatever part of the land any number of the unbelieving Jews are, there will the Romans, the executioners of the divine vengeance upon this nation, be gathered together to destroy them. The expression is proverbial, and will appear to have been beautifully applied, when it is remembered, that the Romans bore in their standards the figure of an eagle; and that a certain kind of eagle, called *περκοπτερον*, [*black winged*] mentioned by Aristotle, *Hist. Ani.* ix. 32, is found to feed on carcasses.—Macknight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

- (1.) Christ presses his disciples to fervency and perseverance in prayer, by the parable of the importunate widow, 1–8 (2.) He recommends humility, and humiliation on account of sin, by the parable of the Pharisee and publican, 9–14. (3.) He encourages those who brought little children to him, whom his disciples had rebuked, 15–17. (4.) He tries and discovers the insincerity of the self-righteous ruler, 18–23. (5.) He takes occasion from hence of cautioning his disciples concerning the danger of riches, and promises a great reward to those who forsake all for the kingdom of God's sake, 24–30. (6.) He foretels his own sufferings, death, and resurrection, 31–34. (7.) Cures a blind beggar near Jericho, 35–43.

A. M. 4037. **AND** he spake a parable unto
A. D. 33. them to this end, that men

ought ^a always to pray, and not to faint;

A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

^a Chap. xi. 5; xxi. 36; Rom. xii. 12;

Eph. vi. 18; Col. iv. 2; 1 Thess. v. 17.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

Verse 1. *And he spake, &c.*—*Ελεγε δε και παραβολην αυτοις.* He also spake a parable to them. The particle *δε*, here used, plainly implies, that this parable has a relation to the preceding discourse, of which indeed it is a continuation, but which is improperly interrupted by the division of the chapters. There is in it, and in the following parable, a particular reference to the distress and trouble they were soon to meet with from their persecutors, which would render the duties of prayer, patience, and perseverance peculiarly seasonable. *That men ought always to pray*—At all times, on all occasions, or frequently, (as the word *παντοτε*, here rendered *always*, signifies, John xviii. 20,) and *not to faint*—Under their trials, not to *despond*, or *yield to evils*, as *εκακειν*, here used, signifies, so as to be wearied out by them, and cease from prayer, as unavailing to procure relief. It frequently happens, that after men have prayed for any particular blessing, they desist, because God does not immediately grant them their petition. To show the evil of this, and to recommend importunity and perseverance in prayer

especially when we are in pursuit of any spiritual mercy or mercies, relating either to ourselves, our friends, or the church of God, the present parable is introduced. As delivered on this occasion, it seems to have been principally designed to inspire the disciples with earnestness and perseverance in their prayers for the coming of the Son of man to destroy the Jewish constitution, notwithstanding God should long defer the accomplishment of their desire. For this event is represented, not only here, but in several other passages of Scripture, as a thing exceedingly to be wished for in those days. The reason was, the Jews in every country were their bitterest persecutors, and the chief opposers of Christianity. See chap. xxi. 28; Heb. x. 25; James v. 7; 1 Pet. iv. 7. Independent of this, however, in the course of his ministry, our Lord often recommended frequency, earnestness, and perseverance in prayer, not because God is, or can be, ever tired out with our importunity; but because it is both an expression and exercise of our firm belief of, and confidence in, his power and goodness, without which it would not be fit for God to bestow his blessings upon us, not

A. M. 4037. 2 Saying, There was ¹ in a city
A. D. 33. a judge, which feared not God, nei-
ther regarded man.

3 And there was a widow in that city ;
and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of
mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while : but after-
ward he said within himself, Though I fear
not God, nor regard man ;

5 ^b Yet, because this widow troubleth me, I

¹ Gr. in a certain city. — ^b Chap. xi. 8.

would we be capable of receiving and using them.
See on Matt. vii. 7-11 ; Luke xi. 5-8. Of continual
praying, see on 1 Thess. v. 17.

Verses 2-5. *There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, &c.*—This magistrate, being governed by atheistical principles, had no inducement from religion to do justice ; at the same time, being very powerful, he did not regard what men said or thought of him ; wherefore, in all his decisions, he was influenced merely by passion or interest. *And there was a widow, &c., and she came, saying, Avenge me of, or rather, as εκδικησον με means, do me justice on, mine adversary*—The word properly signifies, to judge a cause, and defend the injured judicially from the injurious person. The English word *avenge*, therefore, does not exactly hit the sense here intended, although, as Dr. Campbell observes, in the application of the parable, verse 7, it answers better than any other term. This widow, having no friends to assist her, could neither defend herself from injuries, nor obtain satisfaction for them when committed ; hence, in an instance where she was greatly oppressed, she found herself obliged to petition the judge for redress. *This he would not grant for a while*—He was so addicted to his pleasures, and of so indolent a disposition, that he would not put himself to the trouble of even examining her cause, notwithstanding that the grievous injustice which had been done to her pleaded powerfully in her behalf. *But afterwards he said*—Or thought within himself ; *Though I fear not God*—And therefore will not do this widow justice through the influence of any dread I have of his displeasure ; *nor regard man*—Nor fear being called to an account for my neglect by any superior among men. *Yet, because this widow troubleth me*—With the repeated representations of her case ; *I will avenge her*—I will do her justice ; *lest by her continual coming she weary me*—“ The word *παραταλαινω με*, properly signifies, to beat on the face, and particularly under the eye, and hence to beat in general, as 1 Cor. ix. 27. In this passage it has a metaphorical meaning, and here signifies to give great pain, such as arises from severe beating. The sense of the clause, therefore, is, that the uneasy feelings which this widow raised in the judge’s breast, by the moving representations which she gave him of her distress, affected him to such a degree that he could not bear it, and therefore, to be rid of those feelings, he resolved to do her justice.

will avenge her, lest by her continu- A. M. 4037.
al coming she weary me. A. D. 33.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust
judge saith.

7 And ^o shall not God avenge his own elect,
which cry day and night unto him, though he
bear long with them ?

8 I tell you ^d that he will avenge them speed-
ily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man com-
eth, shall he find faith on the earth ?

^c Rev. vi. 10.—^d Heb. x. 37 ; 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

The passage, understood in this sense, has a peculiar advantage, as it throws a beautiful light on our Lord’s argument, verses 6, 7, and lays a proper foundation for the conclusion which it contains.”

Verses 6-8. *And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith*—“ If the repeated, importunate cries of the afflicted do at length make an impression on the hearts even of men so wicked as to glory in their impiety, injustice, and barbarity, they will much more be regarded by God, most gracious, who is ever ready to bestow his choicest blessings, when he sees his creatures fit to receive them. Arguments of this kind, taken from the feeling goodness, or even from the imperfections of men, to illustrate the superior and infinite perfections of God, were often made use of by Jesus, and with great success, in working the conviction designed. Such appeals force their way directly into men’s hearts, bear down all opposition, and make a lasting impression.” *And shall not God avenge his own elect, &c.*—So the true disciples of Christ are continually termed in the New Testament, being chosen of God to be his peculiar people instead of the Jews, whom he rejected because they rejected Christ : *who cry to him day and night*—A just description this of God’s real people ; *though he bear long with them*—Though God may bear long with the wicked, and seem deaf to the cries which his people send up to his throne day and night for deliverance, the just view which he has of their affliction will, in due time, move him to punish severely their enemies. Though this was spoken, as has been intimated above, with a particular reference to the destruction of the Jews, described in the preceding prophecy, yet the sentiment expressed is applicable to all cases in which God’s people are oppressed by their enemies. *I tell you, he will avenge them speedily*—“ Or rather, suddenly ; for so εν ταχει may signify. Besides, Scripture and experience teach us, that in most cases punishment is not speedily executed against the evil works of evil men ; but that when the divine patience ends, oftentimes destruction overtaketh the wicked as a whirlwind, and by its suddenness becomes the more heavy.” To understand the passage thus, “ removes the seeming opposition between this clause and the end of the precedent verse, the reconciling of which has given rise to several strained criticisms, and probably to the various readings found there ; not to mention,

A. M. 4037. 9 ¶* And he spake this parable unto
A. D. 33. certain * which trusted in themselves
² that they were righteous, and despised others :
10 Two men went up into the temple to
pray ; the one a Pharisee, and the other a
publican.

* Eleventh Sunday after Trinity, gospel; verse 9 to verse 15.
² Chap. x. 29; xvi. 15.

that it agrees exactly with the subject in hand, the destruction of the Jewish nation having been represented by our Lord in this very discourse, as what would be exceeding sudden and heavy. See chap. xvii. 24.—Macknight. Thus also Dr. Doddridge : “ It is plain God might *wait long*, and yet at length execute a speedy and sudden vengeance. Compare Psa. lxxiii. 19; Hab. ii. 3; and especially Ecclus. xxxv. 18; to which Grotius supposes there is an allusion here.” Several other interpretations of the passage have been proposed, but none of them appear to be so probable as this, nor to be justified by the text. *When the Son of man cometh*—Namely, to execute judgment on the Jewish nation; *shall he find faith on the earth?*—Or rather, *in the land*; namely, the land of Judea; the word *γη* often signifying, not the earth in general, but some particular land, or country, as in Acts vii. 3, 4, 11, and in numberless other places. The believing Hebrews were evidently in great danger of being wearied out with their persecutions and distresses. Or, by *faith* here may be meant the belief of the particular truth which Christ had been inculcating, namely, that God would, in due time, avenge his elect, and signally punish their oppressors; and the question may imply, that when Christ should come for that purpose, faith in his coming would be in a great measure lost. Accordingly, it appears from 2 Pet. iii. 4, that many infidels and apostates scoffed at the expectation of Christ’s coming, which the godly in those days cherished.

Verses 9, 10. *And he spake this parable*—Having in the preceding parable guarded his disciples against faintness and weariness in prayer, he here guards them against the contrary extreme of self-confidence: *unto certain*—For the conviction of certain persons in his train; *who trusted in themselves that they were righteous*—Who had a high opinion of their own piety, and on that account despised others as greatly inferior to them, both in holiness and in the favour of God. Observe, reader, these persons were, properly speaking, not hypocrites: the Pharisee here mentioned was evidently not a hypocrite, any more than he was an outward adulterer; but, mistaking his real state and character, he sincerely believed himself to be righteous, and accordingly told God so in the prayer which none but God heard. *Two men went up into the temple to pray*—It seems it was not the hour of public prayer, but they went thither to offer up their personal devotions, as was usual with pious people at that time, when the temple was not only the place, but the medium of worship; God having promised,

11 The Pharisee ¹ stood and prayed A. M. 4037
thus with himself, ² God, I thank thee, A. D. 33.
that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners,
unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all
that I possess.

¹ Or, *as being righteous*.—Psa. cxxxv. 2.—Isa. i. 15;
lviii. 2; Rev. iii. 17.

in answer to Solomon’s request, that whatever prayer should be offered in a right manner in, or toward that house, it should, therefore, the rather be accepted. Christ is our temple, and to him we must have an eye in all our approaches to God. *One a Pharisee*—As if he had said, One of that sect so honoured among them; *and the other a publican*—Whom they were used to number with the most contemptible of mankind.

Verses 11, 12. *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself*—The original clause, *καθεις προς εαυτον ταυτα προσηνετο*, it seems, should rather be rendered, *standing by himself prayed these things*. Read thus, it is characteristic of the sect, who always affected to dread pollution from the touch of those whom they considered as their inferiors in piety. Thus this Pharisee kept himself at as great a distance as he could from the miserable sinner who had entered the temple with him, as if he feared being defiled by coming near him, or any other person less holy than himself. *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men*—That is, not as the generality of my countrymen; *extortioners*, (*απαγωγες*, *rapacious*;) *unjust, adulterers*—Such are they, but I thank God I am not like them: *or even as this publican*—A great many good things he here says of himself, which we may suppose to be true. 1st, He was free from gross and scandalous sins. He was not an extortioner, not a usurer, nor an oppressor to his debtors or tenants, but equitable and kind to all dependant upon him: and not rapacious, seizing other men’s property under false pretences. He was not unjust in any of his dealings, did no wrong to any man; did not take advantage of any man’s ignorance, want of experience, or necessity, in buying or selling. He was not an adulterer, but had possessed his vessel in sanctification and honour. 2d, He attended the ordinances of God, and used all the means of grace, and not only those that were most commonly used, such as reading the word of God and prayer, but even fasting; yea, he *fasted twice in the week*, and that partly as an act of temperance, and partly as a help to devotion. This the Pharisees and their disciples were wont to do, keeping two private fasts every week, namely, on Mondays and Thursdays, as the primitive Christians did on Wednesdays and Fridays. Thus he glorified God with his body. Yet this was not all, for, 3d, *He gave tithes of all that he possessed*, according to the law, and so glorified God with his property. Many of the Pharisees were wont to give one full tenth of their income to the house and worship of God, and another tenth in alms to the poor. **The**

A. M. 4037. 13 And the publican, standing
A. D. 33. afar off, would not lift up so much
as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon
his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a
sinner.

^h Job xxii. 29; Matt. xxiii. 12;

sum of this plea is, I do no harm; I use all the means of grace; and I do all the good in my power. This was his righteousness, and of this righteousness, it must be observed, he gives God the glory, at least in appearance, ascribing it not to himself but to God, for he says, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men, &c.*—And yet this Pharisee, notwithstanding all this, was not in a state of acceptance with God, but in a state of guilt, condemnation, and wrath. And what then will become of many professing Christians, who are so far from going beyond this Pharisee in any of these branches of righteousness, that they fall far short of him in every one of them. But why was not this Pharisee accepted of God? 1st, Because he trusted in this righteousness, (which, after all, was very imperfect,) not being acquainted with himself, nor knowing how far he came short of the glory of God, and how he was involved in sin and guilt. Hence he was not humbled before God, nor brought to experience that true repentance toward him, without which there is no forgiveness. 2d, Because he evidently thought highly of himself; nay, and boasted of his fancied righteousness, dwelling upon it with delight, even in his prayers; as if all his business at the temple had been to tell God Almighty how good he was. He went up to the temple indeed to pray, but, it appears, forgot his errand: for in what he said there is not one word of prayer: he was so full of himself, and his own goodness, that he thought he had need of nothing, no, not of the favour and grace of God. 3d, His giving God thanks for his righteousness, although, if it had been done in a proper spirit, it would have been a good thing, yet in him seems to have been a mere piece of formality, savouring of pride; and being, properly speaking, a praising of himself rather than of God; and such a praising of himself as implied the highest contempt of others, and particularly of his fellow-worshipper, the publican.

Verses 13, 14. *And the publican, standing afar off*—1st, Under a sense of his being unworthy to be permitted to draw near to God, or to go up among his people into the court of Israel, though probably a Jew, he stood at a distance, in the court of the Gentiles, probably without the stone wall, termed by the apostle, *the middle wall of partition*, which Gentiles and unclean Israelites were not permitted to pass. Or, if it seem more probable, from the Pharisee's mentioning him in his prayer, that he was in the same court with him, and within his view, as Salmasius thinks, then, his standing afar off implies, that he came no farther than the gate, being so self-abased that he would not go near the Pharisee, whom he esteemed much more holy than

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14 I tell you, this man went down A. M. 4037.
to his house justified rather than the A. D. 33.
other: ^h for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Chap. xiv. 11; James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

himself. Thus he owned that God might justly behold him afar off, and send him into a state of eternal distance from him, and that it was a great favour that God was pleased to admit him thus nigh. 2d, Standing thus at a distance, he *would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven*—Much less his hands, as was usual in prayer. He lifted up his heart indeed to God in holy desires; but, through shame and humiliation, did not lift up his eyes in holy confidence and courage. His iniquities were gone over his head as a heavy burden, so that he was not able to look up; and his downcast looks were an indication of the dejection of his mind at the thoughts of his sinfulness and guilt. 3d, *He smote upon his breast*—In a holy indignation at himself for sin. “The sinner’s heart first smites him in a penitent rebuke, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10; and then he smites his heart with penitent remorse.”—Henry. 4th, His address to God was the very reverse of that of the Pharisee: as full of humility and humiliation, as the Pharisee’s was of pride and ostentation; as full of repentance for sin, and desire toward God, as his was of confidence in himself and his own righteousness and sufficiency. This prayer of the publican was short; fear and shame hindered him from saying much, sighs and groans swallowed up his words: but what he said was to the purpose, *God be merciful to me a sinner*—Observe, reader, 1st, He owns himself to be a sinner, and guilty before God, which the Pharisee did not, but spoke as if he were pure from sin. 2d, He has no dependance but upon the mercy of God. The Pharisee had insisted upon the merit of his unblameable conduct, his fastings and tithes; but the poor publican disclaims all thought of merit, and flees to mercy as his city of refuge. 3d, He earnestly prays for the benefit of that mercy, *O God, be merciful, be propitious, to me*, forgive my sins; be reconciled to me, and receive me graciously. And blessed be God that we have his prayer on record as a prayer answered. Our Lord Jesus, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secret is hid, who is perfectly acquainted with all proceedings in the court of heaven, assures us that this poor, broken-hearted penitent *went to his house justified rather than the other*—And so shall we, if we pray for the same blessing in the same spirit of penitence, humility, and fervour, through Jesus Christ. The Pharisee, doubtless, thought if one of them must be justified, and not the other, certainly it must be he rather than the publican. But Christ affirms the contrary: *I tell you*, says he, with the utmost assurance, and declare it to you as a most momentous and interesting truth, which it concerns you all to believe and lay

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A. M. 4037. 15 ¶¹ And they brought unto him also
A. D. 33.

infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for ^k of such is the kingdom of God.

17 ^l Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.

18 ¶^m And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is God.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, ⁿ Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, ^o Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: ^p sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the

¹ Matt. xix. 13; Mark x. 13.—^k 1 Cor. xiv. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 2.
^l Mark x. 15.—^m Matt. xix. 16; Mark x. 17.—ⁿ Ex. xx. 12, 16; Deut. v. 16-20; Rom. xiii. 9.—^o Eph. vi. 2; Col. iii. 20.
^p Matt. vi. 19, 20; xix. 21; 1 Tim. vi. 19.—^q Prov. xi.

to heart, that this publican was justified, and not the Pharisee. The self-righteous Pharisee goes away rejected, his sins are not pardoned, nor is he delivered from condemnation; but the publican, upon his penitent and humble address, obtains what he asked; and him, whom the Pharisee would not have set with the dogs of his flock, God sets with the children of his family! Christ, having finished the parable, made an application of it to the persons for whose sake chiefly it was delivered, by repeating his favourite and well-known maxim, *He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* See on Matt. xxiii. 12.

Upon the whole, "this parable teaches us several important lessons: as, that the generality of men are great strangers to themselves, and ignorant of their own characters; that they oftentimes thank God in words, while their hearts are by no means penetrated with a due sense of them; that a man may be very ready to censure others, without ever forming a thought of reforming himself; and that, in a certain sense, we may be clear of open and scandalous sins, while we are full of inward spiritual wickedness, pride, envy, malice, and hypocrisy. To conclude: by propounding this parable immediately after that of the importunate widow, our Lord has taught us, that although our prayers must be very earnest and frequent, they should always be accom-

poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. A. M. 4037
A. D. 33.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

24 ¶ And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, ^q How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard it, said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, ^r The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.

28 ¶ ^s Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, ^t There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 ^u Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

31 ¶ ^v Then he took unto him the twelve,

28; Matt. xix. 23; Mark x. 23.—^r Jer. xxxii. 17; Zech. viii. 6; Matt. xix. 26; Ch. i. 37.—^s Matt. xix. 27.—^t Deut. xxxiii. 9.—^u Job xlii. 10.—^v *Quinquagesima Sunday, gospel, verse 31 to the end.*—^w Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 22; xx. 17; Mark x. 32.

panied with the deepest humility; because no disposition of mind is more proper for such weak and frail beings as men to appear with before the great God, than an absolute self-abasement."—Macknight.

Verses 15-17. *They brought unto him infants, &c.*—The contents of these verses we had Matt. xix. 13-15; Mark x. 13-16; where see the notes. The passage very fitly follows the story of the publican, as a confirmation of the truth which was to be illustrated by that parable, that those shall be accepted with God and honoured, who humble themselves, and that Christ has in store for them the choicest and best blessings.

Verses 18-30. *And a certain ruler*—The following account is given us both by Matthew and Mark; from whom we learn, that he was a young man, and very rich: but only Luke informs us that he was a ruler, or magistrate. For an explanation at large of this whole paragraph, see notes on Matt. xix. 16-30; Mark x. 17-27. *Yet lackest thou one thing*—Namely, to love God more than mammon. Our Saviour knew his heart, and presently put him upon a trial which laid it open to the ruler himself. And to cure his love of the world, which could not in him be cured otherwise, Christ commanded him to sell all that he had. But he does not command us to do this; but to use all to the glory of God.

Verses 31-34. *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, &c.*

A. M. 4037. and said unto them, Behold, we go
A. D. 33. up to Jerusalem, and all things ^v that
are written by the prophets concerning the
Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For ^a he shall be delivered unto the Gen-
tiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully en-
treated, and spitted on ;

33 And they shall scourge *him*, and put him
to death : and the third day he shall rise again.

34 ^a And they understood none of these
things : and this saying was hid from them, nei-
ther knew they the things which were spoken.

35 ¶ ^b And it came to pass, that as he was
come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man
sat by the way-side begging ;

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he
asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Naza-
reth passeth by.

^v Psa. xxii ; Isa. liii. — ^a Matt. xxvii. 2 ; Chap. xxiii. 1 ; John
xviii. 28 ; Acts iii. 13. — ^b Mark ix. 32 ; Chap. ii. 50 ; ix. 45 ;

—See notes on Matt. xxii. 17–19 ; Mark x. 32–34.
They understood none of these things—They could
not but understand the literal meaning of what our
Lord said. But as they could not reconcile this to
their preconceived opinion of the Messiah's king-
dom, they were utterly at a loss in what parabolical,

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, A. M. 4037.
thou son of David, have mercy on A. D. 33.
me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him,
that he should hold his peace : but he cried so
much the more, *Thou* son of David, have mercy
on me.

40 And Jesus stood and commanded him to
be brought unto him : and when he was come
near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do
unto thee ? And he said, Lord, that I may re-
ceive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy
sight : ^a thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight,
and followed him, ^d glorifying God : and all
the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto
God.

John x. 6 ; xii. 16. — ^b Matt. xx. 29 ; Mark x. 46. — ^c Chap.
xvii. 19. — ^d Chap. v. 26 ; Acts iv. 21 ; xi. 18.

or figurative sense to take what he said concern-
ing his sufferings ; having their thoughts still taken
up with the temporal kingdom.

Verses 35–43. *A certain blind man, &c.*—Of the
miracle here recorded, see on Matt. xx. 29–34 ; Mark
x. 46–52

CHAPTER XIX.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The conversion of Zaccheus, 1–10. (2.) The parable of the pounds committed by a prince to his servants ; and of the vengeance taken by him on his rebellious subjects, 11–27. (3.) Christ's riding in triumph into Jerusalem ; and his lamentation in prospect of the ruin of that city, 28–44. (4.) His teaching in the temple, and casting the buyers and sellers out of it, 45–48

A. M. 4037. **AND** Jesus entered and passed
A. D. 33. through Jericho.

2 And behold, *there was* a man named Zac-

cheus, which was the chief among A. M. 4037.
the publicans, and he was rich. A. D. 33.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was ;

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIX.

Verses 1, 2. *Jesus entered and passed through Jericho*—Namely, after performing the miracle recorded at the close of the preceding chapter. He was now on his way from the other side Jordan to Bethany, near Jerusalem, to which place he hastened, with a view to be there eight or ten days before the passover, intending to preach and work miracles in the most public manner, under the eye of all the people, and of the grandees, of whose resentment he was no longer afraid, because his mi-

nistry had continued the appointed time, and he was determined to die at this passover. *There was a certain man named Zaccheus, chief among the publicans*—One of the principal tax-gatherers, or head-collector, or perhaps what we would term the commissioner of the customs. *And he was rich*—Having heaped up abundance of wealth by his gainful employment.

Verses 3, 4. *And he sought to see Jesus*—The great things which he had heard of Jesus made such a powerful impression on his mind, that when he

A. M. 4037. and could not for the press, because
A. D. 33. he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down :

* Matt. ix. 11 ;

was informed he was coming that way, he diligently sought an opportunity to see what sort of a person he was; and could not for the press—Could not compass his design, Jesus being now surrounded by a prodigious multitude of people, and Zaccheus himself being little of stature. The passover being near at hand, the roads to Jerusalem were full of people, many of whom, happening to meet with Jesus, chose to travel in his company, that they might behold his miracles. And he ran before—With great earnestness; and climbed up, &c.—Notwithstanding his quality; desire conquering honour and shame. Zaccheus, it seems, was in Jericho when Jesus passed through, though his house was farther on the road to Jerusalem. This accounts for his running before the multitude on this occasion. His desire to see Jesus was, no doubt, increased by the account which he had received in Jericho, of the miracle performed on the blind beggars; for the news of so extraordinary a transaction would be quickly spread abroad.

Verses 5-8. And when Jesus came to the place he looked up, into the tree, and saw him—Zaccheus came to look upon Christ, and resolved to take particular notice of him, but little thought of being noticed by Christ. That was an honour too great, and too far above his merit, for him to have any thought of. Observe, reader, how Christ prevented him with the blessings of his goodness, and outdid his expectations; and see how he encourages very weak beginnings, and helps them forward. He that desires to know Christ shall be known of him: he that only desires to see him, shall be admitted to converse with him. And said, Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day, &c.—Jesus had never seen him before, yet he called him by his name, and by what he said intimated that he knew his house was farther on the road. What a strange mixture of passions must Zaccheus have now felt, hearing one speak as knowing both his name and his heart. Zaccheus might ask, as Nathaniel did, (John i. 48.) Whence knowest thou me? But before he climbed the sycamore-tree, Christ saw him and knew him. And he made haste, &c., and received him joyfully—Overjoyed to have such an honour put upon him and his family. And his receiving him into his house was an indication of his receiving him into his heart. And when they saw it—When the multitude saw him enter the house of Zaccheus; they all murmured—Were very much offended at the particular regard that Jesus showed him; say-

for to-day I must abide at thy house. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, ' That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the

Chap. v. 30.

ing, he was gone to be a guest, παρα αμαρτωλω ανδρι, with a sinful man—And were not they themselves sinful men? and was it not Christ's errand into the world to seek and save sinful men? But they seem to have thought that Zaccheus was a sinner above all men that dwelt in Jericho; such a sinner as was not fit to be conversed with. He, however, soon gave proof, that though he had been a sinner, he was now a penitent, and a true convert. Zaccheus stood, and said to the Lord—He makes his declaration standing, not only that he might be seen and heard by those who murmured at Christ for coming to his house; but that he might show by his posture his deliberate purpose and ready mind; and express himself with solemnity, as making a vow to God. Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor—He does not say, I will give it by my will when I die; but I give it now. Though hitherto I have been uncharitable to the poor, now I will relieve them, and give so much the more for having neglected the duty so long. He does not expect to be justified by his works, as the Pharisee did, who boasted of what he had done, but by his good works he purposed, through the grace of God, to evidence the sincerity of his faith and repentance, and he here signifies that this was his purpose. He addresses himself to Christ, in making this declaration, and not to the people, who were not to be his judges: and he stands, as it were, at Christ's bar. The good that we do, we must do as unto him: we must appeal to him, and approve ourselves to him in our integrity, in all our good purposes and resolutions. If I have taken any thing by false accusation—Or by any kind of injurious charges, or oppressive claims, as the word εσυκοφαντησα, according to Heinsius, may very properly signify. He seems to have meant, by any unjust exaction of the taxes. I restore him four-fold—"This was the utmost that the Jewish law required, even in cases of fraudulent concealment and conviction; (unless where an ox had been killed or sold, and so its labour lost to the owner, and the discovery rendered more difficult: Exod. xxii. 1;) for the phrase of restoring seven-fold, (Prov. vi. 31,) seems only proverbial, to express making abundant satisfaction. But if a man, not legally convicted or accused, voluntarily discovered a fraud he had committed, besides his trespass-offering, he was to add to the principal only a fifth part, Lev. vi. 5. Zaccheus therefore shows the sincerity of his repentance by such an offer. Some commentators have remarked, that oppressive pub-

A. M. 4037. Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my
A. D. 33.

goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by ^b false accusation, ^c I restore *him* four-fold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as ^d he also is ^e a son of Abraham.

10 ^f For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

11 ¶ And as they heard these things, he add-

^b Chapter iii. 14.—^c Exodus xxii. 1; 1 Sam. xii. 3; 2 Sam. xii. 6.—^d Romans iv. 11, 12, 16; Galatians iii. 7.—^e Chapter xiii. 16.—^f Matthew xviii. 11; Matthew x. 6; xv. 24.

licans were by the Roman law required to restore four-fold; but this was only after judgment obtained, where they had been guilty of extorting by force; whereas, before conviction, it was enough to make restitution of what had been taken; and even after it, in common cases, all that the law required was restoring twice as much."—Doddridge.

Verses 9, 10. *Jesus said unto him*—Or, concerning *him*, as Dr. Campbell translates the words, observing, "The thing said shows clearly that our Lord spake not to Zaccheus, but to the people concerning him: he being mentioned in the third person in the next clause." *For so much as he also is a son of Abraham*—Notwithstanding all the sins he has committed, it is now manifest that even this man also is a true son of Abraham, and that, not only in respect of his lineal descent from him, but of his faith and holiness. *For the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost*—"Alluding to the parables of the lost sheep, lost money, and lost son, which he had lately delivered, to prove how agreeable it was to reason, to the duties of his mission, and to the will of God, that he should keep company with the worst of sinners, in order to recover them unto God their rightful owner. And therefore, though Zaccheus had been really as bad a man as the multitude took him, and his vocation bespake him to be, Jesus was in the exercise of his duty when he went to lodge with him."

Verse 11. *And as they heard these things*—Namely, that salvation was come to Zaccheus's family; *he added, and spake a parable*—From this we gather, that he spake the parable in Zaccheus's house; *because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and they thought, &c.*—Because his followers were accompanying him to the royal city, in expectation that the kingdom of God would *immediately appear*, and with a resolution to assist him in erecting it, he spake this parable, wherein he showed them their duty, described the true nature of the kingdom of God, and taught them that it was not immediately to appear. "The parable," says Dr. Doddridge, "considered in this view, as suited to the circumstance of time, and to the case of those to whom it was delivered, will appear a most wise and seasonable admonition; and by neglecting the instruction it was designed to give them, the Jews deservedly brought ruin on themselves."

ed and spake a parable, because he ^{A. M. 4037}
was nigh to Jerusalem, and because ^{A. D. 33.}

^g they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

12 ^h He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten ⁱ pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

^g Acts i. 6.—^h Matt. xxv. 14; Mark xiii. 34.—ⁱ *Mina*, here translated a pound, is twelve ounces and a half; which, according to 5s. the ounce, is £3 2s. 6d.

Verse 12. *A certain nobleman*—Or, a certain king's son; *went into a far country to receive a kingdom, &c.*—In order to be confirmed in his father's kingdom, he went into a distant country to do homage unto a more powerful potentate, of whom he held it as a vassal. There is supposed to be an allusion here to a custom which prevailed greatly in our Lord's time among the princes of the East; who, before they ventured to ascend the throne, went to Rome, and solicited the emperor's permission, who disposed of all the tributary kingdoms as he saw fit. Dr. Campbell, instead of, *to receive a kingdom*, reads, *to procure for himself royalty*, observing, "To me it is manifest, that βασιλεια, here, signifies *royalty*, that is, royal power and dignity. For that it was not a different kingdom from that wherein he lived, as the common version implies, is evident from verse 14. It is equally so, that there is in this circumstance an allusion to what was well known to Christ's hearers, the way in which Archelaus, and even Herod himself, had obtained their rank and authority in Judæa, by favour of the Romans. When this reference to the history of the times is kept in view, and βασιλεια understood to denote royal power and dignity, there is not the shadow of a difficulty in the story. In any other explanation, the expounder, in order to remove inconsistencies, is obliged to suppose so many circumstances not related, or even hinted at by the evangelist, that the latter is, to say the least, made to appear a very inaccurate narrator." Whichever interpretation be adopted, the meaning of this part of the parable evidently is, that before Jesus entered upon his mediatorial kingdom, and sat down at the right hand of God in majesty and glory, it was necessary he should die and ascend to heaven; see Phil. ii. 8, 9; Heb. i. 3, 8, 9; from whence he was afterward to return, as it were, that is, to come forth in his justice and power, to punish, first, the unbelieving and obstinate Jews, and afterward, in future ages, the opposers of his gospel, the persecutors of his people, all antichristian powers, and, at the day of final judgment, all the impenitent and unbelieving.

Verse 13. *And he called his ten servants*—This translation implies, he had neither more nor fewer than ten servants, and that they were all called: but Dr. Campbell thinks the original expression, καλεσας δε δεκα δραχμης αυτου, should rather be rendered, *having*

A. M. 4037. 14 ¹ But his citizens hated him, and
A. D. 33. sent a message after him, saying, We
will not have this *man* to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the ² money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

¹ John i. 11.—² Gr. *silver*, and so verse 23.

called *ten of his servants*, and that if the sense had been as given in our translation, the expression must have been, *καλεσας δε τες δεκα δολης αυτου*. And delivered them *ten pounds*—Before he departed he gave each of these servants a sum of money, to be employed in trade, until he should return. The word *μνα*, or *mina*, as it is commonly called, here rendered *pound*, contained sixty shekels, (Ezek. xlv. 12,) and therefore, according to the common calculation of the worth of a shekel, placing it at two shillings sixpence of our money, it was seven pounds ten shillings; but according to Dr. Prideaux, who sets the shekel at three shillings, the *mina* was nine pounds sterling. Our Lord probably chose to mention this small sum, to illustrate the munificence of the master, in bestowing on the faithful servant so great and noble a reward. The impropriety of rendering the word *pound*, must strike every intelligent reader. The original word should have been retained, as it is in the parable of the talents, Matt. xxv. 14, &c., to which parable this is very similar; and the notes on which the reader is desired to consult, for the more perfect elucidation of this. By the *ten servants*, (a certain number being put for an uncertain,) we are to understand; 1st, The apostles and first preachers of the gospel, to whom Jesus gave endowments fitting them for their work, and from whom he expected a due improvement of those endowments in the propagation of the gospel. 2d, Those whom he should call and qualify for the work of the ministry in future ages: and, 3d, All who did or should hereafter profess to receive his gospel, and to be his disciples and servants; conferring upon them the means of grace, encouragements and advantages for improvement in holiness, and gifts and abilities for usefulness to mankind. And *said unto them, Occupy till I come*—Till I return to take an account of the use you have made of what has been intrusted to your management. The spiritual sense is, Use your endowments, gifts, and graces, with all your privileges and advantages, for the good of your fellow-creatures, and the glory of God, till I come to visit the nation; to destroy Jerusalem; to execute judgment on my enemies, and on those of my people in successive ages; to require your souls of you by death, and to judge mankind in the day of final accounts.

Verses 14, 15. *But his citizens hated him*—The natural subjects of this king's son, (see on verse 12,) "hated him without a cause, as appears from the

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, A. M. 4037.
thy pound hath gained ten pounds. A. D. 33.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been ^k faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

^k Matt. xxv. 21; Chap. xvi. 10.

message which they sent to this potentate, from whom he sought what in latter times has been called *investiture*. For in that message they alleged no crime against him. But only expressed their ill-will toward him, by declaring that they would not have him to reign over them. This is a fit representation of the causeless opposition which the Jewish great men made to Jesus. The message which these citizens sent after their prince had no effect; he received the kingdom, and returned with full authority, which he exercised in calling his servants to account, and in punishing his rebellious subjects. So the opposition which the Jews made to our Lord's being made king proved ineffectual. Having, therefore, *all power in heaven and in earth* given unto him, he will return to reckon with his apostles and ministers, and other servants, and especially his rebellious subjects." Nay, he has returned already in more respects than one, and has both punished the Jews and other persecutors of his people, and opposers of his gospel, with most exemplary punishment. *Then he commanded these servants to be called, that he might know how much every man had gained, &c.*—So Jesus, both at the day of men's death, and at the general judgment, will make a strict inquiry into the use and improvement which all his servants, but especially the ministers of his gospel, have made of the talents and opportunities committed to them. See Macknight, and notes on Matt. xxv. 19, &c.

Verses 16–21. *Then came the first*—The modesty of these servants is remarkable. They do not say that they themselves had gained the ten or the five pounds; but that the pound which their lord had intrusted to their management had gained them, attributing their success, not to themselves, but to the gifts of his grace. *And he said, Well done, thou good servant*—The first servant, having been very diligent and successful, was greatly applauded by his Lord, who rewarded him by raising him to a considerable dignity in the kingdom which he had lately received, signified by setting him over ten cities. Thus the faithful apostles, evangelists, and ministers of Christ shall be rewarded with great honour and authority in his kingdom. *And the second came, saying, Thy pound hath gained five pounds*—Having also been both diligent and successful, though in an inferior degree. *And he said to him, Be thou ruler over five cities*—He also was approved, and rewarded accordingly. Thus the least of Christ's

A. M. 4037. 20 And another came, saying, Lord,
A. D. 33. behold *here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin :*

21 ¹For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man : thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he saith unto him, ^aOut of thine

¹ Matt. xxv. 24.—^a 2 Sam. i. 16 ; Job xv. 6 ; Matt. xii. 37.

faithful ministers and servants shall be rewarded with a proportionable share of honour and felicity in his kingdom. "It is observable, that in Matt. xxv. 20-23, where the servants are represented as doubling the different sums intrusted to each, the reward of each is spoken of as the same ; but here the sums intrusted being the same, and the improvement described as different, there is a proportionable difference in the reward : which, as it is a beautiful circumstance, was no doubt intended for our instruction."—Doddridge. *And another came*—Who had been negligent and slothful, *saying, Lord, here is thy pound*—Which was put into my hands ; and *which I have kept laid up in a napkin*—Very carefully, so that it is not at all diminished. *For I feared thee, &c.*—I was apprehensive I might incur thy severity, if any accident should befall this money in trade, therefore I was determined not to venture it out of my hands, and now return it just as I received it. See on Matt. xxv. 24, 25. *Because thou art an austere man : thou takest up that thou layedst not down, &c.*—This is a proverbial description of an unjust, rigorous character. The slothful servant, by impudently applying it to his lord, and assigning it as the true reason why he had not increased his talent as the others had done theirs, aggravated his crime not a little. Thus slothful ministers of religion, and pretended servants of Christ, will be ever ready to throw the blame of their unfaithfulness on God himself.

Verses 22, 23. *And he saith, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, &c.*—When his lord heard him offer such a vile and groundless charge against him as an excuse for his own negligence, he was filled with indignation, and determined to punish him severely. *Thou knewest that I was an austere man*—This is not an acknowledgment of the vile and detestable charge of "God's demanding of men," as Dr. Guise observes, "more difficult services than he has furnished them for, and would assist them in," which would be a most unrighteous thought of God ; but the servant's lord only argues with him on his own base principles, and shows, that even on them he would be justly condemned for his negligence. *Wherefore then gavest thou not my money*—If thou didst really believe me to be the rigorous person thou sayest I am, why didst thou not lend out my money on proper security, that I might have received mine own, *οὐν τόκῳ, with interest ; a method of improvement of thy talent which would have occasioned thee no trouble at all.* Thy excuse, therefore, is a

own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* A. M. 4037.
wicked servant. ^aThou knewest A. D. 33.

that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow :

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury ?

24 And he said unto them that stood by,

^a Matt. xxv. 26.

mere pretence. In like manner, all the excuses which wicked ministers, or slothful professors of Christianity, offer in their own behalf, shall, at the bar of God, stand them in no stead, whether they be drawn from the character which they affixed to God, or from his supposed decrees, or from their own inability, or from the difficulty of his service, or from any other consideration whatever. Negligent and useless ministers especially, may, in the fate of this slothful servant, see a picture of their own: for Christ, above all things, disapproves of a wicked, or even an indolent or unprofitable minister of his gospel. "This negligent and slothful servant," says Quesnel, "ought to make all pastors and clergymen tremble, who imagine that they lead an innocent life if they do but avoid the grosser sins, and only lead an easy and quiet life in idleness and indolence. In a priest it is a great evil not to do any good. Not to use the gifts of God, is to abuse them. He loses them, who does not make them serviceable to the good of the church. Rest is a crime in one who is called to a laborious life ; and we cannot live to ourselves alone, when we belong to the church." "Let us reflect," says Gregory, in his seventeenth homily on the gospel, "who were ever converted by our preaching ; who, moved by our rebukes, have repented of their evil ways ; who, through our teaching, have forsaken luxury, covetousness, pride. Let us reflect what gain we have made for God, who have been sent by him to labour, with the talents intrusted to us. For he saith, *Occupy till I come.* Behold, now he cometh, now he requires the profit of our labour. What gain of souls shall we be able to show him from our toils ? What sheaves of souls shall we be able to present to him from the harvest of our preaching ? Let us place before our eyes that day of so great strictness, in which the Judge will come and take an account of these servants, to whom he hath committed his talents ! Lo, he will be seen in terrible majesty, amid the company of angels and archangels ! Good and bad must be examined before him, and the works of each made manifest. There all the leaders of the Lord's flock will appear with their gain of souls, won to the Lord by their preaching. And when so many pastors shall appear with their flocks before the eyes of their eternal Pastor—wretched men, what shall we say, who return empty to our Lord ; who have borne the name of shepherds, and yet have no *sheep* to show ! called *pastors* here, but without any flock there !"

A. M. 4037. Take from him the pound, and give
A. D. 33. it to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, ° That unto every one which hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

28 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, ° he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

29 ° And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount* of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against *you*; in the which at your entering ye

shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never
man sat: loose him, and bring *him*
hither. A. M. 4037
A. D. 33.

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him*? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: ° and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 ° And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come nigh, even now

° Matthew xiii. 12; xxv. 29; Mark iv. 25; Chap. viii. 18. Mark x. 32.—° Matt. xxi. 1; Mark xi. 1.

° 2 Kings ix. 13; Matt. xxi. 7; Mark xi. 7; John xii 14. Matt. xxi. 8.

Verses 24–26. *And he said to them that stood by—To the officers of justice that waited on the king; Take from him the pound—Take what was intrusted with him from that idle, suspicious, unfaithful servant, who might otherwise have had that, and much more, allotted him for his own property; and give it him that has ten pounds—As an additional reward for his fidelity and diligence. And they said, Lord, he hath ten pounds—They speak this in surprise at his assigning it to one who had received so ample a reward, thinking there was no occasion to give an additional pound to one who had so many already. Perhaps they thought it more proper to give it to him who had only five pounds. Nevertheless, the prince stood by his former award, and bestowed the other pound likewise upon him; because it was agreeable to the rules of all wise administrations to bestow the most and greatest trusts on them who, by their fidelity in offices already enjoyed by them, had shown that they best deserved them. For unto every one which hath—That uses properly and improves what he hath; shall be given—Still more, and he shall have greater abundance; and from him that hath not—That acts as if he had not a talent to use for the good of mankind and the glory of God; even that he hath shall be taken away from him—The opportunities and advantages which he enjoys shall be taken from him, and given to such as improve those already bestowed on them.*

Verse 27. *But those mine enemies, &c.—Having thus inquired into the conduct of his servants, and treated them according to the different use they made of what had been intrusted with them, he then proceeded to pass sentence on his rebellious citizens, who had refused to have him for their king; and with a just resentment of their base ingratitude, he commanded them to be brought thither immediately,*

and slain in his presence, that others might learn a more dutiful submission to the execution of these rebels. The word *κατασφαξτε*, here rendered *slay them*, properly signifies, *slay them with the sword*, and seems first to refer to the dreadful slaughter of the impenitent Jews, by the sword of each other and of the Romans. But that does not seem to be the chief design of the passage; it more especially relates to the far more terrible execution which shall be done on all impenitent sinners in the great day, when the faithful servants of Christ shall be rewarded. Now all this was as if our Lord had said, Thus shall I at length appear, not as a temporal sovereign, but as the great eternal Judge and victorious Ruler over all; when, having received power and dominion from my Father, I shall bring all to their final account, and with infinite ease triumph over those who reject and affront my authority: take heed, therefore, that you be not found in their wretched number, as many will be who pretend most eagerly to desire the Messiah's appearance.

Verses 28–40. *When he had thus spoken—When he had finished the preceding parable in Zaccheus's house; he went before—Continued his journey, and led the way as foremost of the company, thus showing his readiness to suffer; ascending up to Jerusalem—Being determined to appear there at the approaching passover, though he well knew that he was to encounter persecution and death there. And when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany—Both these villages being situated at the foot of the mount of Olives, and Jesus being between them, on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem, he might very properly be said to have been nigh to both, and nigh to Jerusalem, which was at the distance of two miles only: he sent two of his disciples, &c.—See this paragraph explained, Matthew xxi. 1–16; Mark xi*

A. M. 4037. at the descent of the mount of Olives,
A. D. 33.

the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen;

38 Saying, 'Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: 'Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace,

'the stones would immediately cry out. A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

41 ¶ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and 'wept over it,

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall 'cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And 'shall lay thee even with the ground,

† Psalm cxviii. 26; Chapter xiii. 35.—^a Chapter ii. 14; Eph. ii. 14.—^b Hab. ii. 11.

‡ John xi. 35.—^c Isa. xxix. 3, 4; Jer. vi. 3, 6; Chap. xxi. 20. ^d 1 Kings ix. 7, 8; Mic. iii. 12.

1-10. *The whole multitude began to praise God*—Speaking at once, as it seems, from a divine impulse, words which most of them did not understand. *Peace in heaven*—God being reconciled to man. *Rebuke thy disciples*—Paying thee this immoderate honour. *If these should hold their peace, the stones which lie before you would immediately cry out*—That is, God would raise up some still more unlikely instruments to declare his praise. Or, that he would, by a miracle, raise up others to glorify his name, rather than silence should be kept on this occasion. But though Jesus did not refuse the honours that were now paid him, he was far from assuming the dignity of an earthly prince, or any state pageantry whatsoever. On the contrary, he humbled himself exceedingly; his riding on an ass being an instance of great meekness, according to what was prophesied of him, Zech. ix. 9.

Verses 41-44. *He beheld the city and wept over it*—As he drew nigh he looked on the city, and, notwithstanding he had already met with much ill usage from its inhabitants, and was at this very juncture to be put to death by them, yet, with a divine generosity and benevolence, which nothing can equal, he wept over it, in the view of the surrounding multitude, lifting up his voice and lamenting aloud the calamities which he foresaw were coming upon it. *If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day*—After thou hast neglected so many; *thy day*—The day wherein God still offers thee his blessings; *the things which belong unto thy peace*—And on which thy final happiness depends! *but now they are hid from thine eyes*—God will leave thee in his righteous judgment to this thy chosen ignorance and obstinate perverseness, till it end in thine utter ruin. *For the days shall come*—The time hastens on and will soon arrive; *that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee*—And thou shalt suffer all the hardships of the closest siege. The original phrase is, περιβαλυσιν χαρακα σοι, which Dr. Campbell renders, *will surround thee with a rampart*, observing, the word "χαραξ" does not occur in any other place in the New Testament, but in some places wherein it occurs in the Septuagint, it has evidently the sense here given

it. Indeed, a rampart or mound of earth was always accompanied with a trench or ditch, out of which was dug the earth necessary for raising the rampart. Some expositors have clearly shown that this is a common meaning of the word in Greek authors. Its perfect conformity to the account of that transaction given by the Jewish historian, is an additional argument in its favour." *And keep thee in on every side*—So that, with all thy numerous inhabitants, thou neither shalt be able to resist nor to escape them. To the prophecy here uttered by Jesus, foretelling the principal circumstances of the siege of Jerusalem, the event corresponded most exactly. "For, when Titus attacked the city, the Jews defended themselves so obstinately, that he found there was no way to gain his purpose but to compass the city round with a trench and mound. By this means, he kept the besieged in on every side, cut off from them all hope of safety by flight, and consumed them by famine. The work which he undertook was indeed a matter of extreme difficulty, for the wall measured thirty-nine furlongs, or almost five miles, and the towers were thirteen in number, every one of them ten furlongs in compass. Nevertheless, the whole was finished in three days; for, to use the expression of Josephus, the soldiers in performing this work were animated by a divine impetus. *Bell., vi. 13.*" *And shall lay thee even with the ground*—Of this circumstance, see the notes on Matt. xxiv. 1, 2; Mark xiii. 1, 2. The description which Josephus has given of the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, may be considered as a comment upon these prophecies. *Bell., vii. 18.* "Thus was Jerusalem taken, in the second year of Vespasian's reign, on the 8th day of September; and having been already five times surprised, it was again finally destroyed. Such was the end of the besieging of Jerusalem, when there was none left to kill, nor any thing remaining for the soldiers to get. Cesar commanded them to destroy the city and temple, only leaving certain towers standing, that were more beautiful than the rest, namely, Phaselus, Hippicos, and Mariamne, and the wall that was on the west side, meaning there to keep a garrison, and that they should be a monu-

A. M. 4037. and thy children within thee: and
A. D. 33. ^bthey shall not leave in thee one stone
upon another: ^cbecause thou knewest not the
time of thy visitation.

45 ¶ ^dAnd he went into the temple, and be-
gan to cast out them that sold therein, and
them that bought,

46 Saying unto them, ^eIt is written, My

^b Matt. xxiv. 2; Mark xiii. 2; Chap. xxi. 6.—^c Dan. ix. 24; Chap. i. 68, 78; 1 Pet. ii. 12.—^d Matt. xxi. 12; Mark xi. 11,

house is the house of prayer, but A. M. 4037
^fye have made it a den of thieves. A. D. 33.

47 ¶ And he taught daily in the temple.
But ^gthe chief priests, and the scribes, and
the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

48 And could not find what they might do:
for all the people ^hwere very attentive to hear
him.

15; John ii. 14, 15.—^e Isa. lvi. 7.—^f Jer. vii. 11.—^g Mark xi. 18; John vii. 19; viii. 37.—^h Or, *hanged on him*; Acts xvi. 14.

ment of the prowess of the Romans, who had taken a city so well fortified, as by them it appeared to have been. All the rest of the city they so levelled," answering to our Lord's phrase, *lay thee even with the ground*, "that they who had not seen it before, would not believe that ever it had been inhabited." And in the preceding chapter he says, "They destroyed the wall, and burned the outward part of the city." *Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation*—"Our Lord here assigns the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem and her children. It was because that, when God visited them by his Son, the seed of Abraham and David, the Messiah, they did not know it, but rejected and crucified him. The destruction of the city and of her inhabitants, clearly foreseen by our Lord in all the circumstances thereof, was a scene so affecting, that it moved his tender soul, and made him weep. It seems the miseries of bitterest enemies had more influence to afflict and melt his soul, than the admiration, the acclamations, and hosannas of his friends to elate him with joy. His weeping was a wonderful instance of his humanity, and is so far from lessening the dignity of his character, that it exalts it infinitely. Were it worth

while, the reader might be put in mind that the historians of Greece and Rome, to aggrandize their heroes, have been at pains to relate occurrences at which they shed tears; but this would be to fall egregiously below the greatness of the subject. Is it possible to have the least relish for goodness, and not be ravished with the man who has such a quick feeling of the miseries of others, as to weep for their misfortunes in the height of his own prosperity, especially if the objects moving his compassion are enemies, and his courage is such as to enable him to look without perturbation on the greatest disasters ready to fall on himself? See Matt. xx. 18, 19. Let wondering mortals, then, behold in this an example of compassion and generosity, infinitely superior to any thing that the heathen world can furnish! an example highly worthy of their admiration and imitation."—Macknight.

Verses 45-48. *And he went into the temple*—See notes on Matt. xxi. 12-14; Mark xi. 11, 18. *And he taught daily in the temple*—Jesus, being now to remain but a short time upon earth, employed himself without intermission in teaching as many people as possible, and in the most public places.

CHAPTER XX.

In this chapter, (1,) Christ vindicates his authority against the Jewish rulers, by a question concerning John the Baptist, 1-8. (2,) By the parable of the vineyard, let out to unjust and rebellious husbandmen, he represents the great wickedness and approaching ruin of the Jewish nation, 9-19. (3,) By the superscription on their tribute-money he proves it to be the duty of the Jews to pay tribute to Cesar, 20-26. (4,) From God's speech to Moses at the bush he proves the resurrection of the dead and a future state, against the cavils of the Sadducees, 27-38. (5,) Puzzles the scribes with a question, how the Messiah could be at once David's son and his Lord, 39-44. (6,) Cautions his disciples to beware of the hypocritical, proud, and cruelly dishonest scribes, 45-47. All these passages we had before in Matthew and Mark, and therefore it will not be necessary to say much upon them here, unless on some particulars which did not occur there.

A. M. 4037. **AND** ^a it came to pass, *that* on one
A. D. 33.

of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him*, with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, ^b By what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: ^c for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, That they could not tell whence *it* was.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 ¶ Then began he to speak to the people this parable: ^d A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it

may be they will reverence *him* ^{A. M. 4037.}
when they see him. ^{A. D. 33.}

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed *him*. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard *it*, they said, God forbid.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, ^e The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be broken: but ^f on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 ¶ And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 ^g And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, ^h Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of *any*, but teachest the way of God ⁱ truly:

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cesar, or no?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

24 Show me a ^j penny. Whose image and

^a Matt. xxi. 23.—^b Acts iv. 7; vii. 27.—^c Matt. xiv. 5; xxi. 26; Ch. vii. 29.—^d Matt. xxi. 33; Mark xii. 1.—^e Psa. cxviii. 22; Matt. xxi. 42.

^f Daniel ii. 34, 36; Matthew xxi. 44.—^g Matthew xxii. 15.—^h Matthew xxii. 16; Mark xii. 14.—ⁱ Or, of a truth.—^j Matt. xviii. 28.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

Verses 1-8. *And on one of those days the chief priests, scribes, and elders*—That is, some of the first men of the nation; *came*—By appointment of the senate, to Jesus; *and spake, saying, Tell us by what authority, &c.*—See on Matt. xxi. 23-27, and Mark xi. 27-33.

Verses 9-19. *A certain man planted a vineyard, &c.*—See this paragraph explained on Matt. xxi. 33-46, and Mark xii. 1-12. *And went into a far country for a long time*—It was a long time from the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan to the birth of Christ. *He shall destroy those husbandmen*—

Probably he pointed to the scribes, chief priests, and elders; who allowed, *He will miserably destroy those wicked men*, Matt. xxi. 41, but could not bear that this should be applied to themselves. They might also mean, *God forbid* that we should be guilty of such a crime as your parable seems to charge us with, namely, rejecting and killing the heir. Our Saviour means, But yet ye will do it, as is prophesied of you. *He looked on them*—To sharpen their attention.

Verses 20-26. *And they watched him*—For an elucidation of this paragraph, see on Matt. xxii. 18-22, and Mark xii. 13-17; *and sent spies, which*

A. M. 4037. superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cesar's.

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which be Cesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

27 ¶ Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, (^k which deny that there is any resurrection,) and they asked him,

28 Saying, Master, ^l Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

ⁱ Matt. xxii. 23; Mark xii. 18.—^k Acts xxiii. 6, 8.—^l Deut. xxv. 5.—^m 1 Cor. xv. 42, 49, 52; 1 John iii. 2.

should feign themselves just men—Men scrupulously conscientious in every point: *that they might take hold of his words*—If he answered as they hoped he would. *Master, we know thou sayest, &c.*—Speakest in private, and teachest in public; *the way of God truly*—The true path of duty. *They could not take hold of his words before the people*—As they did afterward before the sanhedrim, in the absence of the people, chap. xxii. 67, &c.

Verses 27–40. *Then came to him certain of the Sadducees*—These verses are explained at large, on Matt. xxii. 23–33, and Mark xii. 18–26. *The children of this world*—The inhabitants of earth; *marry and are given in marriage*—As being all subject to the law of mortality, so that the species is in need of being continually repaired. *But they which obtain that world*—The world which holy souls enter into at death; namely, paradise; *and the resurrection from the dead*—It must be observed, our Lord, agreeably to the Jewish style of that period, calls that only the resurrection which is a resurrection to glory. *They are the children of God*—In a more eminent sense when they rise again, having then received that public manifestation of their adoption, mentioned Rom. viii. 23; *the redemption of their body*. *Now that the dead are raised, even Moses*—As well as the other prophets; *showed, when he calleth, &c.*—That is, when he recites the words which God spoke of himself, *I am the God of Abraham, &c.*—It cannot

33 Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering, said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

36 Neither can they die any more: for ⁿ they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, ^o being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, ^p even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for ^q all live unto him.

39 Then certain of the scribes answering, said, Master, thou hast well said.

40 And after that, they durst not ask him any question at all.

41 ¶ And he said unto them, ^r How say they that Christ is David's son?

ⁿ Rom. viii. 23.—^o Ex. iii. 6.—^p Rom. vi. 10, 11.—^q Mat. xxii. 42; Mark xii. 35.

properly be said, that God is the God of any who are totally perished. *He is not a God of the dead, &c.*—Or, as the clause may be properly rendered, *There is not a God of the dead, but of the living*—That is, the term *God* implies such a relation as cannot possibly subsist between him and the dead; who, in the Sadducees' sense, are extinguished spirits, who could neither worship him nor receive good from him. *For all live unto him*—All who have him for their God, live to, and enjoy him. This sentence is not an argument for what went before; but the very proposition which was to be proved. And the consequence is apparently just. For, as all the faithful are the children of Abraham, and the divine promise, of being *a God to him and his seed*, is entailed upon them, it implies their continued existence and happiness in a future state, as much as Abraham's. And as the body is an essential part of man, it implies both his resurrection and theirs; and so overthrows the entire scheme of the Sadducean doctrine. *They durst not ask him any question*—The Sadducees durst not. One of the scribes did presently after.

Verses 41–47. *How say they that Christ is David's son, &c.*—For an elucidation of these verses, see on Matt. xxii. 41–46; xxiii. 5–7, 14; and Mark xii. 35–40. *David therefore calleth him Lord: how is he then his son?*—This implies both the existence of David in a future state, and the authority of the Messiah over that invisible world into which that

A. M. 4037. 42 And David himself saith in the
A. D. 33. book of Psalms, 'The LORD said

unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,
43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is
he then his son?

45 ¶ Then in the audience of all the people,
he said unto his disciples,

* Psa. cx. 1; Acts ii. 34.—Matt. xxiii. 1; Mark xii. 38.

prince was removed by death. Else, how great a
monarch soever the Messiah might have been, he
could not have been properly called David's Lord;
any more than Julius Cesar could have been called
the lord of Romulus, because he reigned in Rome
seven hundred years after his death, and vastly ex-

46 'Beware of the scribes, which A. M. 4037.
desire to walk in long robes, and ^a love A. D. 33.

greetings in the markets, and the highest
seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms
at feasts;

47 * Which devour widows' houses, and for
a show make long prayers: the same shall
receive greater damnation.

^c Matt. xxiii. 5.—^b Chap. xi. 43.—^d Matt. xxiii. 14.

tended the bounds of that empire which Romulus
founded. Munster's note on this text shows, in a
very forcible manner, the wretched expedients of
some modern Jews to evade the force of that inter-
pretation of the one hundred and tenth Psalm, which
refers it to the Messiah.⁷—Doddridge.

CHAPTER XXI.

Here, (1,) Christ observes and approves a poor widow casting two mites into the treasury, 1-4. (2,) In answer to the inquiry of his disciples respecting the destruction of the temple, he foretels the signs and calamities which would precede and accompany it, 5-19; and the destruction and continued desolations of Jerusalem, 20-24; and the signs of his coming to execute these judgments, 25-33. (3,) He exhorts them to watch and pray, that amidst these great events they might be safe and happy, 34-36. (4,) A general account of his preaching, and the people's attendance, 37, 38.

A. M. 4037. AND he looked up ^a and saw the
A. D. 33. rich men casting their gifts into
the treasury.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow,
casting in thither two ¹ mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you,
^b that this poor widow hath cast in more than
they all.

4 For all these have of their abundance cast
in unto the offerings of God: but she of her

* Mark xii. 41.—¹ Mark xii. 42.—^b 2 Cor. viii. 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXI.

Verses 1-4. *And he looked up*—From those on
whom his eyes were fixed before; and *saw the rich
men casting their gifts, &c.*—See on Mark xii. 41.

Verses 5, 6. *And as some spake of the temple, how
it was adorned with goodly stones*—Such as no
engine now in use could have brought, or even set
upon each other. Some of them (as an eye-witness
who lately measured them writes) were forty-five
cubits long, five high, and six broad, yet brought
thither from another country. See this more fully
elucidated Matt. xxiv. 1, and Mark xiii. 2. *And gifts*
—Which persons delivered from imminent dangers,
had, in accomplishment of their vows, hung on the
walls and pillars. The hanging up such *avathpara*,
or *consecrated gifts*, was common in most of the

penury hath cast in all the living that A. M. 4037.
she had. A. D. 33.

5 ¶ ^c And as some spake of the temple, how
it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts,
he said,

6 *As for these things which ye behold, the
days will come, in the which ^d there shall not
be left one stone upon another, that shall
not be thrown down.*

7 ¶ And they asked him, saying, Master,

^c Matt. xxiv. 1; Mark xiii. 1.—^d Chap. xix. 41.

ancient temples. Tacitus speaks of the immense
opulence of the temple at Jerusalem. (*Hist.* v. 8.)
Among others of its treasures, there was a golden
table, given by Pompey; and several golden vines,
of exquisite workmanship, as well as immense size;
which some have thought referred to God's repre-
senting the Jewish nation under the emblem of a
vine, Isa. v. 1-7; Psa. lxxx. 8; Ezek. xv. 2, 6. *He
said, The days will come when there shall not be
left one stone upon another*—The accomplishment
of this prediction is proved and illustrated, Matt.
xxiv. 2, and Mark xiii. 2.

Verses 7-10. *They asked him, When shall these
things be, &c.*—All the particulars in these verses
are noticed and explained, Matt. xxiv. 3-8, and Mark
xiii. 3-8.

A. M. 4037. but when shall these things be?
A. D. 33. and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

8 And he said, "Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.

10 ^fThen said he unto them, Nation shall

* Matt. xxiv. 4; Mark xiii. 5; Eph. v. 6; 2 Thess. ii. 3.—² Or, *and, The time*, Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17.—^f Matt. xxiv. 7.—[†] Mark

Verse 11. *Fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven*—Of these, Josephus has given us a particular account, *Bell.* vii. 12. "There was a comet in the form of a fiery sword, which for a year together did hang over the city. Before the first revolt and war, the people being gathered together to the feast of unleavened bread, on the 8th of April, at the 9th hour of the night, there was as much light about the altar and temple as if it had been bright day. This remained half an hour. At the same festival, the inner gate of the temple on the east side, being of massy brass, which required at least twenty men to shut it, was seen at midnight to open of its own accord. Not long after the feast-days, on the 21st of May, before the sun set, were seen in the air chariots and armies in battle array, passing along in the clouds and investing the city. And upon the feast of pentecost, at night, the priests, going into the inner temple to attend their wonted service, said, they first felt the place to move and tremble: after that they heard a voice which said, *Let us depart hence*. But that which was most wonderful of all, one Jesus, the son of Ananus, of the common people, four years before the war began, when the city flourished in peace and riches, coming to the celebration of the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem, suddenly began to cry out thus: *A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against men and women newly married, a voice against all this people*. And thus crying, day and night, he went about all the streets of the city." Josephus adds, "that he was scourged by some of the nobility, but, without speaking a word for himself, he persevered crying as before; that he was carried before Albinus, the Roman general, who caused him to be beaten till his bones appeared. But that he neither entreated nor wept, but, as well as he could, framing a weeping voice, he cried at every stroke, *Wo, wo to Jerusalem*:" that he went on thus crying, chiefly upon holydays, for the space of seven years and five months, till in the time of the siege, beholding what he had foretold, he ceased. And that then, once again going about the city, on the wall, "he cried with a loud voice, *Wo, wo to the*

rise against nation, and kingdom A. M. 4037.
against kingdom: A. D. 33.

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences: and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 [†]But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and ^hinto prisons, ⁱbeing brought before kings and rulers ^hfor my name's sake.

13 And ^lit shall turn to you for a testimony.

xiii. 9; Rev. ii. 10.—^b Acts iv. 3; v. 18; xii. 4; xvi. 24. ¹ Acts xxv. 23.—¹ Pet. ii. 13.—¹ Phil. i. 28; 2 Thess. i. 5.

city, temple, and people; and lastly he said, *Wo also to myself*. Which words were no sooner uttered, than a stone thrown out of an engine smote him, and so he yielded up the ghost, lamenting them all." See note on Isa. lxvi. 6.

Verse 12. *But before all these*—Before the appearing of the false Christs—before the rumours of wars—the earthquakes, famines, and pestilences that were to be in divers places; *they shall lay their hands on you, &c.*—"How fully the particulars foretold in this verse were accomplished, we learn from the Roman historians, Tacitus and Suetonius, who have given an account of the persecution raised against the Christians by Nero. But the history of the Acts will throw the greatest light on this passage. For there we are told, that immediately after our Lord's ascension, Peter and John were called before the Jewish senate, and beaten; (Acts iv. 6, 7; v. 40); that Stephen was brought before the same court; (vi. 12;) and put to death; (vii. 58); that *Saul made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison; (viii. 3;) and punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, persecuted them unto strange cities; (xxvi. 11;) that James was brought before Herod, and by him put to death; who also laid Peter in prison, intending to kill him likewise; (xii. 2, 4;) that Paul, formerly himself a persecutor, but now converted, was, in his turn, frequently persecuted; that he and Silas were imprisoned and beaten in the synagogue at Philippi; (xvi. 23;) that he was brought before the great synagogue of the Jews in Jerusalem; (xxii. 30;) before King Agrippa and his wife, before the Roman governors, Gallio, Felix, and Festus; and last of all, before the Emperor Nero, in Rome, and his prefect, Helius Caesariensis."—Macknight.*

Verses 13–19. *It shall turn to you for a testimony*—The persecutions which you suffer shall become a glorious proof both of your innocence and of their guilt in rejecting the gospel. *Settle it, therefore, in your hearts, &c.*—As the Holy Ghost will assist you in your defences, let it be a fixed point with you, *not to meditate before what ye shall answer*. See on

A. M. 4037. 14 ^m Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer.

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

16 ° And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

18 ° But there shall not a hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

^m Matt. x. 19; Mark xiii. 11; Chap. xii. 11.—^a Acts vi. 10. [°] Mic. vii. 6; Mark xiii. 12.—[°] Acts vii. 59; xii. 2.—[°] Matt.

Matt. x. 19, and Mark xiii. 11. *I will give you a mouth and wisdom, &c.*—"I will suggest to you such sentiments, and enable you to deliver them with such eloquence, that your defences shall be unanswerable; and your adversaries shall be struck with them, especially when they find by your manner that you have spoken without premeditation." Of the fulfilment of this promise, we have evident examples in the defences made by the proto-martyr, Stephen, and by the Apostle Paul, especially before King Agrippa and the Roman governors. But there is no need to insist upon particulars. The prevalency of the gospel, wherever it was preached, demonstrates, beyond all doubt, that the defences made by the preachers thereof were unanswerable. *Ye shall be betrayed by parents and brethren, &c.*—See on Matt. x. 22, and Mark xiii. 12, 13. *There shall not a hair of your head perish*—A proverbial expression denoting absolute safety. The special providence of God shall watch over you for your preservation, and you shall not suffer before the time appointed by God, nor without a full reward. But the promise seems to refer especially to their preservation during the siege of Jerusalem; of which, see on verse 20. Thus Jesus encouraged all to steadfastness in the midst of the fiery trial that was to try them. *In patience possess ye your souls*—Be calm and serene, masters of yourselves, and superior to all irrational and disquieting passions. By keeping the government of your spirits, you will both avoid much misery, and guard the better against all dangers.

Verses 20, 21. *And when ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, &c.*—The admonition here given to them who were in the midst of Jerusalem to depart out of it, and to them who were in the countries not to enter thereinto, shows that the encompassing of Jerusalem with armies, spoken of in the prophecy, was such as would permit the inhabitants to flee out of it, and those who were in the countries to enter into it. Behold here the wonder-

20 ° And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 ° But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all

x. 22.—[°] Matt. x. 30.—[°] Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14. [°] Dan. ix. 26, 27; Zech. xi. 1.—[°] Matt. xxiv. 19.

ful prescience of Jesus! Cestius Gallus, in the beginning of the war, invested Jerusalem, and took Bethza, or the lower town. Josephus, (*Bell.*, ii. 24.) says, "If he had continued the siege but a little longer, he would have taken the city. But, I think, God being angry with the wicked, would not suffer the war to end at that time. For Cestius removed his army, and having received no loss, very unadvisedly departed from the city." And, chap. xxv. of the same book, he further informs us, that "immediately after Cestius's departure, many of the principal Jews daily fled from the city as from a sinking ship." Among these, we may believe there were numbers of the Christians, who, remembering their Master's admonition, and foreseeing what was to happen, embraced the opportunity thus afforded them of fleeing out of Judea, and so escaped the general ruin, as their Master had promised them, Matt. xxiv. 13; Luke xxi. 18. To this agrees what Eusebius tells us, (*Hist.*, iii. 5.) "That the people of the church in Jerusalem, being ordered by an oracle, given to the faithful in that place, left the city before the war, and dwelt in a city of Perea, the name of which was Pella." This oracle, of which he speaks, seems to have been our Lord's prophecy and admonition, to which every circumstance of the history perfectly agrees.

Verse 24. *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations*—The fulfilment of this part of the prophecy, we have *Bell.*, vii. 16, where Josephus describes the sacking of the city. "And now, rushing into every lane, they slew whomsoever they found without distinction, and burned the houses, and all the people who had fled into them. And when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine; then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they did not feel the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran

A. M. 4037. nations: and Jerusalem shall be
A. D. 33. trodden down of the Gentiles,

* until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. A. M. 4037
A. D. 33.

* Deut. ix. 27;

xii. 7; Rom. xi. 25.

with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood." Thus were the inhabitants of Jerusalem slain with the sword: thus was she laid even with the ground, and her children with her. Ibid.—"The soldiers being now wearied with killing the Jews, and yet a great number remaining alive, Cesar commanded that only the armed and they who resisted should be slain. But the soldiers killed also the old and infirm; and taking the young and strong prisoners, carried them into the women's court in the temple. Cesar appointed one Fronto, his freedman and friend, to guard them, and to determine the fate of each. All the robbers and seditious he slew, one of them betraying another. But picking out such youths as were remarkable for stature and beauty, he reserved them for the triumph. All the rest that were above seventeen years old he sent bound into Egypt, to be employed in labour there. Titus also sent many of them into the provinces, to be slain in the theatres by beasts and the sword. And those who were under seventeen years of age were slain. And during the time Fronto judged them, one thousand died of hunger." Chap. xvii.—"Now the number of the captives that were taken during the time of the war, was ninety-seven thousand; and of all that died and were slain during the siege, was one million one hundred thousand, the most of them Jews by nation, though not inhabitants of the place; for being assembled together from all parts to the feast of unleavened bread, of a sudden they were environed with war." Thus were the Jews led away captive into all nations. However, the falling by the edge of the sword, mentioned in the prophecy, is not to be confined to what happened at the siege. It comprehends all the slaughters that were made of the Jews in the different battles, and sieges, and massacres, both in their own land and out of it, during the whole course of the war. Such as at Alexandria, where fifty thousand perished; at Cesarea, ten thousand; at Scythopolis, thirteen thousand; at Damascus, ten thousand; at Ascalon, ten thousand; at Apheck, fifteen thousand; upon Gerizim, eleven thousand; and at Jotapa, thirty thousand. And thus was verified what our Lord told his disciples, the first time he uttered his prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, that wherever the carcass was, there the eagles should be gathered together, Luke xvii. 37. See notes on Deut. xxviii. 62; Matt. xxiv. 15-21; and Mark xiii. 14.

Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles—The accomplishment of this part of the prophecy is wonderful. For, after the Jews were utterly destroyed by death and captivity, Vespasian commanded the whole land of Judea to be sold. *Bell.* vii. 26.—"At that time Cesar wrote to Bassus, and to Liberius Maximus, the procurator, to sell the whole land of the Jews; for he did not build any

city there, but appropriated their country to himself, leaving there only eight hundred soldiers, and giving them a place to dwell in, called *Emmaus*, thirty stadia from Jerusalem; and he imposed a tribute upon all the Jews, wheresoever they lived, commanding every one of them to bring two drachms into the capitol, according as in former times they were wont to pay unto the temple of Jerusalem. And this was the state of the Jews at that time." Thus was Jerusalem in particular, with its territory, possessed by the Gentiles, becoming Vespasian's property, who sold it to such Gentiles as chose to settle there. That Jerusalem continued in this desolate state we learn from Dio: for he tells us, that the Emperor Adrian rebuilt it, sent a colony thither to inhabit it, and called it *Ælia*. But he altered its situation, leaving out Zion and Bezetha, and enlarging it so as to comprehend Calvary, where our Lord was crucified. Moreover, Eusebius informs us, that Adrian made a law, that no Jew should come into the region around Jerusalem. *Hist.*, xxi. 6. So that the Jews being banished, such a number of aliens came into Jerusalem, that it became a city and colony of the Romans. *Hist.*, iv. 6. In later times, when Julian apostatized to heathenism, being sensible that the evident accomplishment of our Lord's prophecy concerning the Jewish nation made a strong impression upon the Gentiles, and was a principal means of their conversion, he resolved to deprive Christianity of this support, by bringing the Jews to occupy their own land, and by allowing them the exercise of their religion, and a form of civil government. For this purpose he resolved to rebuild Jerusalem, and to rear up the temple upon its ancient foundations, because there only he knew they would offer prayers and sacrifices. In the prosecution of this design he wrote a letter to the community of the Jews, which is still extant among his other works, inviting them to return to their native country; for their encouragement, he says to them, among other things, "The holy city, Jerusalem, which of many years ye have desired to see inhabited, I will rebuild by mine own labour, and will inhabit it," *epist.* xxv. And now the emperor, having made great preparations, began the execution of his scheme with rebuilding the temple; but his workmen were soon obliged to desist, by an immediate and evident interposition of God. "He resolved," says Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxiii., "to build, at an immense expense, a certain lofty temple at Jerusalem; and gave it in charge to Alypius of Antioch, to hasten the work. But when Alypius, with great earnestness, applied himself to the execution of it, and the governor of the province assisted him in it, terrible balls of fire bursting forth near the foundation, with frequent explosions, and divers times burning the workmen, rendered the place inaccessi-

A. M. 4037. 25 ¶ * † And there shall be signs in
A. D. 33. the sun, and in the moon, and in the
stars; and upon the earth distress of nations,
with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;
26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for

looking after those things which are A. M. 4037
coming on the earth: * for the powers A. D. 33.
of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man
* coming in a cloud, with power and great glory.

* Second Sunday in Advent, gospel, verse 25, to verse 34.
† Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24; 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12.

* Matthew xxiv. 29.—† Matthew xxiv. 30; Revelation i. 7;
xiv. 14.

ble. Thus the fire continually driving them away, the work ceased." This fact is attested, likewise, by Zemuth David, a Jew, who honestly confesses that Julian was hindered by God in this attempt. It is attested, likewise, by Nazianzen and Chrysostom among the Greeks, by Ambrose and Ruffin among the Latins, who lived at the time when the thing happened; by Theodoret and Sozomon, of the orthodox persuasion; by Philistorgius, an Arian, in the extracts of his history made by Photius; (lib. vii. cap. 9;) and by Socrates, a favourer of the Novatians, who wrote his history within the space of fifty years after these things happened, and while the eye-witnesses thereof were yet alive. Thus, while Jews and heathen, under the direction of a Roman emperor, united their whole force to baffle our Lord's prediction, they did but still the more conspicuously accomplish it. See notes on Deut. xxviii. 64-68. *Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*—The time determined in the counsel of God for the conversion of the Gentiles. The Apostle Paul has given us a clear explication of this passage, Rom. xi. 25. This part of the prophecy answers to Dan. ix. 27: *He shall make it (Jerusalem) desolate, even until the consummation, namely, of wrath upon this people, and that determined be poured upon the desolate.* The meaning of both passages is, that after the destruction here foretold, Jerusalem shall continue desolate, until God has poured upon it the whole wrath he has determined; and this wrath will not be finished until the Gentiles are converted.

Verses 25, 26. *There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, &c.*—These seem to be highly figurative expressions, signifying the decaying of all the glory, excellence, and prosperity of the nation; and the prevalence of universal sadness, misery, and confusion. *And upon the earth—Or, upon the land,* as the words may be rendered; *distress of nations with perplexity*—The Jewish tetrarchies shall be distressed and perplexed: *the sea and the waves roaring*—The roaring of the sea and the waves may be a metaphorical expression; for, in the first clause of this verse, the signs in the sun and the moon and the stars are plainly so, answering to what by Mark is expressed thus: *The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall.* For, though the darkening of the sun and the moon may be interpreted literally of eclipses, no reader can understand the *falling of the stars* literally. See on Mark xiii. 24-26, and Matt. xxiv. 29-31. *Men's hearts failing them for fear*—Greek, *αποψυχοντων ανθρωπων απο φοβου*, literally, *men expiring through*

fear; and for looking after those things—Those dreadful calamities; *which are coming on the earth—Or, on the land.* *For the powers of heaven shall be shaken*—For this shall not be like former invasions, or captivities, which only produced some transient disorders in the state, or at most an interruption in the government for a few years; but it shall be attended with a total subversion of it; even of the whole Jewish polity, laws, and religion, which were the work of heaven, or which, containing in them the light of truth, are signified by the sun, moon, and stars in the preceding verse; and therefore might in this be called *the powers of heaven.* The consequence shall be such vast, extensive, and lasting ruin, that it shall be a most lively emblem of the desolation of the whole world at the last day. The above is the exposition commonly given of these verses, compared with the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark. And in consistency therewith, *επι της γης*, which our translation renders, *upon the earth*, is thought to be only intended of the land of Judea and Samaria. But Dr. Campbell thinks the prophecy is not to be confined to that country, and therefore he prefers the common version, for which he assigns the following reasons: "First, though what preceded seems peculiarly to concern the Jews, what follows appears to have a more extensive object, and to relate to the nations and the inhabitable earth in general. There we hear of *συνοχη εθνων*, *distress, or anguish of nations*, and of the things, *επρχομενων τη οικουμενη*, *coming upon the habitable world*; not to mention what immediately follows, to wit, that the Son of man shall be seen coming in a cloud, with great glory and power. Nor is it all probable that, by the term, *εθνων*, *nations*, used thrice in the preceding verse, manifestly for Gentiles, are meant in this verse only Jews and Samaritans. Secondly, the prediction which the verse under examination introduces, is accurately distinguished by the historian, as not commencing till after the completion of the former. It was not till after the calamities which were to befall the Jews should be ended; after their capital and temple, their last resource, should be invested and taken, and the wretched inhabitants destroyed, or carried captive into all nations; after Jerusalem should be trodden by the Gentiles; nay, and after the triumph of the Gentiles should be brought to a period; that the prophecy contained in this and the two subsequent verses should begin to take effect. The judicious reader, to be convinced of this, needs only give the passage an attentive perusal."

Verses 27, 28. *Then shall they see the Son of man*

A. M. 4037. 28 And when these things begin
A. D. 33. to come to pass, then look up, and lift
up your heads: for ^b your redemption draweth
nigh.

29 ^c And he spake to them a parable; Behold
the fig-tree, and all the trees;

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and

^b Rom. viii. 19, 23.

coming in a cloud—They shall see the accomplish-
ment of what Daniel foretold, by the figurative ex-
pression of, “the Son of man coming in the clouds
of heaven;” for the destruction of the Jewish nation
by the Roman armies, and, in after ages, of other
persecuting and antichristian powers, and the spread-
ing of my gospel in consequence thereof, according
to this my prediction, shall demonstrate to all unpre-
judiced persons, that I am *the Son of man*, pro-
phesied of by Daniel, and that the conversion of the
world to Christianity is the glorious universal king-
dom which Daniel foretold was to be given to the
Son of man; and this is the true sign from heaven,
about which the Jews have been so solicitous. See
note on Matt. xxiv. 30, 31. With regard to the de-
struction of the Jewish nation, and the consequent
downfall of their religious institutions, which they
all along opposed to Christianity, it may be observed,
that no events whatever could have contributed so
effectually to the conversion of both Jews and
Gentiles. “For it is a known fact, that while the
Jewish constitution subsisted, the spreading of the
gospel was hindered, both by the believing and un-
believing Jews; the former disgusting the Gentiles,
by endeavouring to subject them to the law of
Moses; and the latter, terrifying them by the perse-
cutions which they raised against the disciples, even
in heathen countries. But the abolition of the
Mosaical institutions confuted the error of the one,
and the destruction of the nation brake the power of
the other. The success, therefore, of the gospel,
depending in a great measure upon the downfall of
the Jewish state, was very properly predicted as
the natural consequence thereof. Moreover, as this
prophecy described so minutely the catastrophe of
the Jewish state, its accomplishment could not but
make a strong impression upon the minds of the
Gentiles, as we know in fact it did bring over many
of them to Christianity.” *When these things begin
to come to pass*—The things I have been predicting;
then look up—With firm faith; *and lift up your
heads*—With joy; *for your redemption*—Out of
many troubles; *draweth nigh*—By God’s destroy-
ing your implacable enemies.

Verses 29-33. *Behold the fig-tree*—Christ spake
this in the spring, just before the passover; when
all the trees were budding on the mount of Olives,
where they then were. *When they now shoot forth,
ye know of your own selves*—Though none teach
you; *that summer is now nigh at hand*—See note
on Matt. xxiv. 32-35. *So when ye see these things,
know that the kingdom of God is nigh*—The de-

know of your own selves that sum- A. M. 4037.
mer is now nigh at hand. A. D. 33.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things
come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of
God is nigh at hand.

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation
shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

^c Matt. xxiv. 32; Mark xiii. 28.

struction of the Jewish city, temple, and religion,
to make way for the establishment of the gospel
dispensation, and the advancement of my kingdom.
*Verily, this generation shall not pass, &c., till all
be fulfilled*—Greek, *ως αν παντα γενηται*, till all things
be effected, all that has been spoken of the destruc-
tion of Jerusalem, and the overthrow of the Jewish
constitution in church and state, to which things the
question, verse 7, relates; and which is treated of
from the eighth to the twenty-fourth verse; in other
words, till every article of this prophecy is accom-
plished. Our Lord, on other occasions, spake of his
own coming, as what was to happen in that age.
See Mark ix. 1; and Matt. xxvi. 64. *Heaven and
earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass
away*—You may expect a dissolution of the frame
of nature sooner than the least iota of this prophecy
to fail of being fulfilled, within the time I have just
now mentioned. This is the most astonishing part
of the whole, for it determines the time of the com-
pletion of all the particulars mentioned, to the lives
of the men of the age then in being; and it determines
this, not simply, but with an asseveration, both to
make the disciples attentive, and to strike future ages
with admiration, when they should read this pro-
phesy, and see every circumstance of the destruc-
tion of Jerusalem and the Jewish state, with its
consequences, even in the remotest ages, clearly
foretold, and the time in which it was to happen
precisely marked. Thus our Lord, in the fullest
manner, showed the greatness of his own fore-
knowledge, and, by consequence, demonstrated
the divinity of his mission. For, as the Jewish
nation was at this time in the most flourishing state,
the events here foretold were altogether improbable.
Besides, the circumstances of the destruction are
very numerous and surprisngly particular, and the
language in which the whole is conceived is with-
out the least ambiguity. It is, therefore, a prophecy
of such a kind as could not possibly be forged by
an impostor; and every thinking person, who com-
pares the events with this prediction, must do vio-
lence to his conscience if he do not acknowledge
Jesus to be a prophet commissioned of God. It ap-
pears, however, that our Lord’s disciples did not
then understand any part of this prophecy; which
is the more to be wondered at, as it was both plain
and particular, and had been delivered once before,
chap. xvii. 20. Probably they applied all the dread-
ful passages of it to the heathen nations, especially
the Romans, whose ambition they thought would
lead them to oppose the erection of their Master’s

A. M. 4037. 33^d Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

34 ¶ And * take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life,

* Matthew xxiv. 35.—* Romans xiii. 13; 1 Thessalonians v. 6; 1 Peter iv. 7.

kingdom, with all the forces of their empire. See Macknight. An observation of Mr. West's, relating to the authors by whom this prophecy, so plain and circumstantial, is recorded, is worthy of the reader's particular attention, namely, that Matthew and Mark were incontestably dead before the events here predicted took place, as Luke also probably might be; and as for John, the only evangelist who survived them, it is remarkable that he says nothing of them, lest any should say the prophecy was forged after the events happened. See West on the Resurrection, p. 393.

Verses 34-36. *Take heed, &c.*—Here our Lord cautions them against the security and sensuality, to which, if they should yield, they would unfit themselves for the trying times that were approaching, and would render those times a great surprise and terror to them; nay, and involve themselves in the ruin about to come on others of their countrymen. By this we learn, 1st, That Christ's promises of deliverance to his disciples and the first Christians were conditional, and only to be fulfilled, provided that, through divine grace, they made it their care to guard against those sins which would have exposed them to God's judgments: and, 2d, That there is a close connection between our duty and safety; between our obedience to God and the divine aid and providence, for our preservation, whether temporal or spiritual: and that we are not to expect preservation immediately from his hand, without the use of those means which he has put it into our power to use in order to it. *Lest at any time your hearts be overcharged, &c.*—The original word βαρυνθῶσιν, here rendered *overcharged*, properly signifies *burdened*, or, *pressed down*, and so very elegantly and strongly expresses the hateful consequences of intemperance; and the load which it brings on those rational faculties, which are the glory of the human nature. Thus Horace,

corpus onustum

Hesternis vitiiis animum quoque prægravat unâ,
Atque affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ.

SAT. ii. lib. ii. lin. 77.

The immoderate use of meat and drink not only burdens the mind with the guilt thereby contracted, but it renders it dull, stupid, and lifeless in duty, and indeed unfit for prayer and praise, for the exercise of any grace, and the practice of any virtue: nay, it stupifies the conscience, and renders the heart unaffected with those things that are most affecting. *And cares of this life*—Anxious cares about visible and temporal things, and the inordinate pursuit of

and so that day come upon you un- A. M. 4037. awares. A. D. 33.

35 For ^f as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 ^g Watch ye therefore, and ^h pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape

^f 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15.—* Matt. xxiv. 42; xxv. 13; Mark xiii. 33.—^h Chap. xviii. 1.

them. The former is the snare of those that are given to their pleasures; this is the snare of the men of business that will be rich. Observe, reader, we have need to guard against both, also against all other temptations, lest at any time our hearts should be thus overcharged. Our caution against sin, and our care of our own souls, must be constant. But was there need to warn the apostles themselves against such sins as these? Then surely there is need to warn even strong Christians against the very grossest sins. Neither are we wise if we think ourselves out of the reach of any sin. *And so that day*—That awful and important time, of which he had been speaking, when these dreadful calamities should come upon that nation; and overwhelm the unwary and carnally secure. *For as a snare, &c.*—For the character of the generality of people in the Jewish nation, at that time, would be such that this ruin would come on all—Or on the greatest part of all; *that dwell on the face of the whole earth*—Or, of the whole land, as a snare upon a thoughtless bird, which, in the midst of its security, finds itself inextricably taken. Thus should we *take heed*, lest either the hour of death or day of judgment should come upon us, when we neither expect nor are prepared for such awful events. *Watch ye, therefore*—This is the general conclusion of all that precedes. Watch against every temptation to negligence and sin, and against every thing which might lull you into a dangerous security; and *pray always*—With the most fervent importunity; *that ye may be accounted worthy*—Through pardoning mercy, and the renewing, assisting grace of God; *to escape all these things*—Those calamitous and destructive events; *that shall assuredly come to pass*—In the very manner I have described them. *And stand before the Son of man*—With courage and acceptance, acquitted and approved as his servants, and may not fall before him as his enemies in that day of awful visitation. In Rom. xiv. 4, *standing* and *falling* are terms used to signify the being approved or condemned. Those of our Lord's disciples who followed his directions, and were faithful to the grace they had received, not only escaped the destruction coming on the great body of the Jewish nation, but were acknowledged as his servants, and appointed to be the ministers of his word, and the heralds of his grace and mercy to the Gentile nations. The expression, *καταξιώθητε*, here rendered *accounted worthy*, sometimes implies an honour conferred on a person, as when the apostles are said to be *counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ*, Acts v. 41: some times the being meet or fit for any

A. M. 4037. all these things that shall come to pass,
A. D. 33. and ¹ to stand before the Son of man.

37 ² And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple; and ¹ at night he went out, and

¹ Psa. i. 5; Eph. vi. 13.

thing, or suitable thereto, as when John the Baptist exhorts to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, Luke iii. 8. And so to be accounted worthy to escape, is, to have the honour of it, and to be fitted, or prepared for it. "The reader will observe that Luke's account of this discourse is very short, in comparison with that of Matthew and Mark, for this obvious reason, that he had given the chief heads of it before, partly in a discourse of our Lord's last coming, which was delivered to a very numerous assembly in Galilee, (chap. xii. 35-48,) and partly in another discourse, relating only to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was delivered in his journey thither, at the feast of dedication, chap. xvii. 20, &c. Here, therefore, he chooses to omit what had been inserted on either of those occasions; as John, who probably wrote after the accomplishment of this prophecy, entirely omits it, as already so largely recorded by the former three, from whom, considering the circumstances of time, it came with infinitely better grace, than it could afterward have done from him."—Doddridge. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 42-51; and Mark xiii. 33-37.

Verses 37, 38. *And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple*—"His daily custom at this, and it may be at other passovers, was to spend the day in the city, most commonly in the temple, where he always found a great concourse of hearers, and in the evening to retire to the mount of Olives, where he lodged in the villages, or in the gardens, or in the open air among the trees. He chose to lodge at

abode in the mount that is called *the* A. M. 4037.
mount of Olives. A. D. 33.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

² John viii. 1, 2.—¹ Chap. xxii. 39.

night in such places as these, that he might avoid falling into the hands of his enemies. For though they durst not attack him in the midst of his followers by day, they probably would have apprehended him during the silence and darkness of the night, had he lodged anywhere within the walls of the town. Accordingly they did not venture to lay hands on him, till Judas Iscariot, one of his own disciples, betrayed him to them, in the absence of the multitude, by conducting an armed band to the place of his retirement."—Macknight. *And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple*—The evangelist does not say, that the people came and heard Jesus preach in the temple after this time, for Jesus himself had declared that he never was to preach to them any more, Matt. xxiii. 38, 39. But having described in what manner our Lord spent his time at this passover, the evangelist adds, that his ministry sustained no damage by his leaving the city at night, because he did not fail to return every morning to the temple, and because a great number of people came thither early to be instructed by him, knowing that it was his custom to be there betimes. "How much happier," says Dr. Doddridge, "were his disciples in these early lectures, than the slumbers of the morning would have made them on their beds! Let us not scruple to deny ourselves the indulgence of unnecessary sleep, that we may, morning after morning, place ourselves at his feet, and lose no opportunity of receiving the instructions of his word, and seeking those of his Spirit."

CHAPTER XXII.

In this chapter the evangelist begins the account of Christ's sufferings, mentioning many circumstances thereof omitted by Matthew and Mark. Here we learn, (1.) That, while the Jewish rulers were consulting together, and contriving how they might take Jesus, in order to put him to death, Judas, instigated by Satan, agrees to betray and deliver him privately into their hands, 1-6. (2.) After due preparation, Christ eats the passover with his disciples, 7-18. (3.) He institutes the Lord's supper, in commemoration of his sufferings, 19, 20. (4.) He discourses with his disciples upon several points,—upon Judas betraying him, 21-23; the unreasonableness of their carnal ambition, and the future real honours prepared for them in his kingdom, 24-30; Peter's denial of him, through the influence of Satan, 31-34; and the approaching change in the lot of them all, 36-38. (5.) In his agony in the garden he sweats blood, and prays with great earnestness and importunity, while his disciples sleep, 39-46. (6.) Being betrayed by Judas, he is seized by a band sent by the chief priests and scribes, to whom, after a glorious display of his power, in healing the ear of one of the high-priest's servants, he voluntarily surrenders himself, 47-53. (7.) Peter denies him thrice in the high-priest's hall, and by a look of Jesus is rendered deeply penitent, 54-61. (8.) Christ is abused and condemned as a blasphemer, 62-71.

A. M. 4037. **NOW** * the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover.

2 And ^b the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him: for they feared the people.

3 ¶ ^c Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and ^d covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them ¹ in the absence of the multitude.

7 ¶ ^e Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11 And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12 And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

14 ^f And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

* Wednesday before Easter, gospel, verse 1 to the end.—^a Matt. xxvi. 2; Mark xiv. 1.—^b Psa. ii. 2; John xi. 47; Acts iv. 27.

^c Matt. xxvi. 14; Mark xiv. 10; John xiii. 2, 27.—^d Zech. xi. 12.—^e Or, without tumult.—^f Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12.—^g Matt. xxvi. 20; Mark xiv. 17.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXII.

Verses 1-6. *Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh*—Being to be celebrated within two days after our Lord had delivered the prophecies and admonitions recorded above. Concerning this feast, see on Matt. xxvi. 2. *The chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him*—See on Matthew xxvi. 3-5. *But they feared the people*—Lest, if they seized him openly, a tumult should be raised among them, either to rescue him out of their hands, or to avenge his death. *Then entered Satan*—For he is never wanting to assist those whose hearts are bent upon mischief; *into Judas*—Being one of the twelve. This was a circumstance of such high aggravation, that it is observable each of the evangelists has marked it out in this view. See on Matt. xxvi. 14-16, and Mark xiv. 10. *He went*—He went from Christ and his company, who were at Bethany, in the house of Simon, to the house of Caiaphas, the high-priest, whom he knew to be a most inveterate enemy to his Master, and having found means of introducing himself, and communicating his general design, *communied*, or conversed, *with the chief priests and captains*—Called *captains of the temple*, verse 52. They were Jewish officers, who presided over the guards which kept watch every night in the temple. The result of their communing is not mentioned, only by the sequel it appears, that he informed the priests of the place where his Master used to spend the nights, and undertook to conduct a band of armed men thither, who, in the absence of the multitude, might easily take him. And, because none of them were so well acquainted with Jesus as to be able to distinguish him from his disciples, in the darkness of the night, he agreed to point him out to them by kissing him. *And they were glad*—When they

heard his proposal, they thought it very practicable, and rejoiced at so unexpected an offer from one of his disciples, to facilitate their measures. *And covenanted to give him money*—As a reward for that service. See on Matt. xxvi. 4-16. *And he promised*—To attend particularly to the affair; *and sought opportunity to betray him*—To put him into their hands in as private a manner as possible; *in the absence of the multitude*—That, knowing nothing of what was done, they might not raise a tumult, and rescue him out of the hands of those that seized him.

Verses 7-13. *Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed*—They called the day on which the passover was killed, one of the days of unleavened bread, and the first day thereof, because it was preparatory to that feast; though, properly speaking, the first day began with the passover-supper. This appears likewise from Josephus, who, making use of the vulgar computation, tells us, that the feast of unleavened bread lasted eight days; whereas, in the law, it was ordered to be kept only seven days. Thus Exod. xii. 19: *Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.* *He sent Peter and John*—From the place where he had spent the night before in retirement with them; *saying, Go and prepare us the passover*—Go, buy a lamb for us, and get it killed and roasted, and make the other preparations, *that we may, once more, eat it together.* *They said, Where wilt thou that we prepare?*—See on Matt. xxvi. 17, and Mark xiv. 10-16: where this paragraph is considered at large.

Verses 14-18. *When the hour was come, &c.*—When the evening approached, Jesus left Bethany; and every thing being prepared by the time he came

A. M. 4037. 15 And he said unto them, ² With
A. D. 33. desire I have desired to eat this pass-
over with you before I suffer.

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more
eat thereof, ³ until it be fulfilled in the kingdom
of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and
said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves.

² Or, I have heartily desired.—³ Chap. xiv. 15; Acts x. 41;
Rev. xix. 9.

into the city, they all sat down at the appointed hour. *And he said, With desire I have desired—That is, I have earnestly desired it. He desired it, both for the sake of his disciples, to whom he desired to manifest himself further, at this solemn parting; and for the sake of his whole church, that he might institute the grand memorial of his death. For I will not any more eat thereof until, &c.—That is, it will be the last time I shall eat with you before I die. The particle until, used here and verse 18, does not imply that, after the things signified by the passover were fulfilled, in the gospel dispensation, our Lord was to eat the passover. It is only a Hebrew form of expression, signifying that the thing mentioned was no more to be done for ever. Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven—That is, until the deliverance of mankind from the bondage of sin and death is procured by my death and resurrection; a deliverance typified by that of our fathers from the Egyptian bondage, to keep up the memory of which the passover was instituted. And he took the cup, and gave thanks—Having spoken as above, Jesus took a cup of wine in his hand, that cup which used to be brought at the beginning of the paschal solemnity, and gave thanks to Almighty God for his great goodness to his people, mentioning, no doubt, some of the principal instances thereof, especially their redemption, first from Egypt, and then from Babylon. And said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves, for I will not drink, &c.—As if he had said, Do not expect me to drink of it: I will drink no more before I die. Or, his meaning might be, After what passes, this evening, I will not drink any more with you of the fruit of the vine; therefore, as it is the last paschal supper that I shall partake of with you, let that consideration be an additional reason for your celebrating it with peculiar seriousness and devotion. Until the kingdom of God shall come—Till the gospel dispensation shall be fully opened, or till that complete and spiritual redemption, which is typified by this ordinance, shall be fulfilled and perfected.*

Verses 19, 20. *And he took bread—Namely, some time after, when the supper was ended, wherein they had eaten the paschal lamb. And gave thanks, and brake it—Matthew and Mark say, Blessed and brake it. They do not say, Blessed it: for the word it, though supplied in our translation in Matthew, is not in the original: for which reason, and because Luke here uses the word ευχαριστίας, he*

18 For ^b I say unto you, I will not ^{A. M. 4037.}
drink of the fruit of the vine, until ^{A. D. 33.}
the kingdom of God shall come.

19 ¶ ⁱ And he took bread, and gave thanks,
and brake it, and gave unto them, saying,
This is my body which is given for you: ^k this
do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, say—

^b Matt. xxvi. 29; Mark xiv. 25.—ⁱ Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv.
22.—^k 1 Cor. xi. 24.

gave thanks, many are of opinion that the word God should be supplied in Matthew; he blessed God. And gave unto them, saying, This is my body—That is, the representation of my body, to be broken on the cross. See the like form of expression, Gen. xli. 26, 27. As our Lord had just now celebrated the paschal supper, which was called the passover, so, in the like figurative language, he calls this bread his body. And this circumstance of itself was sufficient to prevent any such mistake, as that this bread was his real body, any more than the paschal lamb was really the passover. This do in remembrance of me—The passover solemnity was usually concluded with eating a little bread and drinking a cup of wine. Jesus, therefore, when he instituted the Lord's supper, did not appoint any new rite, but appropriated an old one to a new purpose. Hence the propriety of the expression, This do in remembrance of me. Do it no longer in remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt, but in remembrance of me, who, by dying for you, will bring you out of spiritual bondage, a bondage far worse than the Egyptian, under which your fathers groaned, and will establish you in the glorious liberty of God's children: do it in remembrance of me, who, by laying down my life, will ransom you from sin, and death, and hell; and will set open the gates of heaven to you, that you may enter immortality and triumph. Likewise also the cup after supper—This the Jews termed the cup of thanksgiving, it being the cup usually given by the master of the family to each after supper: and Matthew says, Jesus took this, and gave thanks. For, at the institution of the sacrament, he not only gave thanks before he brake and distributed the bread, but before he delivered the cup, to show how infinitely we are obliged to God for our spiritual food, the flesh and blood of his Son, which nourishes the divine life in the soul. Saying, This cup is the new testament, or covenant, (as the word διαθηκη rather means,) in my blood—Here is an undeniable figure, whereby the cup is put for the wine in the cup. And this is called, the new covenant in Christ's blood, which could not possibly mean that it was the new covenant itself, but only the seal of it, and the sign of that blood, which was shed to confirm it. In other words, as the expression, this is my body, signifies, This is the representation of my body; so, this is my blood of the new covenant, must signify, This is the representation of my blood. And Christ's meaning in the

A. M. 4037. ing, ¹ This cup is the new testament
A. D. 33. in my blood, which is shed for you.

21 ¶ ^m But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

22 ⁿ And truly the Son of man goeth ° as it was determined: but wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

¹ 1 Cor. x. 16.—^m Psa. xli. 9; Matt. xxvi. 21, 23; Mark xiv. 18; John xiii. 21, 26.—ⁿ Matt. xxvi. 24.

passage is: All of you, and all my disciples in all ages, must drink of this cup, because it represents my blood, shed for the remission of men's sins; my blood, in which the new covenant between God and man is ratified; so that this institution exhibits to your joyful meditation the grand foundation of men's hopes, and perpetuates the memory of the same to the end of the world.

We here see, then, that it is a primary end of this solemn service, to bring to the devout remembrance of Christians the death of their Master, as the foundation of the remission of their sins; and, in short, the whole mercy of the new covenant, as founded on the shedding of his blood. Therefore, they err who make the keeping up of the memory of Christ's death in the world, as a simple fact, the only end of the Lord's supper. We may observe, further, that "from our Lord's words, here recorded, and from those wherewith the apostle has concluded his account of the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. xi. 26, *As often as ye eat this bread, &c., ye do show (καταγγελλετε, ye preach, ye declare) the Lord's death till he come,* it appears this sacrament was instituted, not only to bring Christ's sufferings, and the consequence thereof, to the remembrance of his disciples, but to demonstrate the truth of these things to the world, in all ages. In this view, the Lord's supper is the strongest proof of his integrity, and of the truth of his mission; for if he had been an impostor, and was to have suffered death on account of his deluding the people, is it to be imagined that he would have instituted any rite with a view to preserve the memory of his having suffered punishment for the worst of crimes? No: this is beyond all human belief. And therefore, since by this institution he has perpetuated the memory of his own sufferings, it is a strong presumption that he was conscious of his own innocence, that his character was really what the evangelists have represented it to be, and that our faith in him, as the Son of God, is well founded."—Macknight.

Verses 21–23. *But behold*—Πλην ἰδὸς. This particle (πλην, *verumtamen, nevertheless, or notwithstanding*) "is a proof," says Bengelius, "that Judas was present at the Lord's supper;" for it shows that Christ's discourse is continued without interruption; and it appears, from verse 14, that when he sat down to the supper and begun the discourse, the twelve were with him: Dr. Lightfoot was of the same opinion, who says, "What can be desired more, as a demonstration that Judas was present at

23 ^p And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 ¶ ^q And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25 ^r And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and

^p Acts ii. 23; iv. 28.—^q Matt. xxvi. 22; John xiii. 22, 25, Mark ix. 34; Luke ix. 46.—^r Matt. xx. 25; Mark x. 42.

the eucharist?" Thus also Henry: "By the placing this after the institution of the Lord's supper, it seems plain that Judas did receive that supper, did eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." On which he observes, "There have been those who have eaten bread with Christ, and yet have betrayed him." According to Matthew and Mark, however, Jesus pointed out Judas, as the traitor, to the disciples at this supper, before the institution of the sacrament, as at a prior supper (see John xiii. 23, &c.) he had done to John. Perhaps he did it both before and after he instituted the eucharist. So Dr. Macknight thought. "Our Lord," says he, "was now deeply affected with his own thoughts, for he uttered some of the things twice that lay heaviest upon his spirit, as persons in great concern are wont to do; particularly after delivering the sacramental cup, and telling them that his blood was shed for them, he mentioned the treachery of Judas a second time. And this second declaration came in very properly after the institution of the sacrament, which exhibits the highest instance of his love to mankind; his dying to obtain the remission of their sins. For it showed that the person who could deliberately do so great an injury to so kind a friend, must have been a monster, the foulness of whose ingratitude cannot be reached by the force of language." *The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table*—"Manus quæ sacramentum sumpsit, quæque hostibus perfidam fidem dedit." The hand which took the sacred supper, and which gave a perfidious promise to enemies. So Bengelius. *And truly the Son of man goeth*—That is, dieth; as it was determined—See on Matt. xxvi. 24, 25.

Verses 24–27. *And there was also a strife among them, &c.*—Of the kind of contentions here spoken of there are two instances recorded by the evangelists, evidently different from each other, and each attended with very different circumstances. The former is mentioned by Matthew, chap. xviii. 1–4; by Mark, chap. ix. 33–37; and by Luke, chap. ix. 46. This certainly is not that here referred to. The other, recorded Matt. xx. 20, &c.; and Mark x. 35, &c., is thought, by most commentators, to be that which Luke here speaks of. See the notes on these two last mentioned passages. Some, however, are of opinion, that a third contention of a similar kind arose among the disciples, at this last paschal supper which our Lord ate with them; and that it arose from some expressions which he dropped respecting the glory of his heavenly kingdom, which the dis-

A. M. 4037. they that exercise authority upon
A. D. 33. them are called benefactors.

26 ^aBut ye shall not be so: ^bbut he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 ^aFor whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? ^bis not he that sitteth at meat? but ^cI am among you as he that serveth.

^a Matt. xx. 26; 1 Pet. v. 3.—^b Chap. ix. 48.—^c Chap. xii. 37.—^d Matt. xx. 28; John xiii. 13, 14; Phil. ii. 7.—^e Heb. iv. 15.

ciples erroneously interpreted of a glorious temporal kingdom, which they continued to expect him to erect. And it must be acknowledged, that the manner in which Luke introduces his account of this dispute here, favours this interpretation of the passage. For, immediately after he had informed us of the disciples beginning to inquire among themselves which of them it was that should betray Christ, he proceeds to say, *And there was also a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest.* Be this as it may, if it really was a third contention of the same sort with those which had occurred before, it appears that Christ composed it by the arguments which he had made use of for the same end formerly. For, *he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, &c.*—Among the Gentiles, they are reckoned the greatest men who have the greatest power, and who exercise it in the most absolute manner. Such, however, have at times affected the pompous title of *benefactors*, (*εὐεργεταί*, a surname which some of the kings of Egypt and Syria assumed,) and thereby have tacitly acknowledged that true greatness consists in goodness. But your greatness shall not be like theirs; shall not consist in temporal power over your fellow-creatures, or in honour or dignity among them, though it should be joined with an affectation of titles which denote qualities truly honourable. Whosoever desires to be great among you, let him be so by his humility and by his serviceableness to the rest, in imitation of me, your Master, whose greatness consists in this, that I am become the servant of you all. *He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger*—According to the manner of the Jews, the aged expected great service and submission from the young; *and he that is chief*—He that presides over the rest in any office of peculiar trust and influence; *as he that doth serve*—Let him be as humble and condescending as the servant. *For whether is greater*—Which of the two is naturally accounted greater by a stranger who happens to come in; *he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth?*—That stands and waits upon the guests? *Is not he that sitteth at meat?*—Accounted greater? *But I am among you as he that serveth*—These words may, no doubt, have a respect to the whole of Christ's life; yet they seem to refer more particu-

28 Ye are they which have con- A. M. 4037.
tinued with me in ^amy tempta- A. D. 33.
tions;

29 And ^aI appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ^aye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, ^band sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, be

^a Matt. xxiv. 47; Chap. xii. 32; 2 Cor. i. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 12. ^b Matt. viii. 11; Chap. xiv. 15; Rev. xix. 9.—^c Psa. xlix. 14; Matt. xix. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 2; Rev. iii. 21.

larly to his having lately washed the disciples' feet, as John informs us, chap. xiii. 14. See notes on Matt. xx. 25, 28. "It seems to have been our Lord's view," says Dr. Campbell, "in these instructions, not only to check in his apostles all ambition of power, and every thing which savoured of a desire of superiority and dominion over their brethren; but also to restrain that species of vanity which is near akin to it, the affectation of distinction from titles of respect and dignity. Against this vice particularly the clause under consideration seems to be levelled. The reflection naturally suggested by it is, How little are any, the most pompous epithets which men can bestow, worthy the regard of a good man, who observes how vilely, through servility and flattery, they are sometimes prostituted on the most undeserving."

Verses 28-30. *Ye have continued with me in my temptations*—*Ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς μου*, in my trials and afflictions: and his whole life was little else than one continued series of them, particularly from the time of his entering on his public ministry. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom*—I will preserve you in all your temptations and trials here, and will confer on you a kingdom of glory hereafter: *I appoint*, not a primacy to one, but a kingdom to every one; and that on the same terms as *my Father hath appointed to me*—Who have fought and conquered. *That ye may eat and drink at my table, &c.*—That ye may enjoy the highest happiness as guests, not as servants, and the highest dignity, not as subjects, but as princes. Now as these honours, which I shall hereafter confer on you, are incomparably beyond those about which you seem so solicitous, let a consideration of this awaken a nobler ambition in your minds, than that which appears now to influence them; and, instead of contending for superiority over each other, in my church militant, in which you must expect to meet with continual reproach and suffering, aspire after high degrees of that celestial glory, which you are to share with me in my church triumphant. See on Matt. xix. 28, 29. The words seem to be primarily applicable to the twelve apostles, and secondarily to all Christ's servants and disciples, whose spiritual powers, honours, and delights, are here represented in figurative terms, with respect to their advancement both in the kingdom of grace and glory.

Verses 31-34. *And the Lord said, &c.*—To make

A. M. 4037. hold, ° Satan hath desired to have
A. D. 33. you, that he may ^dsift you as wheat :

32 But ° I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: ^f and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 ° And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou

^c 1 Pet. v. 8.—^d Am. ix. 9.—^e John xvii. 9, 11, 15.—^f Psa. li. 13; John xxi. 15-17.

his disciples humble and watchful, and kindly affectionate one to another, Christ assured them, that Satan was seeking to destroy them all by his temptations. As if he had said, *O Simon, Simon, behold Satan*—As in the case of Job; (Job ii. 4, 5;) *hath desired to have you*—My apostles, ἐπιηρατο υμας, *hath required you, or sought you out*; or *requested permission*, as Dr. Campbell translates it; *to sift you as wheat*—To assault you by furious and violent temptations, or to try you to the uttermost. I must assure thee, therefore, that an hour of terrible trial is just at hand, which will press harder than thou art aware, on thee and all thy companions here. *But I*—Forseeing the danger to which thou, Peter, wilt be peculiarly exposed, I have graciously prevented thee with my watchful care; and *have prayed for thee*—For thou wilt be in the greatest danger of all my disciples; in order that thy faith fail not—Altogether. *And when thou art converted*—Renewed to repentance, or *hast returned* to thy duty, as ἐπιστρεφας may be rendered; when thou art recovered from thy fall, and confirmed again in faith and holiness; *strengthen thy brethren*—All that are weak in faith, or shaken in mind by the approaching trial, and ready to relinquish the service they have undertaken. When thou art recovered by the grace of God, do what thou canst to recover others; when thy own faith is strengthened, labour to confirm the faith of others, and to establish them; when thou hast found mercy, encourage others to hope that they also shall find it. And do thine utmost, all the remainder of thy days, by word and deed, to engage all, over whom thou hast any influence, to a steady adherence to my cause in the midst of the greatest difficulties, and especially by setting them an example of eminent faith and fortitude. *And he said, Lord, I am ready to go with thee to prison and to death*—So Peter thought at this time: and such was his present intention and resolution; but he was not sufficiently acquainted with himself, nor aware of his own weakness. See on Matt. xxvi. 33-35. *And he saith, I tell thee, Peter*—I most assuredly say unto thee; *the cock shall not crow this day*—Or rather, it shall not be the time of cock-crowing to-day, see on Mark xiv. 39; *before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me*—And shalt solemnly disclaim all regard to me. So terrified shalt thou be at the faces of these enemies whom thou now defiest. In other words, notwithstanding thy pretend-

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shalt thrice deny that thou knowest A. M. 4037.
me. A. D. 33.

35 ¶ ^b And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

^g Matt. xxvi. 34; Mark xiv. 30; John xiii. 38.—^h Matt. x. 9; Chap. ix. 3: x. 4.

ed affection and fortitude, a few hours shall not pass till, in great consternation at the dangers with which I and my disciples shall 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.

Verses 35-37. *And he said, When I sent you without purse, &c.*—“Our Lord, having finished what he had to say to Peter in particular, now turned to the other disciples, and put them in mind how they had been prohibited, when they were first sent out, to make any provision for their journey, and directed to rely wholly on God; and that, though they had accordingly gone away without purse, scrip, and shoes, they had never wanted any thing, but had had abundant provision made for them by the kindness of men whom God had disposed to befriend them: but he told them that matters were now altered; they were to be violently assaulted by their enemies, were to meet with the strongest temptations, and to be so hotly persecuted by their countrymen, that they could no longer expect any succour at their hands; for which reason, he ordered them in their future journeys to provide money, and clothes, and swords for themselves: that is, besides relying on the Divine Providence, as formerly, they were to use all prudent precautions in fortifying themselves against the trials that were coming on them.”—Macknight. Or rather, these commands to arm themselves against dangers, are to be considered merely as predictions and warnings given them of the dangers and trials they were to meet with. For the predictions of the prophets are often announced under the form of commands. Thus Isaiah, foretelling the destruction of the family of the king of Babylon, chap. xiv. 21, says, *Prepare slaughter for his children, &c.* And Jeremiah, foretelling in like manner the destruction of the Jews, exhibits God as thus addressing them, chap. ix. 17, 18, *Call for the mourning women, &c.* And in the prophecy of Ezekiel (chap. xxxix. 17-19) and in the Apocalypse (chap. xix. 17, 18) this allegoric spirit is carried so far, that orders are given to brute animals to do what the prophet means only to foretel they would do. *For this prophecy that is written, must yet be*

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A. M. 4037. 37 For I say unto you, that this
A. D. 33.

that is written must yet be accomplished in me, ¹ And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

39 ¶ ^k And he came out, and ^l went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 ^m And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

¹ Isa. liii. 12; Mark xv. 28.—^k Matt. xxvi. 36; Mark xiv. 32; John xviii. 1.—^l Chap. xxi. 37.—^m Matt. vi. 13; xxvi. 41; Mark xiv. 38; Verse 46.

accomplished—As all the other predictions of the prophets concerning me must also be: *and he was numbered with the transgressors*—Prepare, therefore, to meet a most violent persecution; for I, your Leader, am to be treated as a malefactor, and of course you, my followers, will not escape suffering. Nor are these trials at a distance, they are just at hand. *For the things which are written concerning me have an end*—Are now drawing to a period, are upon the point of being accomplished. *And they said, Behold, here are two swords*—Our Lord's disciples, mistaking his meaning about the swords, replied, they had two: the reason why they had any at all, probably, was, that they might defend themselves against robbers in their journey from Galilee and Perea; and from the beasts of prey, which in those parts were very frequent, and dangerous in the night-time: *And he said unto them, It is enough*—To show them their mistake, he told them that two swords were sufficient, which it is evident they could not have been for so many men, had he meant what he said in a literal sense. He only meant, This will be a time of extreme danger; to meet which, it will be necessary to be prepared by faith, fortitude, and patience.

Verses 39–46. *He went, as he was wont*—As was his custom every night; *to the mount of Olives*—See on Matt. xxvi. 30–32. *And when he was at the place*—When he had entered the garden of Gethsemane; *he said, Pray that ye enter not into temptation*—Having forewarned them of the lamentable effect which his sufferings would have upon them; that they would all stumble that very night, according to the prophecy of Zechariah, he exhorted them to pray that the temptation might not entirely prevail against them, and cause their faith to fail altogether. *And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast*—Namely, not only from the other disciples, whom he had left at the entrance into the garden, but from Peter, James, and John, whom he had taken with him farther into it: *kneeled down*—Matthew, fell on his face; Mark, fell on the ground;

41 ⁿ And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled
A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33.

down, and prayed,
42 Saying, Father, if thou be ³ willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, ^o not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared ^p an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 ^q And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

ⁿ Matt. xxvi. 39; Mark xiv. 35.—³ Gr. *willing to remove*.—^o John v. 30; vi. 38.—^p Matt. iv. 11.—^q John xii. 27; Heb. v. 7.

and prayed, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup—The Greek rather means, "O that thou wouldst remove this cup!" ^α being evidently a particle of wishing. Therefore, in Mark it is, *He prayed, that if it were possible the hour might pass from him*; saying, *Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; take away this cup from me*. It seems, he first kneeled and prayed, as Luke here says; then, in the vehemence of his earnestness, he fell on his face, and spake the words recorded by Matthew and Mark. In the meantime, his prayer, though most fervent, was accompanied with due expressions of resignation; for he immediately added, (Matthew,) *Nevertheless, not as (Mark, what) I will, but as (Mark, what) thou wilt*; or, as Luke here has it, *not my will, but thine be done*. *And there appeared an angel*—Probably standing near him in a visible form; *strengthening him*—Lest his body should sink and die before the time; and perhaps suggesting such holy consolations as were most proper to animate his soul in such a struggle. It is probable, that during this time of suffering the divine nature had withdrawn its usual support. *And being in an agony*—Probably now conflicting with the powers of darkness; feeling the weight of the wrath of God, due to the sins of mankind, and at the same time surrounded with a mighty host of devils, who exercised all their force, subtlety, and malice to persecute, distract, and oppress his wounded spirit; *he prayed more earnestly*—Than before, even with stronger cries and tears; *and his sweat*—Cold as the weather was; *was as it were great drops of blood*—Which, by the vehement distress of his soul, were forced out of the pores of his body, in so great a quantity as afterward united in large, thick, grumous drops, and even fell to the ground. Thus Jesus suffered unspeakable sorrows in his soul, as long as the divine wisdom saw fit. At length he obtained relief, being heard in that which he feared, (Heb. v. 7), or, on account of his piety, or perfect submission to the will of his Father, as *απο της ενλαβειας*, may be translated.

Verses 45, 46. *And when he rose up from prayer*—

A. M. 4037. 46 And said unto them, Why sleep
A. D. 33. ye? rise and 'pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, 'behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

* Verse 40.—Matt. xxvi. 47; Mark xiv. 43; John

After this dreadful conflict; and *was come to his disciples*—Namely, the third time; notwithstanding the repeated admonitions he had given them, *he again found them sleeping*—And that, as the evangelist says, *for sorrow*—The sensations of grief which they felt at the sight of their Master's distress so overpowering them, that they sunk into sleep; a circumstance which shows how much they were affected with his sufferings. *And said unto them, Why sleep ye*—Why do you still persist to sleep at such a season as this? I call upon you yet once more, *to rise and pray, lest ye enter into* and fall by the approaching most dangerous temptation. See the various circumstances attending this dreadful scene of our Lord's sufferings in the garden more fully elucidated in the notes on Matt. xxvi. 36-46; and Mark xiv. 32, &c.

Verses 47, 48. *And while he yet spake, behold, a multitude* had entered the garden, consisting of persons of very different stations and offices in life; and *Judas went before them*—To lead them to the place, and show them the man they wanted, by kissing him. See on Matt. xxvi. 47-56; Mark xiv. 43-49. *Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?*—Dost thou make my condescending kindness the occasion of thy base treachery, and use that as the signal of it, which, among men, is the usual token either of love or homage? And dost thou thus betray him who is thy Lord and Master, and whom thou canst not but know to be the Messiah, entitled in the Scriptures, *the Son of man*? And dost thou think that he can be imposed upon by this poor artifice? or that God, who has promised him so glorious and triumphant a kingdom, will not punish such baseness and cruelty to him? "There is great reason to believe," says Dr. Doddridge, "that our Lord uses this phrase of *the Son of man* to Judas on this occasion, (as he had done the same evening at supper, twice in a breath,) in the sense here given. And it adds a spirit to these words that has not often been observed, which the attentive reader will discern to be attended with much greater strength and beauty, than if our Lord had only said, *Dost thou betray me with a kiss?*"

Verses 49-51. *When they which were about him saw what would follow*—That the band was just going to seize Jesus, or had already seized him, and were about to lead him away; *they said, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?*—Thou didst allow us to have two swords, shall we now make use of them?

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49 When they which were about A. M. 4037
him saw what would follow, they A. D. 33.
said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 ¶ And 'one of them smote a servant of the high-priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

xviii. 3.—' Matt. xxvi. 51; Mark xiv. 47; John xviii. 10.

Surely never can there be a greater occasion for doing it: and we doubt not but, few as we are, thou canst render us victorious over this armed multitude. They did not wait for an answer from Jesus, but *one of them*—Namely, Peter, immediately *smote the servant of the high-priest*—One who, it is probable, was the forwardest, and seemed peculiarly officious in seizing Christ. Peter struck full at his head, intending to cleave him down, but the stroke glanced a little on one side, so that he only cut off his right ear. *Jesus said, Suffer ye thus far*—Let me go to the wounded man, and have my hands at liberty, while I do one more act of mercy. *And he touched his ear, and healed him*—Putting the ear on again, which was cut off, or creating a new one in the place of it. It may not be improper to observe, that two other interpretations are given of the clause, *Suffer ye thus far*. "All antiquity," says Dr. Campbell, "seems agreed in understanding our Lord's expression as a check to his disciples, by intimating that they were not to proceed further in the way of resistance, as it was not to such methods of defence that he chose to recur: and what is recorded by the other evangelists, as likewise said on the occasion, strongly confirms this explanation." Dr. Whitby thinks that Christ spake thus to the soldiers, desiring them thus far to suffer the rash opposition of his disciples, and not to proceed to violence against them, on account of the assault made, and injury done by one of them, which he would immediately repair; for it follows, *and he healed him*. "And this," adds the doctor, "he said and did partly to show, that he, who had such power to heal, and (John xviii. 6) to throw down his enemies, was taken willingly, and not for want of power to preserve himself: and partly to preserve his apostles from their assaults." It must be acknowledged that all these interpretations are plausible; but the first, which is adopted by Elsner, Doddridge, Macknight, Wesley, and many others, seems as probable as either of the others, and certainly exhibits the mercy and benevolence of our Lord in the most amiable and striking point of view. And one would have thought, that such a generous piece of kindness to his enemies would have so overcome them, that they would have proceeded no further against him. But, alas! their hearts were hardened! How illustriously did our Lord now exemplify his own rule of *doing good to them that hate us*, as he afterward

A. M. 4037. 52 ^a Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders which were come to him, Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: ^a but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

54 ¶ ^γ Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought him into the high-priest's house. ^z And Peter followed afar off.

55 ^a And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 ^b And after a little while another saw him,

^a Matt. xxvi. 55; Mark xiv. 48.—^x John xii. 27.—^γ Matt. xxvi. 57.—^z Matt. xxvi. 58; John xviii. 15.—^a Matt. xxvi. 69; Mark xiv. 66; John xviii. 17, 18.—^b Matt. xxvi. 71;

did that which enjoins us to *pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us.*

Verses 52, 53. *Jesus said unto the chief priests, captains, &c.*—The soldiers and servants were sent to apprehend Jesus, but these chief priests, &c. came of their own accord; and, it seems, kept at a distance during the scuffle, but drew near when they understood that Jesus was taken. *Be ye come out as against a thief?*—See on Matt. xxvi. 55, 56. *This is your hour*—Before which you could not take me; *and the power of darkness*—The time when Satan has power.

Verses 54–62. *Then took they him, and brought him into the high-priest's house*—See on Matt. xxvi. 57; and Mark xiv. 53, 54. *When they had kindled a fire, Peter sat down among them*—See the story of Peter's three-fold denial of Christ elucidated at large in the notes on Matt. xxvi. 69–75; and Mark xiv. 66–72. *Another saw him, and said*—Observe here, in order to reconcile the four evangelists, that divers persons concurred in charging Peter with belonging to Christ. 1st, The maid that let him in, afterward seeing him at the fire, first put the question to him, and then positively affirmed that he was with Christ. 2d, Another maid accused him to the standers by, and gave occasion to the man here mentioned to renew the charge against him, which caused the second denial. 3d, Others of the company took notice of his being a Galilean, and were seconded by the kinsman of Malchus, who affirmed he had seen him in the garden. And this drew on the third denial. *And about an hour after*—So he did not recollect himself in all that time.

Verses 63–65. *And the men that held Jesus mocked*

and said, Thou art also of them. A. M. 4037. And Peter said, Man, I am not. A. D. 33.

59 ^o And about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. ^d And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, ^e Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

63 ¶ ^f And the men that held Jesus, mocked him, and smote *him*.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

Mark xiv. 69; John xviii. 25.—^c Matt. xxvi. 73; Mark xiv. 70; John xviii. 26.—^d Matt. xxvi. 75; Mark xiv. 72.—^e Matt. xxvi. 34, 75; John xiii. 38.—^f Matt. xxvi. 67, 68; Mark xiv. 65.

him—What has just been related concerning Peter, passed while the priests examined Jesus, of which examination, before Luke gives an account, he mentions the following remarkable circumstance, namely, that the men who held Jesus *mocked him and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, struck him on the face*—These circumstances are placed by Matthew and Mark after the council's condemning him. Perhaps he was abused in the same manner both before and after his condemnation. Certainly "his judges and their retinue were abundantly capable of being thus unjust and barbarous toward him. Nevertheless, what Luke has said here, does not necessarily oblige us to suppose this. He might conclude his account of Peter's denials with relating what followed upon our Lord's being condemned, because it happened immediately after the last denial; and to show what a load of indignity was laid at once on the Son of God; namely, that while the most zealous of all his disciples was denying him with oaths and imprecations, the servants and others were insulting him in the most barbarous manner."—Macknight. *Saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?*—"This usage of Christ," says Dr. Hammond, "refers to that sport so ordinary among children, called *μωδα*, in which it is the manner, first to blindfold, then to strike, (verse 63,) then to ask who gave the blow, and not to let the person go till he had named the right man who had struck him. It was used on this occasion to reproach our blessed Lord, and to expose him to ridicule." *Many other things spake they blasphemously against him*—The expression is remarkable. They charged him with blasphemy, because he said he was the Son of God: but the

A. M. 4037. 66 ¶ ^ε And as soon as it was day, A. D. 33. ^h the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes came together, and led him into their council,

67 Saying, ⁱ Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe.

68 And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go.

^ε Matthew xxvii. 1.—^h Acts iv. 26; xxii. 5.—ⁱ Matthew xxvi. 63; Mark xiv. 61.—^h Matt. xxvi. 64; Mark xiv. 62;

evangelist fixes that charge on them, because he was really so.

Verses 66-71. *And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief-priests, &c., came together*—When the band of soldiers arrived at the high-priest's with Jesus, they found many of the chief-priests, and the scribes, and the elders assembled there. (Mark xiv. 53.) Some persons of distinction, however, may have been absent, whose coming the rest would wait for. Wherefore, although the soldiers brought Jesus to the high-priest's a while after midnight, his trial did not begin till about three in the morning: the intermediate time being spent in procuring witnesses, in sending for the absent members, in gathering the clerks and officers of the court, and in fitting up an apartment for the trial. For, that Jesus was tried by the council, not in the temple, as many suppose, but in the high-priest's palace, is evident from John xviii. 28, where we are expressly told, that they led Jesus from Caiaphas's house to the pretorium. *Saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us*—Dost thou give up the pretensions thou hast formerly made, or dost thou maintain them? If thou art indeed the Messiah, tell us plainly, and it will bring matters to a short issue. It seems, these wretches hoped to gain a great advantage against Jesus either way; if he confessed it, they would condemn him on that confession; and if he denied it, they would expose him on that denial, as afraid to maintain the pretensions he had made. *And he said, If I tell you*—That I am the Christ, and give you the most convincing proofs of it, you are resolved that *you will not believe*. *And if I ask you*—What you have to object against the proofs I produce; *you will not answer me*—Here he seems to refer to their silence, when he put a ques-

69 ^κ Hereafter shall the Son of A. M. 4037. man sit on the right hand of the A. D. 33. power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, ^l Ye say that I am.

71 ^m And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

Heb. i. 3; viii. 1.—^κ Matt. xxvi. 64; Mark xiv. 62.—^l Matt. xxvi. 65; Mark xiv. 63.

tion to them which would have led them to his own authority, chap. xx. 5-7. *Nor let me go*—If I be not the Christ, you ought to answer the arguments by which I prove that I am; if I be, you ought to let me go; but you will do neither: you will only overbear me with renewed violence. *Hereafter shall the Son of man sit, &c.*—The day will come, when ye shall see the Son of man, who now stands in this despised and lowly form at your tribunal, exalted to all the dignity and glory which that high title imports; *sitting on the right hand of the power of God*—And coming with irresistible strength to take vengeance on the proudest of his enemies. See on Matt. xxvi. 59-64; and Mark xiv. 53-65. *Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God?*—A number of them cried out together, feigning great astonishment at the blasphemy, as they were pleased to call it, of his answer, and desiring him to repeat it, lest they might have mistaken him, asked, *Art thou then the Son of God?*—Both these, *the Son of God, and the Son of man*, were known titles of the Messiah, the one taken from his divine, and the other from his human, nature. *And he said unto them, Ye say that I am*—This, according to the Jewish manner of speaking, was a plain and strong affirmation of the thing expressed. When the high-priest heard our Lord's second reply, he solemnly rent his clothes, crying out, that he had spoken blasphemy; and, appealing to the council, he said, *What need we any further witness?* (Mark xvi. 64.) *And they said, What need we, &c.*—The council replied, As you have justly observed, what need have we of witnesses now, seeing we ourselves have heard in what manner he hath blasphemed? And being asked what punishment he deserved, they answered, that he deserved death. Matt. xxvi. 26, 66.

CHAPTER XXIII.

In this chapter the history of Christ's sufferings and death is continued and concluded. (1.) He is accused to Pilate, the Roman governor, as an enemy to Cesar, and tried without evidence, 1-5. (2.) Being represented as a Galilean, he is sent to Herod the tetrarch, and despitefully used, 6-12. (3.) Convinced of his innocence, Pilate labours to release him; but at last, yielding to the importunity of the Jews, condemns him to be crucified, 13-25. (4.) Being hurried away to execution, he foretells to the lamenting women the miseries coming on their nation, 26-31. (5.) He is crucified along with

two thieves, and insolently derided, 32-38. (6.) While one of the thieves rails against him, the other is converted, and acknowledges him to be the true Messiah, 39-43. (7.) He commends his soul to God; and his death is attended with affecting prodigies, 44-49. (8.) He is honourably buried by Joseph of Arimathea, and others, 50-56.

A. M. 4037. **AND** * the whole multitude of them
A. D. 33. arose, and led him unto Pilate.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow ^bperverting the nation, and ^cforbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, ^dthat he himself is Christ, a king.

3 * And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests, and to the people, ^fI find no fault in this man.

* Thursday before Easter, gospel, ver. 1 to ver. 50.—^a Matt. xxvii. 2; Mark xv. 1; John xviii. 28.—^b Acts xvii. 7.—^c Matt.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIII.

Verses 1-3. *And the whole multitude of them*—Namely, of the chief priests, scribes, and elders, *arose and led him unto Pilate*—See on Matt. xxvii. 42; and Mark xv. 1. *And they began to accuse him*—Charging him with three capital crimes; *perverting the nation, forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, and saying, that he himself was Christ, a king*. They did not charge him with calling himself *the Son of God*, knowing very well that Pilate would not have concerned himself with such an accusation, which no way affected the state. All the three crimes, however, with which the Jews charge him, were only inferences of theirs, from his saying that he was the Son of God, chap. xxii. 70. They themselves drew imaginary consequences from his doctrine, which he had expressly denied; nay, and taught the contrary: and they who oppose his followers still use the same method. They lay to their charge things of which they are perfectly innocent, and on that ground persecute them with violence. The truth is, the opposition which these chief priests and others made to Christ, proceeded from mere malice and envy: and they pretended zeal for Cesar only to ingratiate themselves with Pilate, and to procure from him a condemnatory sentence against Jesus, without which they knew they could not accomplish their design of putting him to death. So far were they from being in reality zealous for, or even well affected toward Cesar, that a general uneasiness, of which Pilate was not ignorant, prevailed in the nation under the Roman yoke, and they wanted nothing but an opportunity to shake it off. And now they wished Pilate to believe, that this Jesus was active to foment that general discontent, of which, in reality, they themselves were the aiders and abettors. Christ had particularly taught, that they ought to give tribute to Cesar, though he knew many would be offended with him for it; and yet he is here falsely accused as forbidding to pay that tribute! As to making himself a rival with Cesar, it is certain that the chief reason why they rejected him, and would not own him to be the Messiah, was

5 And they were the more fierce, ^{A. M. 4037.}
saying, He stirreth up the people, ^{A. D. 33.}
teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto ^eHerod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.

8 ¶ And when Herod saw Jesus, he was

xxvii. 27; xxii. 21; Mark xii. 17.—^d John xix. 12.—^e Matt xxvii. 11; 1 Tim. vi. 13.—^f 1 Pet. ii. 22.—^g Chap. iii. 1.

because he did not appear in worldly pomp and power, and assume the character of a temporal prince, nor do any thing against Cesar. He did indeed say that he was Christ, and if so, then a king; but not such a king as was ever likely to give disturbance to Cesar.

Verses 4-9. *Then said Pilate*—After having heard his defence. See on Matt. xxvii. 11-14; and Mark xv. 2-5. *I find no fault in this man*—I do not find that he either attempts or asserts any thing injurious to Cesar. *And they were the more fierce*—The priests were not disconcerted or abashed by the public declaration, which the governor, in obedience to conscience and truth, made of the prisoner's innocence; for they persisted in their accusations with more vehemence than before, affirming that he had attempted to raise a sedition in Galilee. They probably mentioned Galilee, either to alarm Pilate, the Galileans being notorious for sedition and rebellion; or to influence him, knowing that he was prejudiced against the people of that country. Pilate, hearing of Galilee, asked whether the prisoner came out of that country? and, being informed that he did, he ordered him to be carried away immediately to Herod, who was then in Jerusalem. Perhaps he supposed that the prince, in whose dominions the sedition was said to have been raised, could be a better judge of the affair than he. Moreover, as Herod was a Jew, expert in the religion and customs of his country, the governor imagined, that he might have had influence with the priests to desist. Or, if at their solicitation he should condemn Jesus, Pilate thought to escape the guilt and infamy of putting an innocent person to death. He might also propose to regain Herod's friendship, formerly lost, perhaps by encroaching on his privileges. But whatever was his motive, the king, who had of a long time desired to see Jesus, rejoiced at this opportunity; for he hoped he should have the pleasure of seeing him work some miracle or other. Nevertheless, because Herod had disregarded the admonitions of John the Baptist, and had been guilty of the heinous crime of putting him to death, Jesus, liberal as he was of his

A. M. 4037. exceeding glad: for ^b he was desirous
A. D. 33. to see him of a long *season*, because
¹ he had heard many things of him; and he
hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many
words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and
vehemently accused him.

^b Ch. ix. 9.—¹ Mat. xiv. 1; Mark vi. 14.—² Isa. liii. 8.—¹ Acts

miracles to the poor and afflicted, would not work
them to gratify the curiosity of a tyrant, nor so
much as answered one of his questions, though,
verse 9, he proposed many to him, probably con-
cerning the miracles which were reported to have
been wrought by him. "In this our Lord followed
the rule observed by God in the administration of
his moral government. He bestows on men means,
opportunities, and assistances, such as, if they im-
prove them properly, will lead them to knowledge,
holiness, and happiness. But, these being slighted
by men, God, after waiting the determined time, for
wise reasons, shuts up from them all the springs of
grace, and leaves them hopeless of that salvation,
which they have so long despised."—Macknight.

Verses 10–12. *And the chief priests and scribes*—
Whose malice had brought them to attend him
thither; *stood*—In the presence of the king; and
vehemently accused him—Doubtless as an enemy to
Cesar, and guilty of seditious practices, crimes which
they had laid to his charge before Pilate. Observe,
reader, it is no new thing for good men and good
ministers, who are real and useful friends to the civil
government, to be falsely accused as factious and
seditious, and enemies to the government. *Herod,*
with his men of war—Namely, those of his soldiers
who now attended him as his life-guard; *set him at*
naught—Treated him in a very contemptuous man-
ner, as a despicable person beneath their notice; and
who no way answered the account they had heard
of him, as he neither said nor did any thing to gra-
tify their curiosity. *And arrayed him in a gorgeous*
robe—Herod, finding himself disappointed in his
expectation of seeing Jesus work miracles, ordered
him to be clothed with a robe, in colour like those
which kings used to wear, and permitted his attend-
ants to insult him. Thus Herod, who had been ac-
quainted with John the Baptist, and had more know-
ledge of Christ too, and of religion, than Pilate had,
was more abusive to Christ than Pilate was: for
knowledge without grace does but make men more
ingeniously wicked. Our Lord's being dressed in
this manner by Herod's order, shows, that here also
the priests had accused him of having assumed the
titles and honours belonging to the Messiah; for the
affront put upon him was plainly in derision of that
pretension. The other head of accusation, his
having attempted to raise a sedition in Galilee, on
account of the tribute, they durst not touch upon,
because Herod could not fail to know the gross
falseness of it. Herod's usage of our Lord was

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11 ^k And Herod with his men of ^{A. M. 4037.}
war set him at naught, and mocked ^{A. D. 33}
him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and
sent him again to Pilate.

12 ¶ And the same day ¹ Pilate and Herod
were made friends together; for before they
were at enmity between themselves.

13 ¶ ^m And Pilate, when he had called to—

iv. 27.—^m Matt. xxvii. 23; Mark xv. 14; John xviii. 38; xix. 4.

exceedingly insolent, but, perhaps, the remorse of
conscience, which he had felt on account of the
murder of John the Baptist, might render him cau-
tious how he joined in any attempt on the life of
Jesus, which we do not find that he ever did. The
expression, *εσθητα λαμπραν*, which we render, *a*
gorgeous robe, is translated in the Vulgate, *veste*
alba, *a white garment*, and by Erasmus, Castalio,
Beza, and in the Zurich translation, *veste splendida*,
a shining garment. "Though the Greek word may
be rendered either way," says Dr. Campbell, "I
prefer the latter, as denoting that quality of the
garment which was the most remarkable; for this
epithet was most properly given to those vestments,
wherein both qualities, *white* and *shining*, were
united. Such white and splendid robes were worn
in the East by sovereigns." *And he sent him again*
to Pilate—Without further injury, thereby intimat-
ing, that he left him to do what he pleased with his
prisoner, but that, for his own part, he apprehended
his pretensions to royalty worthy of derision rather
than serious resentment. *And the same day Herod*
and Pilate were made friends together—Whatever
Pilate's real intentions were, in sending Jesus to
Herod to be examined by him, his doing this was so
well taken by the latter; and Herod's sending him
back to the Roman governor was, on the other hand,
such a public instance of regard to him, that this
mutual obligation, with the messages that passed
between them on this occasion, brought them to a
better understanding one of another, than there had
been of late between them. *For before they were*
at enmity between themselves—The cause of this
enmity can only be conjectured: perhaps it might
be the slaughter which Pilate had made of some of
the Galileans, who had come up to offer sacrifices at
Jerusalem, spoken of Luke xiii. 1; or, perhaps, Pi-
late had encroached upon Herod's jurisdiction, by
giving judgment in causes which concerned his
subjects: and therefore Herod, looking upon the
sending of Jesus to him to be judged, because he
was a Galilean, as a reparation for former offences,
was forthwith reconciled to Pilate. Observe, reader,
how those who quarrelled with one another, could
yet unite against Christ, as Gebal, and Ammon, and
Amalek, though divided among themselves, were
confederate against the Israel of God, Psa. lxxxiii. 7.

Verses 13–16. *And Pilate*—Having received an
account of what had passed before Herod; *called*
together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people
—Namely, such of them as had appeared against

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A. M. 4037. gether the chief priests, and the rulers,
A. D. 33. and the people,

14 Said unto them, ⁿ Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, ^o I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him;

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him:

16 ^p I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*.

* Verses 1, 2. — Verse 4. — Matt. xxvii. 26; John xix. 1.

Jesus as his accusers; and said, *Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people*—As having taught doctrines injurious to your religion, and also to the civil peace and the Roman government; and behold *I have examined him before you*—And heard all that could be alleged against him; and have found no fault in this man—*Οὐδέν αἰτιῶν, no crime, or cause for accusation; touching the things whereof you accuse him*—None of which you have proved against him. *No, nor yet Herod*—He has discovered no fault in him, though much better acquainted than I am with your customs and religion. *Lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him*—*Εἰς πεπραγμένον αὐτοῦ, hath been done by him*: for, instead of sending him back, like one who deserves a capital sentence, he has treated him like an idiot rather than a traitor, so as plainly to show that he thinks him to be merely an object of ridicule. *I will therefore chastise him*—Namely, by scourging; and *release him*—And am persuaded he will give us no further trouble: nor would he have interest enough to do it, if he were so inclined. Thus Pilate solemnly protests that he believes Christ has done nothing worthy of death or of bonds; and therefore, surely he ought immediately to have discharged him, and not only so, but to have protected him from the fury of the priests and rabble, and to have bound his persecutors to their good behaviour, for their insolent conduct. But, being himself a wicked man, he had of course no respect for Christ. Having made himself otherwise obnoxious, he was afraid of displeasing either the emperor or the people, and therefore, for want of integrity, he yields to a set of miscreants, whom he ought to have dispersed as a riotous and seditious assembly, and have forbid to come near him; for he plainly saw what spirit influenced them. He declares Christ to be innocent, and therefore has a mind to release him; yet, to please the people, 1st, He will release him under the character of a malefactor, because of necessity he must release one, verse 17; so that, whereas he ought to have released him as an act of justice, he will release him by an act of grace, and be beholden to the people for it. 2d, He will *chastise him, and release him*: But if no fault be chargeable upon him, why should he be chastised? There is as much injustice in

17 ^q (For of necessity he must A. M. 4037.
release one unto them at the feast.) A. D. 33.

18 And ^r they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas:

19 (Who, for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time,

† Matt. xxvii. 15; Mark xv. 6; John xviii. 39.— Acts iii. 14.

scourging as in crucifying an innocent man; nor could it be justified by pretending that this would satisfy the clamours of the people, and make him the object of their pity; for we must not do evil that good may come.

Verses 18–25. *They cried out all at once*—Thus, by giving ground a little, and proposing to chastise Jesus, to satisfy these wretches, Pilate only encouraged them to press on the more, and become more violent in their clamours for his crucifixion; saying, *Away with this man*—*Αἶψε τῶρον, tolle istum in crucem, crucify this fellow; and release unto us Barabbas, who for a certain sedition, and for murder, was cast into prison*—Thus the Jewish rulers demanded the release of a notorious villain, who had really been guilty of the crime whereof they had falsely accused Jesus; had made an insurrection with some accomplices; and had also committed murder in the insurrection, a crime which, though their impudence exceeded all bounds, they durst not lay to Christ's charge. For this infamous creature the people likewise begged life, preferring him to the Son of God, who had always made it his whole study to do them good! *Pilate, therefore, willing*—Or rather, *desirous; to release Jesus, spake again to them*—Luke does not tell us what the governor said to the people, but the other evangelists have supplied that defect. See on Matt. xxvii. 15–25, and Mark xv. 6–15. *But they*—Without so much as offering any further reason, persisted in their importunity; and *cried out as before, Crucify him, crucify him*—They not only would have him to die, but to die in the most ignominious and painful manner: nothing less will satisfy them than that he should be crucified. *And he*—Pilate; *said unto them the third time, Why? What evil hath he done*—Name his crime. What can you prove against him? *I have found no cause of death*—No cause why he should be put to death. We may observe here, as Peter, a disciple of Christ, dishonoured him by denying him thrice; so Pilate, a heathen, honoured Christ by thrice owning him to be innocent. *I will therefore*—As I said, (verse 16,) *chastise him*—By scourging, and then I hope your rage will be moderated, and you will be prevailed upon to agree that I should let him go, without any further punishment.

A. M. 4037. Why, what evil hath he done? I
A. D. 33. have found no cause of death in
him; I will therefore chastise him, and let
him go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices,
requiring that he might be crucified: and the
voices of them and of the chief priests pre-
vailed.

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should
be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for
sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom

* Matt. xxvii. 26; Mark xv. 15; John xix. 16.—¹ Or, assented,

But popular fury, the more it is complimented, the more furious it grows. Hence they were instant with loud voices—With great noises or outcries; not requesting, but requiring that he might be crucified—As if they had as much right at the feast to demand the crucifying of one that was innocent as the release of one that was guilty! And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed—Pilate at length yielded to their importunity, and consented to do what was contrary both to the conviction and inclination of his own mind, not having courage to withstand so strong a stream. He gave sentence that it should be as they required—Here we see judgment turned away backward, and justice standing afar off, for fear of popular fury! truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. He released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, &c.—Who hereby would be hardened in his wickedness, and do the more mischief; whom they desired—Being altogether such a one as themselves; but he delivered Jesus to their will—And he could not have dealt more barbarously with him than to deliver him to the will of them who hated him with a perfect hatred, and whose tender mercies were cruelties.

Verses 26, 27. And as they led him away—After he had been barbarously scourged and mocked, as is recorded, Matt. xxvii. 26–31, and Mark xv. 15–20, where see the notes; they laid hold on one Simon, coming out of the country—Who was probably a friend of Christ's, and known to be so; and on him they laid the cross—Which doubtless was done to put a reproach upon him; that he might bear it after Jesus—Lest Jesus should faint under it, and die away, and so prevent the farther instances of the malice which they designed. See on Matt. xxvii. 32. And there followed him a great company of people—Especially of women. These were not only his friends and well-wishers, but many others of the common people, who were not his enemies, and were moved with compassion toward him, because they had seen, or at least heard of, his wonderful works, and what a wise, holy, and benevolent man he was, and had reason to think he suffered unjustly; this drew a great crowd after him, some of whom were influenced by pity, others probably by curiosity; but

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they had desired; but he delivered A. M. 4037.
Jesus to their will. A. D. 33.

26 ¶ And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

Ex. xxiii. 2.—¹ Matt. xxvii. 32; Mark xv. 21; John xix. 17.

they also, as well as those that were his particular friends, bewailed and lamented him—So that, though there were many that reproached and reviled him, yet there were some that valued him, were sorry for him, and sympathized with him in his sufferings. Observe, reader, the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus may move the natural affections of many who are strangers to devout affections; and those may bewail Christ who do not savingly believe in him, and truly love him.

Verses 28, 29. But Jesus turning, said, &c.—Jesus, who ever felt the woes of others more than he did his own, forgetting his distress at the very time that it lay heaviest upon him, turned about, and with a benevolence and tenderness truly divine, said to them, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, &c.—Not that they were to be blamed for weeping for him, but commended rather: those hearts were hard indeed, that were not affected with such sufferings of such a person; but he bids them weep not only for him, but also and especially for themselves, and for their children, namely, because of the destruction that was coming upon Jerusalem, which some of them would probably live to see, and share in the calamities thereof; or at least their children would, for whom it behooved them to be solicitous. For the days are coming in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, &c.—As if he had said, "The calamities about to fall on you and your children are most terrible, and call for the bitterest lamentations; for in those days of vengeance you will vehemently wish that you had not given birth to a generation whose wickedness has rendered them objects of the divine wrath to a degree that never was experienced in the world before. And the thoughts of those calamities afflict my soul far more than the feeling of my own sufferings." These words sufficiently imply that the days of distress and misery were coming, and would fall on them and on their children; which indeed they did in a most awful manner; though at that time there was not any appearance of such an immediate ruin: nor would the wisest politician have inferred it from the present state of affairs. The prediction was especially fulfilled during that grievous famine which so miserably afflicted Jerusalem during the siege. For,

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A. M. 4037. 29 ^a For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say,

Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

30 ^x Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

31 ^r For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

^a Matt. xxiv. 19; Chapter xxi. 23.—^x Isa. ii. 19; Hos. x. 8; Rev. vi. 16; ix. 6.—^r Prov. xi. 31; Jer. xxv. 29; Ezk. xx. 47; xxi. 3, 4; 1 Pet. iv. 17.

as Josephus reports, (*Bell.*, v. 10.) mothers snatched the food from their infants out of their very mouths: and again, in another place, (*Bell.*, v. 12.) the houses were full of women and children, who perished by famine. But Josephus relates a still more horrid story, which our Lord, with his spirit of prophecy, had probably in view. He says, (*Bell.*, vi. 3.) "There was one Mary, the daughter of Eleazer, illustrious for her family and riches. She, having been stripped and plundered of all her substance and provisions by the soldiers, out of necessity and fury killed her own sucking child, and having boiled him, devoured half of him, and covering up the rest, preserved it for another time. The soldiers soon came, allured by the smell of victuals, and threatened to kill her immediately if she would not produce what she had dressed. But she replied, that she had preserved a good part for them, and uncovered the relict of her son. Dread and astonishment seized them, and they stood stupefied at the sight. 'But this,' said she, 'is my own son, and this my work. Eat, for even I have eaten. Be not you more tender than a woman, nor more compassionate than a mother. But, if you have a religious abhorrence of my victim, I truly have eaten half; and let the rest remain for me.' They went away trembling, fearful to do this one thing; and hardly left this food for the mother. The whole city was struck with horror," says the historian, "at this wickedness; and they were pronounced blessed, who died before they had heard or seen such great evils."

Verses 30, 31. *Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, &c.*—Proverbial expressions, to signify their desire of any shelter or refuge; and so very desirous were they of hiding themselves, that some thousands of them crept even into the common sewers, and there miserably perished, or were dragged out to slaughter. (*Bell.*, vi. 9.) *For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry*—If the Romans are permitted by Heaven to inflict such heavy punishments on me, who am innocent, how dreadful must the vengeance be which they shall inflict on the nation, whose sins cry aloud to heaven, hastening the pace of the divine judgments, and rendering the perpetrators as fit for punishment, as dry wood is for burning. The expression is proverbial; and was in frequent use among the Jews, who compared a good man to a

32 ¶ ^a And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

33 And ^a when they were come to the place which is called ² Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors; one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

34 ¶ Then said Jesus, Father, ^b forgive them: for ^c they know not what they do. And

^a Isa. liii. 12; Matt. xxvii. 38.—^a Matt. xxvii. 33; Mark xv. 22; John xix. 17, 18.—^b Or, the place of a scull.—^b Matt. v. 44; Acts vii. 60; 1 Cor. iv. 12.—^c Acts iii. 17.

green tree, and a bad man to a dead and dry one. It is as if our Lord had said, If a righteous person suffer thus, what will become of the wicked? Of those who are as ready for destruction, as dry wood is for the fire? Compare Ezek. xx. 47, with Ezek. xxi. 3, where God's burning every green and every dry tree is explained to be, his destroying the righteous and the wicked together. See also Psa. i. 3, where a good man is compared to a green tree full of leaves: and both Christ and John the Baptist resemble bad men to dry, dead, and barren trees.

Verses 32-34. *There were also two other malefactors*—This should rather be rendered, *Two others, who were malefactors, were also led with him to be put to death.* The distinction between Jesus and the malefactors is remarkably preserved in the next verse. *And when they were come to the place called Calvary*—See on Matt. xxvii. 33, and Mark xv. 22; *there they crucified him*—That is, nailed him to the cross; *and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left*—So that he was in the midst of two thieves, as if he had been the greatest criminal of the three. Thus he was not only treated as a transgressor, but numbered with them, and exhibited as the worst of them. *Then said Jesus*—Our Lord passed most of the time on the cross in silence; yet seven sentences, which he spake thereon, are recorded by the four evangelists, though no one evangelist has recorded them all. Hence it appears that the four gospels are, as it were, four parts, which, joined together, make one symphony: sometimes one of these only sounds; sometimes two or three; sometimes all sound together. *Father*—So he speaks, both at the beginning and at the end of his sufferings on the cross; *forgive them*—How striking is this passage! He made no manner of resistance to the cruel violence of his enemies; nor did he revile them, even when they were distorting his limbs, as on a rack; nay, on the contrary, even while they were actually nailing him to the cross, he seems to feel the injury they did to their own souls, more than the wounds which they gave him; and, as it were, to forget his own anguish, out of a concern for their salvation! In the midst of the agonies which he suffered, he pours out a compassionate prayer for those that were imbruing their hands in his blood, pleading the only excuse which the most extensive charity could suggest; *Father, forgive them; for*

A. M. 4037. ^d they parted his raiment, and cast
A. D. 33. lots.

35 ¶ And ^e the people stood beholding. And the ^f rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

^d Matt. xxvii. 35; Mark xv. 24; John xix. 23.—^e Psa. xxii. 17; Zech. xii. 10.—^f Matt. xxvii. 39; Mark xv. 29.

they know not what they do—Thus did our Lord Jesus, though expiring by the tortures which he felt, give us an example of that benevolence which he hath commanded us to practise; and breathe out at once a prayer and an apology for his executioners. The Roman soldiers, who were the immediate instruments of his death, had indeed but little knowledge of him; and the Jews, who were the authors of it, through their obstinate prejudices, apprehended not who he was: for if *they had known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8. And how eminently was this prayer of Christ heard! It procured forgiveness for all that were, or afterward became, penitent, and a suspension of vengeance even for the impenitent. *And they parted his raiment, &c.*—See on Matt. xxvii. 35, 36.

Verses 35–37. *And the people stood beholding*—Him hanging on the cross, being, it seems, not at all concerned, but rather pleasing themselves with the spectacle. *And the rulers*—Whom, from their office, one would have supposed to be men of sense and men of honour, stood among the rabble; and *derided him, saying, He saved others, let him save himself*—Thus do they upbraid him for the good works he had done, as if it were indeed for these that they crucified him. They triumph over him as if they had conquered him, at the time that he was conquering sin and death for them! They challenge him to save himself from the cross, when he was saving others by the cross! See on Matt. xxvii. 39–44. *Let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God*—If he really be the true Messiah, *the elect of God*, and, in consequence of that divine choice, be the king of Israel, as he has often pretended, let him save himself from death, that we may see a demonstration of his saving power; and we will then believe him. Or, if he, as the Messiah, would deliver our nation from the Romans, (to do which they supposed would be the principal office of the Messiah,) let him deliver himself from the Romans that have him now in their hands. Thus these Jewish rulers ridiculed him, as captivated by the Romans instead of subduing them. The expression, *ο τυ θεω εκλεκτος, the elect, or chosen of God*, is taken from Isa. xlii. 1, and appears to be one of those titles by which the Messiah was at that time distinguished. *The soldiers also*—Who kept guard at that time, joined with the rest of the spectators; and *mocked him*,

38 ^g And a superscription also was A. M. 4037.
written over him, in letters of Greek, A. D. 33.
and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING
OF THE JEWS.

39 ¶ ^h And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

^g Matt. xxvii. 7; Mark xv. 26; John xix. 19.—^h Matt. xxvii. 44; Mark xv. 32.

coming and offering him vinegar—To drink in the midst of his agonies. Compare John xix. 29. *And saying*—As the rulers and people had done; *if thou be the king of the Jews*—As thou hast frequently pretended to be, before thou undertakest to deliver them, *save thyself*—From our power, and thus begin to assert thy claim to a supreme authority. Their insult, it seems, did not lie in their offering our Lord vinegar, for that was the soldiers' common drink, when mixed with water; (see note on Matt. xxvii. 48;) but it lay in what they said to him when they offered it, reproaching him for pretending to be a king, when he was so poor and mean a person, and now about to expire as a malefactor. As this claim of being a *king*, seemed to the soldiers most derogatory to the Roman authority, it is no wonder that they grounded their insult on this, rather than his professing himself the Son of God. Thus the priests derided his claiming the title of the Messiah, and the Romans his claiming that of a king.

Verse 38. *A superscription also was written over him, &c.*—THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS—No transposition is necessary here: for Luke does not tell us when the superscription was written, so far is he from saying that it was written after Jesus was mocked. He only observes in general that there was a title placed over him, and by mentioning it together with the insults, insinuates that it was one of them. The Evangelist John has marked the particular time when the title was written and affixed, xix. 9. See notes on Matt. xxvii. 37, 38.

Verses 39–41. *And one of the malefactors railed on him*—The word *κακουργος*, here rendered *malefactor*, does not always denote a *thief*, or *robber*, but was a term likewise applied to the Jewish soldiers, who were hurried by their zeal to commit some crime, in opposition to the Roman authority. As Mathew and Mark represent both the malefactors here spoken of as reviling our Lord, we must either suppose that they both did so at first, and that afterward one of them, by divine grace co-operating with the extraordinary circumstances in which he was now placed, was brought to repentance; or that those evangelists put the plural number for the singular, as the best authors sometimes do. This seems most probable, because, if this malefactor, while on the cross, had been guilty of reviling Christ, it is likely that, when he rebuked his fellow-criminal, he would

A. M. 4037. 41 And we indeed justly; for we
A. D. 33. receive the due reward of our deeds:
but this man hath done nothing amiss.

have confessed his sin in that particular, and have assigned some reason for so suddenly altering his opinion of Christ. But, indeed, it is by no means certain that his repentance did not commence till he hung on the cross. For any thing we know to the contrary, he might have repented and turned to God long before; his condemnation to death, and his sufferings in prison, being made, through divine grace, the means of producing that effect. Or, he might have heard our Lord preach in the course of his ministry, and have seen some of his miracles, and from a consideration of both joined together, might have been solidly convinced that he was the Messiah. And, with regard to the crime for which he was condemned to die, it might have been committed before such conviction took place, though not discovered till some time afterward. Or, like many professors of religion in every age, holding the truth in unrighteousness, he might have been overcome by temptation, so as to commit some gross act of wickedness, by which he had forfeited his life, but of which he had afterward sincerely repented. This supposition would account for his declaration concerning Christ, that he had *done nothing amiss*—*Oudev arorov, nothing improper, disorderly, or out of place*, as the words signify: a declaration which he certainly could with no propriety have made, unless he had firmly believed Jesus to be the true Messiah, and therefore innocent of those things which the Jews laid to his charge. Be this as it may, at whatever time, and in whatever way he was brought to repentance, he now gave evident proof, indeed all the proof which in his circumstances could be given, that his repentance was genuine; bringing forth all such fruits as were meet for repentance: 1st, In publicly confessing his guilt, and desert of the punishment inflicted on him. 2d, In reproving his fellow-criminal. 3d, In bearing an honourable testimony to Christ, and that at a time when the chief priests, scribes, and elders, and all the multitude, were condemning and reviling him; and he was in such disgraceful circumstances as stumbled even his own disciples. 4th, In professing, and evidently possessing, faith in a future state, and in the righteous retributions thereof, evidently manifested when, in reproving his fellow-sinner, he said, *Dost thou not fear God?* that is, fear his vengeance in another world; for they had nothing to fear in this, beyond the crucifixion which they were now suffering. 5th, By reposing his confidence in Christ, as the Lord of that world, at a time when his enemies were triumphing over him, and he himself, abandoned by most of his friends, was expiring on a cross. In short, as Dr. Whitby observes, "This thief improved his time at last in such an extraordinary manner, as, perhaps, no man ever did before, or will do hereafter. He then believed Christ to be the Saviour of the world, when one of his disciples had betrayed, another had denied him, and all of them

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, A. M. 4037.
remember me when thou comest into A. D. 33.
thy kingdom.

had forsok him! to be the Son of God, the Lord of life, when he was hanging on the cross, suffering the pangs of death, and seemingly deserted by his Father! he proclaims him the Lord of paradise, when all the Jews condemned him, and the Gentiles crucified him as an impostor and malefactor! He feared God, acknowledged the justice of his punishment, and with patience submitted to it. He condemned himself, and justified the holy Jesus, declaring that he had *done nothing amiss*. He was solicitous, not for the preservation of his body, but the salvation of his soul; nor only for his own, but the salvation of his brother thief, whom he so charitably reprehends, so earnestly requests not to proceed in his blasphemous language, so lovingly invites to the fear of God. So that the glory which he did to Christ by his faith and piety, upon the cross, seems such as the whole series of a pious life in other men can hardly parallel." Upon the whole, this penitent malefactor was a remarkable instance of the power of divine grace, especially if his conversion was effected while he hung on the cross. But this gives no encouragement to any to put off their repentance till they are on their death-beds, in hopes they shall then find mercy; for though it is certain that true repentance is never too late, it is as certain that late repentance is seldom true. None can be sure they shall either have time or grace to repent when they are sick and dying; but every man may be sure that he cannot have the advantages which this penitent thief had, whose case was altogether extraordinary, and who was placed in the midst of scenes and circumstances of the most affecting kind. He heard the blasphemous reproaches and revilings cast upon him whom he, now at least, if not before, knew to be not only a righteous man, but the true Messiah, the Son of God; beheld the barbarous cruelties exercised upon him, the unparalleled patience with which he suffered, and the benevolent and forgiving spirit which he manifested toward his murderers: not to mention the preternatural darkness which had begun to take place, sufficient, one would have supposed, to produce astonishment and dread in all whose hearts were not perfectly hardened. To which may be added, that the conversion of this sinner was designed to be a singular instance of the power of Christ's grace, and to put a peculiar glory upon him when he was now in his lowest estate of humiliation and suffering.

Verse 42. *And he said, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom*—Such was the prayer of a dying sinner to a dying Saviour. And as in his confession he discovered deep repentance toward God, so in this petition he discovered strong faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He owns him to be the Lord, and to have a kingdom, and that he was going to that kingdom: that he should have authority in it, and that those should be happy whom he favoured; to believe and confess which was a great thing at that

A. M. 4037. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

44 ¶ And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

¹ Matt. xxvii. 45; Mark xv. 33.—² Or, land.—³ Matt. xxvii. 51; Mark xv. 38.—⁴ Psa. xxxi. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 23.

time, when Christ was in the depth of disgrace, deserted by his own disciples, reviled by his own nation, suffering as an impostor, and not delivered by his Father! Verily, we have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel! He evidently entertained an incomparably more rational and exalted notion of the Messiah's kingdom than the disciples themselves: for while they expected nothing but a secular empire, he gave evidence that he acknowledged Christ's spiritual dominion, and not only believed him to be a king, but such a king as, after he was dead, could profit the dead; for, at the very time that Jesus was dying on the cross, he begged to be remembered by him when he came into his kingdom. His petition discovers also great modesty, humility, and consciousness of his own demerits. He begs only to be remembered, and refers it to Christ in what way to remember him. It is a request like that of Joseph to the chief butler, *Think on me*, Gen. xl. 14, and it succeeded better; the chief butler forgot Joseph, but Christ remembered this thief. Observe, reader, to be remembered by Christ, now he is in his kingdom, is what we should earnestly desire and pray for: and it will be enough to secure our welfare living and dying.

Verse 43. *Jesus said*—In answer to his prayer; *Verily I say unto thee*—I, the Amen, the faithful Witness, give thee assurance, *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise*—As if he had said, I will not only remember thee when I come into my kingdom, but this very day; and will confer upon thee more than thou hast asked. Christ here lets us know, 1st, That he was going, not only to *αδης*, the invisible world, but to that part of it termed paradise. His human soul was removing to the place of separate souls; not to the place of the damned, but to the place of the blessed. This was the beginning of the joy set before him, with the prospect of which he comforted himself. He went by the cross to the crown, and we must not think of going any other way, or of being perfected save by sufferings. 2d, That when penitent believers die, they go to be with him there. He was now as a priest, purchasing this happiness for them, and is ready, as a king, to confer it upon them. Observe, reader, how the state of happiness, prepared for holy souls after death, is set forth. 1st, It is being in paradise, *a garden of pleasure*, the paradise of God, Rev. ii. 7, alluding to those gardens in which the eastern monarchs made their magnificent banquets, or rather to the garden

46 ¶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 ¶ Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to

¹ Matt. xxvii. 50; Mark xv. 37; John xix. 30.—² Matt. xxvii. 54; Mark xv. 39.

of Eden, in which our first parents were placed, when they were innocent. It is termed *Abraham's bosom*, in the story of Lazarus, and was a common expression among the Jews, for the mansion of beatified souls in their separate state. In the second Adam we are restored to all we lost in the first Adam; and more, to a heavenly paradise instead of an earthly one. 2d, It is being *with Christ* there. It is the happiness of paradise and of heaven, to see Christ, to be with him, and to share in his glory. *Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, &c.*, John xvii. 24. Thus St. Paul expected, when he departed, *to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23; and the first Christians in general were confident, that when they were absent from the body, they should be present with the Lord. 3d, Holy souls enter this place, or state, immediately upon death. *This day*, that is, before six o'clock in the evening, when their day ended. "The souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are immediately in joy and felicity." Observe, 1st, "That the word *σήμερον*, to-day, is not to be connected with *I say*, as if the sense were this, *I say to thee to-day*; but with the words following, so as to contain a promise, that *the thief* [with respect to his soul] *should even that day be in paradise*, appears from the familiar phrase of the Jews, who say of the just man dying, *To-day he shall sit in the bosom of Abraham*. 2d, Christ doubtless spake in that sense in which the thief could, and in which Christ knew he would, understand him; now he, being a Jew, would surely understand him according to the received opinion of his nation concerning paradise, which was, that it was the place into which pious souls, separated from the body, were immediately received."

Verses 44, 45. *About the sixth hour*—Answering to twelve o'clock with us; *there was darkness, &c.*—See on Matt. xxvii. 45. The noon-tide darkness, covering the sun, obscured all the upper hemisphere. And the lower was equally darkened, the moon being in opposition to the sun, and so receiving no light from it. *Until the ninth hour*—Or three o'clock in the afternoon. *And the veil of the temple was rent, &c.*—See on Matt. xxvii. 51.

Verses 46-49. *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*—The Father receives the spirit of Jesus; Jesus himself the spirits of the faithful. See on Matt. xxvii. 50. *When the centurion*—The Roman

A. M. 4037. that sight, beholding the things
A. D. 33. which were done, smote their breasts
and returned.

49 ° And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

50 ¶ ¹ And behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor: *and he was* a good man, and a just:

51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them:) *he was* of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; ² who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

° Psa. xxxviii. 11; Matt. xxvii. 55; Mark xv. 40; John xix. 25.—¹ Matt. xxvii. 57; Mark xv. 42; John xix. 38.—² Mark xv. 43; Chap. ii. 25, 38.

officer, who stood over against him and guarded the execution; *saw what was done*—In so miraculous a manner, in those amazing prodigies that attended Christ's death; *he glorified God*—By a free confession of his persuasion of the innocence of Jesus; *saying, Certainly this was a righteous man*—Notwithstanding all the vile reproaches which have been cast upon him. *And all the people that came together*—On this remarkable occasion, among whom, doubtless, were some of those who, but a little before, had been insulting him in his dying agonies; *beholding the things that were done, smote their breasts*—For sorrow and remorse; in terrible expectation that some sad calamity would speedily befall them and their country, for the indignities and cruelties they had offered to a person, for whom God had expressed so high a regard even in his

52 This *man* went unto Pilate, A. M. 4037.
and begged the body of Jesus. A. D. 33.

53 ° And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And that day was ° the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

55 ¶ And the women also, ° which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and ° beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

56 And they returned, and ° prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day, ° according to the commandment.

° Matthew xxvii. 59; Mark xv. 46.—¹ Matthew xxvii. 62. ² Chap. viii. 2.—³ Mark xv. 47.—⁴ Mark xvi. 1.—⁵ Exod. xx. 10.

greatest distress. See these verses elucidated at large on Matt. xxvii. 54–56. *And all his acquaintance*—Who these were, Matthew and Mark inform us, in the verses just referred to.

Verses 50–56. *There was a man named Joseph, a good man, and a just*—One who united in his character the two great principles of morality—justice and benevolence. *The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them*—Though he was a member of the council which condemned Jesus, he did not join them in their unjust sentence, having either declined being present when the sentence was passed, or having remonstrated against it. *This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus, &c.*—See this paragraph explained at large in the notes on Matthew xxvii. 57–61, and Mark xv. 42–47.

CHAPTER XXIV.

(1.) Two angels assure the women who visited his sepulchre that Jesus was risen, as he had foretold, 1–7. (2.) They report this to the disciples, but are not believed, 8–11. (3.) Peter visits the sepulchre, and finds the grave-clothes laid by themselves, but the body gone, 12. (4.) Christ joins and converses with two disciples going to Emmaus; explains the prophecies concerning himself, and makes himself known to them, 13–35. (5.) He appears to ten of the disciples the same day at evening; desires them to look upon and handle him for their conviction; eats with them, and explains the Scriptures to them, 36–48. (6.) Promises them the Holy Spirit, and, having blessed them, he ascends into heaven, and leaves them full of wonder, joy, and praise, 49–53.

A. M. 4037. **N**OW ° upon the first day of
A. D. 33. the week, very early in the

morning, they came unto the se- A. M. 4037
pulchre, ° bringing the spices which A. D. 33.

° Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 1; John xx. 2.

° Chap. xxiii. 56.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIV.

Verse 1. *Upon the first day of the week, &c.*—On the morning of the first day of the week, when every thing was made ready, all the women, mentioned verse 10; and Mark xvi. 1; and certain others with

them, who were not from Galilee, went out very early, carrying the spices which they had prepared to the sepulchre, at which some or all of them arrived about the rising of the sun. Whether they went and returned all in one company, or at different

A. M. 4037. they had prepared, and certain *others*
A. D. 33. with them.

2 ° And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 ^d And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, ° behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye ¹ the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen. ^f Remember

• Matt. xxviii. 2; Mark xvi. 4.—^d Verse 23; Mark xvi. 5.
• John xx. 12; Acts i. 10.—¹ Or, *him that liveth?*

times, and by different ways, is not quite certain. See the notes on Matt. xxviii. 1-10; Mark xvi. 1, 2; John speaks of none of the women who made this visit to the sepulchre but Mary Magdalene. Yet, because he mentions none but her, it does not follow that there were no others with her. In the gospels there are many such omissions. For instance, Mark and Luke speak of one demoniac only, who was cured at Gadara, though Matthew tells us there were two who had devils expelled out of them at that time. In like manner Mark and Luke speak only of one blind man, to whom Jesus gave sight near Jericho, while from Matthew it is certain two had that benefit conferred on them there. Before Jesus rode into Jerusalem both the ass and its colt were brought to him, though Mark, Luke, and John speak only of the colt. Wherefore, since it is the manner of the sacred historians in other instances to make such omissions, John may be supposed to have mentioned Mary Magdalene singly in this part of his history, notwithstanding he knew that others had been with her at the sepulchre; and the rather, because his intention was to relate only what things happened in consequence of her information, and not to speak of the transactions of the rest, which his brother historians had handled at large.

Verses 2-8. *They found the stone rolled away*—Their inquiry among themselves, while they were going along, had been, *Who shall roll us away the stone?* That difficulty, however, they found removed, but alas! when they entered in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus. About this, as we may well suppose, they were much perplexed. God, however, was graciously pleased soon to remove their perplexity. *For, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments*—Or, suddenly appeared to them, as the word *επεσησαν* may be properly rendered. It does not imply that the angels, at their first appearing, were close by the women, as may be proved from the Greek translation of Gen. xviii. 2, where, though it be said, that *Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, lo, three men (εισηκεισαν επανω αυτω) stood by him*, it is added, that *when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door*, which

how he spake unto you when he ^{A. M. 4037.}
was yet in Galilee, ^{A. D. 33.}

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And ^e they remembered his words,

9 ^h And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and ⁱ Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

^e Matt. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; ix. 31; Chap. ix. 22.—^f John ii. 22.—^h Matt. xxviii. 8; Mark xvi. 10.—ⁱ Chap. viii. 3.

shows that they were at some distance from him. It is probable that both these angels were in a sitting posture when they first showed themselves to the women, because Mark affirms it expressly of the one whom he mentions, (verse 5,) and because they showed themselves in this posture afterward to Mary Magdalene, John xx. 12. Or, the evangelists may be reconciled by supposing that the angel of whom Mark speaks, arose when the women went down into the sepulchre. See on Mark xvi. 3-6. *And as they were afraid*—Mark says, *εξεθαμβηθησαν*, *affrighted*, or *terrified*, at this extraordinary and surprising sight; and bowed down their faces to the earth—Fixed their eyes upon it, in token of the profoundest respect; they—Namely, the angels; said unto them—This evangelist, having no intention to tell which of the angels spake, attributes to them both words, which, in the nature of the thing, could be spoken only by one of them, probably the one mentioned by Matthew and Mark, it being the custom, as has been just observed, of the sacred historians to mention one person or thing only, even in cases where more were concerned. *Why seek ye the living among the dead?*—Why are you come hither with materials for embalming one who is possessed of an immortal life? *He is not here, but is risen*—He has quitted the grave to return no more to it. *Remember how he spake when he was yet in Galilee*—Thus they refer the women to his own words, which if they and his other disciples had duly believed and observed, they would more easily have credited the fact when it took place. That the tidings, therefore, might not be such a surprise to them as they seemed to be, the angels repeat to them what Christ had often said in their hearing. *And they remembered his words*—When they were thus reminded of them. And now, doubtless, they were ashamed of the preparations they had made to embalm him on the third day, who had so often said, he would on the third day rise again.

Verses 9-12. *They returned from the sepulchre*—To Jerusalem; and told all these things to the eleven—Apostles, in the course, probably, of that morning, for it is not likely that they found them all collected

A. M. 4037. 11 ^k And their words seemed to
A. D. 33. them as idle tales, and they believed
them not.

12 ¶ ^l Then arose Peter, and ran unto the
sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the
linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed,
wondering in himself at that which was come
to pass.

13 ¶ ^m And behold, two of them went that
same day to a village called Emmaus, which
was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these
things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they com-
muned *together*, and reasoned, ⁿ Jesus himself
drew near, and went with them.

^k Mark xvi. 11; Verse 25.—^l John xx. 3, 6.—^m Mark
xvi. 12.—ⁿ Matt. xviii. 20; Verse 36.—^o John xx. 14; xxi. 4.
^p John xix. 25.

together in one body; and to all the rest—Namely,
at different times. *And their words seemed to them
as idle tales, &c.*—Their Master's crucifixion had
given such a severe blow to their faith, that they had
laid aside all the thoughts which they had entertain-
ed of his being the Messiah. And, therefore,
they had not the least expectation of his resurrec-
tion, notwithstanding he had often predicted it to
them: nay, they looked upon the story which the
women told them about it as a mere chimera, the
delusion of a disordered imagination. *Then arose
Peter, &c.*—Or rather, *But Peter, arising; ran to
the sepulchre*—That is, Peter was an exception: the
tidings brought by Mary Magdalene, and the other
women, did not seem *as idle tales* to him, nor to
John, who now arose and went with him, and got to
the sepulchre before him. See on John xx. 1-10.

Verses 13-24. *Behold, two of them*—Not of the
apostles, for those two, returning, told what had
passed between Christ and them to the eleven apos-
tles, (verses 33, 35,) but two of the other disciples
that were with them; *went that same day*—On
which Jesus arose; *to a village called Emmaus*—
Not that Emmaus near Tiberias, so called from the
hot baths there, for that was in Galilee, but a village
in the tribe of Judah; *about threescore furlongs*—
That is, near eight miles from Jerusalem. Some
MSS. say it was one hundred and sixty furlongs
distant from Jerusalem, which is evidently a mistake,
Josephus confirming the declaration of Luke, *Bell.*,
vii. 27. *And they talked together of all these things*
—As they walked along they discoursed together of
all these wonderful and important things which had
lately happened, and which could not but lie with
great weight on their minds. *And while they com-
muned together*—About the sufferings and death of
their beloved Lord, and the report which had been
spread that morning of his resurrection; and rea-

16 But ^o their eyes were holden, A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of
communications *are* these that ye have one to
another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, ^p whose name was
Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou
only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not
known the things which are come to pass there
in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things?
And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of
Nazareth, ^q which was a prophet ^r mighty
in deed and word before God, and all the
people:

20 ^s And how the chief priests and our rulers

^q Matthew xxi. 11; Chapter vii. 16; John iii. 2; iv. 19;
vi. 14; Acts ii. 22.—^r Acts vii. 22.—^s Chapter xxiii. 1;
Acts xiii. 27, 28.

soned—Concerning these things, namely, whether it
was probable that he actually was risen, and there-
fore, notwithstanding he had suffered death, was the
Messiah. The word *συνήρειν*, here rendered *reasoned*,
properly signifies, as Mr. West observes, *to discuss*,
examine, or *inquire together*; and it appears from
the connection, that as they were discoursing on the
sufferings, and death, and resurrection of Jesus, the
scope of their inquiry was, how to reconcile these
events with what had been foretold concerning the
Messiah, which, by the message that the women had
but just before brought from the angels, they were
particularly called to remember. Accordingly, when
Jesus had inquired, (verse 17,) *What manner of
communications, &c.?* or, as Mr. West would ren-
der it, *What arguments are these that ye are deba-
ting one with another?* this is the point he took oc-
casion to illustrate and explain, (verses 26, 27,) by
showing them it was necessary, in accomplishment
of what was foretold, that the Messiah should suffer
these things, and so enter into his glory. *Jesus
himself drew near, &c.*—As one come from Jerusa-
lem, and who was travelling the same way. *But their
eyes were holden*—Their sight was supernaturally
influenced; *that they should not know him*—Prob-
ably, also, one reason why they did not know him,
was that, as Mark says, (chap. xvi. 12,) he appeared,
εν ερεπα μορφη, in another form, or habit, namely, dif-
ferent from that which he formerly had when he
conversed with them. *And he said, What manner
of communications are these that ye have, and are
sad?*—Jesus spake thus to them in the character of
a stranger, making free, as travellers might do one
with another, to ask what the subject of their con-
versation was, and why they looked so sad? *And
one of them*—One of the two; *whose name was
Cleopas*—The same with Alpheus, the father of
James the Less and Judas, who were two of the

A. M. 4037. delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted ^c that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and ^d certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre.

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

^c Chap. i. 68; ii. 38; Acts i. 6.—^d Matt. xxviii. 8; Mark xvi. 10; Verses 9, 10; John xx. 18.—^e Verse 12.—^f Verse 46; Acts xvii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 11.—^g Verse 45.—^h Gen. iii. 15; xxii. 18; xxvi. 4; xlix. 10; Num. xxi. 9; Deut. xviii. 15.

apostles, see on Luke vi. 15, 16; *answering said, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem?*—Cleopas was surprised that any one who had come from Jerusalem should have been ignorant of the extraordinary things which had lately happened there. "There are two ways," says Dr. Campbell, "wherein the words of Cleopas may be understood by the reader: one is, as a method of accounting for the apparent ignorance of this traveller; the other, as an expression of surprise, that any one who had been at Jerusalem at that time, though a stranger, should not know what had made so much noise among all ranks, and had so much occupied, for some days, all the leading men in the nation, the chief priests, the scribes, the rulers, and the whole sanhedrim, as well as the Roman procurator, and the soldiery. The common version favours the first interpretation; I prefer the second, in concurrence, as I imagine, with the majority of interpreters, ancient and modern. I cannot discover, with Beza, any thing in it remote from common speech. On the contrary, I think it, in such a case as the present, so natural an expression of surprise, that examples remarkably similar may be produced from most languages." *And he said, What things*—What are those matters to which you refer? *And they said, Concerning Jesus, a prophet mighty in deed and in word*—Who wrought the most astonishing miracles, and taught the most instructive and excellent doctrine; *before God*—Who evidently bore testimony to him; *and all the people*—Among whom he appeared publicly for some years. *And the chief priests, &c.*—Delivered him to the Roman governor; *to be condemned*—Prevailing on him, by their importunity, to pass sentence of death upon him. *But we trusted, &c.*—Having thus given an account of Christ's character, miracles, and sufferings, Cleopas was so ingenuous as to acknowledge, that they once believed him to be the deliverer of Israel, and in that faith had become his disciples. But that they now began to think themselves mistaken, because he had been dead three days. He added, that some women of their acquaintance, who had been that morning at the sepulchre, had as-

24 And ^a certain of them which were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

26 ^b Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 ^c And beginning at ^d Moses, and ^e all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

^a Psa. xvi. 9, 10; xxii. cxxxii. 11; Isa. vii. 14; ix. 6; xl. 10, 11; l. 6; liii.; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 14, 15; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 25; Dan. ix. 24; Mic. vii. 20; Mal. iii. 1; iv. 2; John i. 45.

tonished them with the news of his resurrection, affirming, that they had seen a vision of angels, which told them that he was alive. It seems his companion and he had left the city before any of the women came with the news of Christ's personal appearance. *And certain of them who were with us*—Meaning, probably, Peter and John, as is related, John xx. 2, &c.; *went, &c., and found it as the women had said*—That is, that the body was gone, and that the funeral linen was laid in order there; *but him they saw not*—They had not the satisfaction of seeing Jesus.

Verses 25-27. *Then he said, O fools*—*Ω αἰῶνοι, O foolish, or thoughtless persons.* The word is not *Ω μωροί*, properly rendered, *O fools*, and is a term of great indignation, and sometimes of contempt; but that employed here is only a term of expostulation and reproof; *and slow of heart to believe, &c.*—From this reproof it would appear, that Cleopas and his companion were of the number of those who gave little credit to the tidings which the women had brought of their Master's resurrection; his crucifixion and death, as they themselves acknowledge, having almost convinced them that he was not the Messiah. What he reproved them for was their not understanding and believing the prophets, which, he said, declared that, before the Messiah should enter into his glory, he must suffer such things as they said their Master had suffered. *And beginning at Moses, &c.*—And in order that his reproof might appear to be well founded, that their drooping spirits might be supported, and that they might be prepared for the discovery he was about to make of himself, he explained the whole types and prophecies of the Old Testament, which relate to the Messiah's sufferings, such as the Mosaical sacrifices, the lifting up of the brazen serpent, the twenty-second Psalm, the fifty-third of Isaiah, &c. Thus did Jesus demonstrate to these desponding disciples, from the Scriptures, that their despair was without cause, and the suspicion without foundation, which they had taken up, of their being deceived in thinking him to be the Messiah, because the priests had put him to death.

A. M. 4037. 28 And they drew nigh unto the
A. D. 33. village whither they went: and ° he
made as though he would have gone farther.

29 But ^d they constrained him, saying, Abide
with us: for it is toward evening, and the day
is far spent. And he went in to tarry with
them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat
with them, ° he took bread, and blessed it, and
broke, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they
knew him: and he ² vanished out of their
sight.

° Gen. xxxii. 26; xlii. 7; Mark vi. 48.—^d Gen. xix. 3; Acts
xvi. 15.—² Matt. xiv. 19.

Verses 28-31. *And they drew near unto the village, &c.*—His discourse made so deep an impression upon them, and engrossed their attention to such a degree, that they neither thought of the length of the journey, nor considered the countenance of him who spake to them, so that, ere they were aware, they arrived at the village whither they went. *And he made as though he would have gone farther*—When the disciples turned aside from the road to go to their lodging in the village, Jesus walked forward as if he were going on, as he would have done, had they not pressed him to stay. *But they constrained him*—Being loath to part with a person whose conversation had charmed them so much, they begged him to go no farther, but to abide with them; for, they said, *it is toward evening*—Namely, the first evening of the Jewish day, which began at three o'clock. See on Matt. xiv. 15; *and the day is far spent*—Greek, *κεκλιθεν η ημερα, the day has declined*. That this is the meaning of the expression is evident, for, on any other supposition, the two disciples could not have returned to Jerusalem after dining at Emmaus, so as to have been present, (as it appears from verse 33 they were,) when Jesus showed himself to his disciples the same day, which ended at sun-setting. *And he went in to tarry with them*—By their pressing invitations the disciples prevailed with their fellow-traveller to turn in with them. And their humanity met with an abundant recompense. *As he sat at meat with them he took bread, &c.*—Some have inferred from this, that he gave these two disciples the sacrament on this occasion, adding it to the ordinary meal they were eating, as at the first institution of the rite. But in the Greek there is no foundation for the conjecture, the words signifying properly, *And it came to pass, when he sat down at the table with them, taking bread he blessed it, &c.*—Among the Jews, the giving of thanks at table for their food, and the distributing of it to the guests, was the office of the head of the family. This office Jesus now assumed, though he only appeared as a guest at this table, and, looking up to heaven, blessed, or gave thanks over it, just in the manner he had formerly done: *And their eyes were opened*—

32 And they said one to another, A. M. 4037.
Did not our heart burn within us A. D. 33.
while he talked with us by the way, and while
he opened to us the Scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and
returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven
gathered together, and them that were with
them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and
hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things *were done* in
the way, and how he was known of them in
breaking of bread.

² Or, *ceased to be seen of them*, Chap. iv. 30; John viii. 59.
¹ 1 Cor. xv. 5.

The supernatural cloud, or the miraculous influence which before prevented their knowing him, was removed, partly, perhaps, through the action just mentioned, of his taking, blessing, and breaking the bread in the manner they had known him frequently to do, a manner probably peculiar to him. *And they knew him*—To their unutterable astonishment, plainly seeing that it was Jesus their Master; and, as they were preparing to acknowledge him as such, *he vanished out of their sight*—Rather, suddenly became invisible, or *ceased to be seen by them*, as the original words, *αφαντος εγενετο απ αυτων*, literally signify. For certainly he did not vanish as a mere spectre.

Verses 32-35. *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us?*—This reflection of the disciples, on this affair, is natural and beautiful. It is as if they had said, How strange it is that we should not have discovered him sooner, when we found his discourses have that effect upon us, which was peculiar to his teaching. For did not our very hearts glow within us, with love to God and our Divine Instructor, as well as to the truths which he made known to us by opening the Scriptures? They found the preaching powerful, even when they knew not the preacher; it not only made things of the greatest importance very plain and clear to them, but, together with a divine light, brought a divine warmth into their souls, and kindled therein a holy fire of pious and devout affections: and this they now notice for the confirming of their belief, that it was indeed Jesus himself who had been talking with them all the while. *And they rose up the same hour*—Not being able to conceal such good news, or to defer the publication of that which they believed would give their brethren such joy, as they felt in their own breasts; they therefore, late as it was, rose up from their unfinished meal, *that very hour*, and made all possible haste to Jerusalem, that they might declare to the other disciples the wonderful story, and give them full assurance of their Lord's resurrection. They were, however, in some measure prevented: for, immediately upon their arrival, the apostles, with the women, accosted them with

A. M. 4037. 36 ¶ * * And as they thus spake,
A. D. 33.

Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen ^h a spirit.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: ⁱ handle me, and see; for a spirit hath

* Easter Tuesday, gospel, verse 36 to verse 49.—* Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 5.

this declaration, *The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon*—Before he was seen of the other apostles, (1 Cor. xv. 5,) he had, in his wonderful condescension and grace, taken an opportunity on the former part of the day, (though where or in what manner is not recorded,) to show himself to Peter, that he might early relieve his distresses and fears, on account of his having so shamefully denied his Master. The generality of the apostles had given little credit to the reports of the women, supposing that they were occasioned more by imagination than reality. But when a person of Simon's capacity and gravity declared that he had seen the Lord, they began to think he was risen indeed. And their belief was not a little confirmed by the arrival of these two disciples, who declared that the Lord had appeared to them also, and gave a circumstantial relation of all that had happened.

Verses 36–43. *As they thus spake, Jesus stood in the midst of them*—While the disciples from Emmaus were giving their brethren an account of the Lord's appearing to them, and were probably offering arguments to convince those (if any such were present) who doubted the truth of his resurrection, Jesus himself came in, and by his appearance, and by what he said and did in their presence, put an end to their discourse, and gave them all full satisfaction. How he came in, is not here said; but (John xx. 19) we learn, it was when the doors of the room were shut where the disciples were assembled. It was, however, just as easy to his divine power to open a door undiscernedly, as it was to come in at a door opened by some other hand. *And saith unto them, Peace be unto you*—Thus graciously intimating that he forgave their former cowardice, and would still continue to treat them as friends, though they had of late conducted themselves in a manner unworthy of that character and relation. *But they were terrified and affrighted*—At this sudden, unexpected appearance; and *supposed that they had seen a spirit*—This is not to be wondered at, considering that they knew the doors of the room were shut, and secured by locks and bolts, for fear of the Jews. And in the present hurry of their thoughts, they did not reflect on the proofs Christ had so often given of his divine power, or on the evidences they had but just before received of his resurrection. *And he said, Why are ye troubled?*—Why are ye thus

not flesh and bones, as ye see me ^{A. M. 4037.}
^{A. D. 33} have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his hands and his feet*.

41 And while they yet believed not ^k for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, ^l Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honey-comb.

43 ^m And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

^h Mark vi. 49.—ⁱ John xx. 20, 27.—^k Genesis xlv. 26. ^l John xxi. 5.—^m Acts x. 41.

perplexed and affrighted? *and why do thoughts—* Διλογισμοί, doubtful and suspicious reasonings, arise in your hearts, as if it were only the appearance of a spirit which you have here before you? *Behold my hands and my feet*—Which, for your satisfaction, still retain the scars of those wounds which I received in being nailed to the cross. *Handle me, and see*—Whether this be not really a solid and substantial body; for a spirit—As you know; *hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have*—But is only an empty form, presenting itself to the eye, but eluding the grasp of any hand. Here our Lord manifestly allows, both that disembodied spirits, even the spirits of deceased persons, do exist, and that they may appear to the living. This the disciples supposed; and surely if they had been mistaken, our Lord would have shown them their error. *And he showed them his hands and his feet*—And, as John says, also *his side*, in which probably was the appearance of a large wound, newly, but perfectly, healed. Our Lord did this that they might be fully convinced, by the united testimony of their senses, that he their Lord and Master was indeed risen. *And while they yet believed not for joy*—They did in some sense believe; otherwise they would not have rejoiced. But their excess of joy prevented a clear, rational belief; and *wondered*—Were in such astonishment, that they hardly knew what they saw or heard, or where they were; *he said, Have ye here any meat?*—That I may eat with you, and thereby may still more fully assure you of the truth of my resurrection, and of the reality of my presence with you. *And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish*—On which it is probable they had been supping just before. *And he took it, and did eat before them*—Not that he had any need of any food, but to give them still further evidence, in order that not even a shadow of a doubt might remain in their minds, upon a point of the utmost importance to the business for which he came into the world, and a fundamental article of the Christian system. As our Lord remained on earth forty days after this, during which he had several interviews with his disciples, he continued all that time, according to this evangelist, (Acts i. 3,) to give them still further proof of the reality of his resurrection; discoursing also to them concerning the nature of the new dispensation of religion, which he was about to erect in the world by their ministry.

A. M. 4037. 44 And he said unto them, ^a These
A. D. 33. *are the words which I spake unto*
you, while I was yet with you, that all things
must be fulfilled which were written in the
law of Moses, and *in the prophets, and in*
the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then ^o opened he their understanding,
that they might understand the Scriptures.

46 And said unto them, ^p Thus it is written,
and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to

^a Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 22; xx. 18; Mark viii. 31; Chap. ix.
22; xviii. 31; Verse 6.—^o Acts xvi. 14.—^p Verse 26; Psa.
xxii.; Isa. l. 6; liii. 2, &c.; Acts xvii. 3.—^q Dan. ix. 24;
Acts xiii. 38, 46; 1 John ii. 12.

Verses 44-48. *And he said to them*—Not, as ap-
pears, on the day of his resurrection, but on that of
his ascension. *These are the words which I spake*
to you—In private, frequently; *while I was yet with*
you—Dwelling among you: we should better un-
derstand what Christ does, if we did but better
remember what he hath said; that *all must be ful-*
filled which is written in the law of Moses, and the
prophets, and the psalms—Under these three, the
Jews were wont to comprehend all the books of the
Old Testament. Under the name *law*, the five
books called the pentateuch were included; the
chief of the historical books were joined with the
prophets, and all the rest with the *psalms*. The
prophecies, as well as types, relating to the Messiah,
are contained in one or other of these books. *Then*
opened he their understanding to understand the
Scriptures—Especially in their reference to him.
He had explained many parts of them before, re-
peatedly, in the course of his ministry, and since his
resurrection, especially to the two as they went to
Emmaus. But still they understood them not, till
he took off the veil from their hearts, by the illumina-
tion of his Spirit. *And he said, Thus it is written,*
&c.—Thus Moses and the prophets foretold that the
Messiah should suffer, and rise from the dead on the
third day, as Jesus had done; so that, if they had
understood the Scriptures, instead of being stumbled
at these events, and finding their faith in him as the
Messiah shaken by them, they would thereby have
found it confirmed. *And that repentance and re-*
mission of sins—The two principal doctrines of the
gospel, inclusive of, or leading to, all the others;
should be preached—As they continually were by
the apostles, both to Jews and Gentiles. And should
they not still be preached? are they not as necessary
to be preached as ever? *in his name*—In imitation
of his example as a prophet; through his mediation
and grace as a priest; and by his authority and ordi-
nance, as a king; *among all the Gentile nations*—
As well as among the Jews; *beginning at Jerusa-*
lem—In God's visible church, where there had long
been the greatest light, and the greatest privileges
and advantages; where the greatest blessings had
been abused, and the greatest guilt contracted; and
where, in a little time, judgment would begin, as

rise from the dead the third day: A. M. 4037.
A. D. 33. 47 And that repentance and ^a re-
mission of sins should be preached in his name
^r among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ^s ye are witnesses of these things.

49 ¶ ^t And behold, I send the promise of my
Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of
Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power
from on high.

50 ¶ And he led them out ^u as far as to Be-

^a Gen. xii. 3; Psa. xxii. 27; Isa. xlix. 6, 22; Jer. xxxi.
34; Hos. ii. 23; Mic. iv. 2; Mal. i. 11.—^r John xv. 27; Acts
i. 8, 22; ii. 32; iii. 15.—^s Isa. xlii. 3; Joel ii. 28; John xiv.
16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7; Acts i. 4; ii. 1, &c.—^u Acts i. 12.

mercy was to begin now. That the heralds of di-
vine grace should begin at Jerusalem, was appointed
both graciously and wisely; *graciously*, as it en-
couraged the greatest sinners to repent, when they
saw that even the murderers of Christ were not ex-
cepted from mercy; and *wisely*, as hereby Chris-
tianity was more abundantly attested, the facts being
published first on the very spot where they hap-
pened. *And ye are witnesses of these things*—
Chosen of God, and appointed to be such; namely,
witnesses of Christ's life, doctrine, and miracles, and
especially of his death, resurrection, and ascension.

Verse 49. *And behold, I send the promise of my*
Father—Emphatically so called, namely, the Holy
Ghost, in his enlightening, renewing, and comfort-
ing influences, that you may be enabled to under-
stand, love, obey, and adorn the gospel which you
preach; and in his extraordinary and miraculous
gifts, that you may attest the truth and importance
of it to the world. *But tarry ye in Jerusalem, &c.*
—As the divine wisdom hath seen fit that the first
offers of mercy shall be made to this people, sinful
as they are, and that the gospel dispensation, in its
greatest glory, shall be opened here, and the fullest
proof possible be given of its truth and importance,
that those may be rendered inexcusable who shall
continue to reject it; I charge you not to go from
hence till you have received those gifts and graces
with which you are to be furnished, for the perfect
discharge of your ministry.

Verses 50-53. *And he led them out as far as Be-*
thany—Not the town, but the district: namely, to
the mount of Olives, which was within the bounda-
ries of Bethany. *And he lifted up his hands*—In a
most solemn and devout manner; *and blessed them*—
As one that had authority, not only to desire, but to
command a blessing upon them. *And while he*
blessed—Or was blessing them, and while they be-
held, (Acts i. 9,) by which it appears that this event
took place in the day-time; *he was parted from them*
—Miraculously and unexpectedly; *and carried up*
into heaven—Not suddenly, but leisurely, that they
might behold him departing, till a cloud received
him out of their sight, Acts i. 9. It was much more
proper that our Lord should ascend into heaven,
than that he should rise from the dead, in the sight

A. M. 4037. thany : and he lifted up his hands, A. D. 33. and blessed them.

51 * And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

* 2 Kings ii. 11; Mark xvi. 19; John xx. 17; Acts i. 9;

of the apostles. For his resurrection was proved when they saw him alive after his passion; but they could not see him in heaven while they continued on earth. And they worshipped him—Not only prostrated themselves before him, as the word προσκυνεω, here used, often means; but, being fully satisfied of his divine power and glory, they worshipped him in the strictest sense of the word, or paid him divine honours, though now become invisible to them; which it is certain they continued to do during the whole course of their ministry; confiding in him in all their dangers and trials; loving him and living to him; and making him, together with the Father, the great object of their prayers, praises, and obedience. And returned to Jerusalem with great joy—On account of the glorious discoveries which he had made to them, the glorious work to which he had called them, the extraordinary qualifications with

a.

52 † And they worshipped him, A. M. 4037. and returned to Jerusalem with great A. D. 33. joy:

53 And were continually * in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Eph. iv. 8.—† Matt. xxviii. 9, 17.—* Acts ii. 46; v. 42.

which he had promised to endue them, and the great success which he had engaged to give them therein; especially for the full proof they had now received, that he was indeed the true Messiah, their Saviour, and their Lord; and that they had not been deceived in attaching themselves to him as his disciples, but had been guided by the truth and grace of God. And were continually in the temple—That is, constantly attended there at the hours of service; praising and blessing God—As for all his other benefits, so in particular for sending the Messiah for the redemption and salvation of mankind, for raising him from the dead, after he had been unjustly and cruelly crucified by a cabal of wicked men; for his glorious ascension into heaven in their sight, and the promise made them of his return; and for performing such wonders to confirm and perfect their faith in him. Amen—May he be continually praised and blessed!